

The Heaven-Sent Leaf

by Katy Lederer

In *The Heaven-Sent Leaf*, Katy Lederer draws on her experience as both acclaimed younger poet and “brainworker” at a hedge fund in midtown Manhattan to produce an uncannily prescient work of high lyric. Though on its surface *The Heaven-Sent Leaf* addresses that most taboo of subjects—money—what it ultimately confronts is what it means to be, as Wallace Stevens put it, “finally human.” Working in the tradition of the flaneur, Lederer charts her speakers’ interior landscapes according to the city’s highly monetized geography, viewing life in the big city through the lens of expenditure—not just of money, but of all that money signifies. In poems that are both heartfelt and ruthlessly critical of our current financial milieu, in which the fates of individuals are packaged, priced out, and then bundled for sale on the open market, Lederer proves Robert Graves’s famous observation wrong: though there may be no money in poetry, there is indeed poetry in money.

Praise for Katy Lederer:

“Sparkling and strange, acrobatic but never evasive, clear-eyed about its own emotional life even as it takes semantics for a tumble, Katy Lederer’s book-length sequence of not-quite-sonnets measures up to its contemporaries as a chronicle of love in and out of a life, in dramatized personae, and in the poet’s own soul. *The Heaven-Sent Leaf* transcends all its contemporaries, and swerves away from almost all its precedents, in following at once the love and the money.”

—Stephen Burt

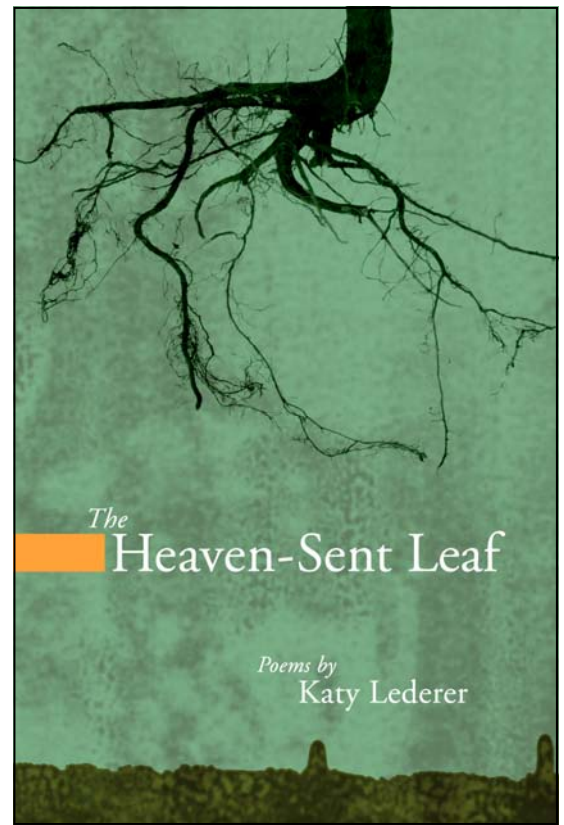
“Katy Lederer’s *The Heaven-Sent Leaf* carries us through the cool halls of commerce into the richly impacted language of desire. In this architecture of financial and romantic speculation, tenderness brushes up against other things tendered. The result is not exactly an erotics of money—or a balance sheet of love’s trades and trade-offs—but a feeling for the shared roots of money and blood, lineage and ‘brainwork,’ poetry and speculation. The rich counter-tensions in these poems build with fugue-like intensity, driving our attention deep into the green-leaved groves of personal and global futures.”

—Elizabeth Willis



About the Poet

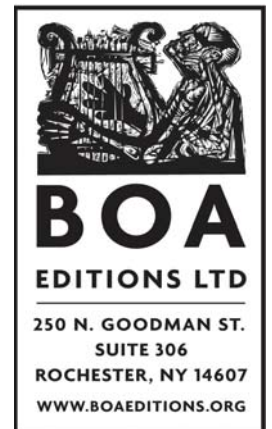
Katy Lederer’s other books are *Winter Sex* (Verse Press, 2002) and the memoir *Poker Face: A Girlhood Among Gamblers* (Crown, 2003), which was included in *Publishers Weekly* list of Best Nonfiction Books of 2003 and *Esquire Magazine*’s eight Best Books of the Year 2003. Her work has appeared in *The American Poetry Review*, *Boston Review*, *Harvard Review*, *GQ*, and elsewhere. She has been anthologized in *Body Electric* (Norton), *From Poe to the Present: Great American Prose Poems* (Scribner), and *Isn’t It Romantic?* (Verse Press), among others. Educated at UC Berkeley and the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, her honors and awards include an Academy of American Poets Prize, fellowships from Yaddo and the New York Foundation for the Arts, and a Discover Great New Writers citation from Barnes & Noble.



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