



I Am a Face Sympathizing with Your Grief: Seven Younger Iranian Poets

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Poetry. Middle Eastern Studies. Translated from the Farsi by Alireza Taheri Araghi. In order to shine some light on contemporary Iranian poetry unknown to Anglophone readers, I AM A FACE SYMPATHIZING WITH YOUR GRIEF brings together works by seven emerging poets: Arash Allahverdi, Sodéh Negintaj, Babak Khoshjan, Ali Karbasi, Mahnaz Yousefi, Shahram Shahidi, and Ahoora Goudarzi. Their poems teem with a rich array of imagery, themes, and allusions—from the Vietnam War to the Iranian Revolution, from the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur to the Iran-Iraq war, and even Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* movies. With poems simultaneously personal, historical, and immediate, the seven poets in this collection reveal a vastly different Iran than those titans of traditional Persian literature, Rumi and Khayyám. Although these Iranian poets might be considered relatively unknown, their works, edited and translated from the Farsi by Alireza Taheri Araghi, are a testament to the compelling poetry worldwide being written outside the spotlight.

"Like a shot of fresh blood in the brain. Armed with a hacksaw not just to the language but the the logic behind it. Alive in all the way most US writing now is not. Horny and insane and hilarious and fervent, to the teeth. A fertile ground from which something not already-known can feed. Thank god and fuck yes."—Blake Butler

"This radiant anthology is the anti-drone, prodigious and full of personality, rage, lust, humor, outsize claims and devastations. The young poets collected here write with brio, ambition, and an almost astronomical self-possession, recalling those great youngsters who invent what it means to be absolutely modern, from Rimbaud to Cendrars to MIA. Alireza Taheri Araghi has excellent instincts as both editor and translator; this madcap chorus comes through loud and clear, fresh, pliant, and dazzling. Reading the work of so many young hands, I feel I might finally want to live forever, again."—Joyelle McSweeney

"In the vertiginous analogic reality of these poems (which are readable as hell) I hear something like this: 'Look at the surreally horrible things I am able to say are happening to me, that I am able to say are happening to my mother and father and sister and brother and lover. I am able to say that this unreal cruel reality is happening and I am going to keep on saying it as I look you in the eye.' There is resistant power in the way these poems comically beautifully bedraggledly boldly _continue_. Often long, often anaphoric, they crystallize violence in a moving stream. These young Iranian poets (young giants) are pervy, droll, and dangerously sane."—Catherine Wagner

"If there is hope for American poetry to transcend its embedment in empire, it might be via dialog with collections like this one. There is blood coming since our slab of rock ripped apart their waterfall. And events like this don't pass without marking and being marked by poems. Poems that are embodied, complex, and energetic."—Maged Zaher

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