

Press Release

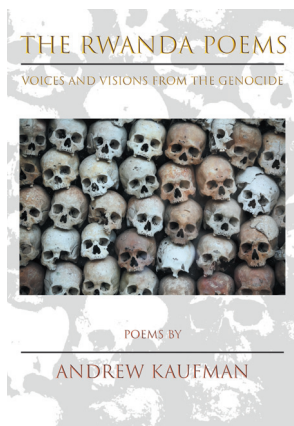
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NYQ Books™ Announces the Publication of ***The Rwanda Poems: Voices and Visions from the Genocide*** **by Andrew Kaufman**



March 10, 2023 - Beacon, NY - NYQ Books™ is proud to announce the publication of *The Rwanda Poems: Voices and Visions from the Genocide*, by Andrew Kaufman. The only book of poems to date devoted to the Rwanda genocide and published in this country, this is a work of nonfictional poetry, a cousin in genre to the nonfictional novel. It is based not only on the poet's observations and encounters during months spent in post-genocide Rwanda, but on his numerous extensive interviews with survivors, all of whom lost most if not all of their families, and with convicted genocide perpetrators, conducted in prisons. The result is a startling book of poems that by turns is unthinkableably horrifying, heartbreaking, and enraging, yet which at times breaks unexpectedly into stunning revelatory moments of grace.

Collectively, *The Rwanda Poems* achieve transcendence, they gather to a greatness, thanks to those survivors and perpetrators willing to speak and to Kaufman's technical skill, his distinctive ear for cadence, and unerring eye for the right image. Individual poems formed along the perpetrator / survivors axis deliver not just the killers' depravity but the survivors' resilience and humanity. Kaufman has woven the disparate elements seamlessly together. *The Rwanda Poems* add to our awareness of what living through genocide and sex slavery feels like on both intellectual and visceral levels. In a world that would rather forget, Kaufman's masterful achievement is a testament to remembering.

Stephanie Dickinson, author of *Blue Swan Black Swan* and *Razor Wire Wilderness*

I don't know why Andrew Kaufman found it necessary to immerse himself in the horrors of the Rwandan Genocide. It's like agreeing to visit hell. But once there, the poet/traveler who speaks these poems does not become a tourist. Instead, and as he's shown in earlier collections, the poet has mastered the uncanny ability to become part of the literal and emotional fabric of the place he visits and inhabits. This is more than a selection of random poems written over time and gathered into a collection. It exists, functions, and reads as a book, with a beginning, middle, and ending. Or rather several endings. I am moved by the depth of these sentiments, and excited by the poetry that emerges from them.

Bruce Weigl, author of *Among Elms in Ambush*, BOA Editions

There will never be enough newspapers, cable news outlets, social media posts, or serious journals able to depict or describe for us the depths to which pleading screams, and a violated innocence reached during such an awful period in Rwanda's history. Even those who survived can barely speak for having either lost their minds, their tongues, their voices, their hands, an arm, a leg, or eventually their lives. Who's to speak up about these horrifying images must be someone intimate with its aspects, must have gone there, listened to their assaulted lives, their appalling stories. In these poems, Kaufman has gathered this profound suffering together with all of this incredibly malignant force's methodology and purposefully created out of it an equation to which every culture on Earth might very well pay close attention.

Paul B. Roth, editor, The Bitter Oleander Press

Andrew Kaufman's books of poetry include *The Cinnamon Bay Sonnets*, winner of the Center for Book Arts Book Award, *Earth's Ends*, winner of the Pearl Poetry Book Award, *Both Sides of the Niger* (Spuyten Duyvil Press), and the *Complete Cinnamon Bay Sonnets* (Rain Mountain Press). An NEA recipient, he has traveled widely in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America and has taught literature and writing at a number of colleges and universities. He lives in New York City.

NYQ Books™ was established in 2009 as an imprint of The New York Quarterly Foundation.

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