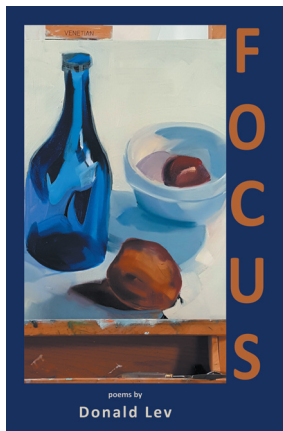


Press Release

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NYQ Books™ Announces the Publication of *Focus* by Donald Lev



April 10, 2017 - New York, NY - NYQ Books™ is proud to announce the publication of *Focus* by Donald Lev. *Focus* is a collection of poems by Donald Lev written for the most part after 2012, and is intended as a sequel to his collection published that year by NYQ Books, *A Very Funny Fellow*, whose concluding poem, "This Big Window," imagines needing a telescope. The heavens, it seems to the author "are seriously overgrown" like his "neglected yard," "his sluggish imagination," and his "boxloads of books and neuroses." From this point, *Focus* struggles bravely, and perhaps blindly, on.

"The no-frills poetry of Donald Lev goes right to the heart of what poetry is. Young poets think they have to "find a voice," but Lev knows that each of us already has one. He reaffirms that everything is a subject for poetry. He does not presume to teach us anything in these poems. He does something more profound—he questions. His riddles remain riddles, and represent the mysteries of unresolved everyday conundrums. Lev is an explorer of the human heart, caught between micro and macrocosm, suspending his thin lines between humor and despair, youthful memories and the realities of old age. Above all, a deeply human text."

—Eric Greinke

"These excellent, in good part autobiographic poems, are divided into four parts. They're often witty, and often wise, enlivened for the reader by Donald Lev's humor and good will. Spiced with interesting asides and inside moments, *Focus* is well worth your valuable time.

—Ed Sanders

Donald Lev was born in New York City in 1936. He attended Hunter College, worked in the wire rooms of the *Daily News* and *New York Times*, and then drove a taxi cab for 20 years (with a 6-year hiatus in which he ran messages for, and contributed poetry to, *The Village Voice* and operated the Home Planet Bookshop on the Lower East Side). His earliest poems appeared in print in 1958 and he started his first small press magazine, *HYN Anthology*, in 1969. Among his honors have been a Madeline Sadin Award from *New York Quarterly* in 1973 and a Life Time Achievement Award from the Catskill Reading Society/Outloudbooks in 2003. He was Distinguished Visiting Poet for the Northeast Poetry Center in Sugar Loaf, NY in July of 2012. In 2008 Outloudbooks brought out his *The Darkness Above: Selected Poems 1968-2002* a sampling from the first four decades of his writing. A chapbook, *Only Wings: 20 Poems of Devotion* was published in 2010 by Presa Press in Michigan, and a new collection, *A Very Funny Fellow*, was brought out by NYQ Books in February, 2012. His most recent book, *Where I Sit*, was published by Presa Press in 2015. His brief underground film-acting career pinnacled with his portrayal (he wrote his own lines) of "The Poet" in Robert Downey Sr.'s 1969 classic *Putney Swope*. He lives in High Falls, NY, where he publishes the literary tabloid *Home Planet News*, which he and his late wife Enid Dame founded in 1979.

NYQ Books™ was established in 2009 as an imprint of The New York Quarterly Foundation, Inc. Its mission is to augment the *New York Quarterly* poetry magazine by providing an additional venue for poets who are already published in the magazine.

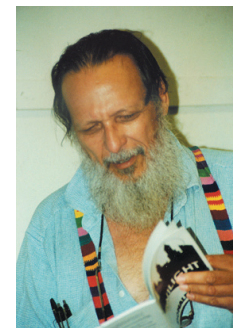


photo by Eldad Benary