



Copia (American Poets Continuum Series)

Erika Meitner

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"The poems in *Copia* are about what is and what is almost-gone, what is in limbo and what won't give way, what is almost at rock bottom but still and always brimming with the possibility of miracle."—Rachel Zucker

Erika Meitner's fourth book takes cues from the Land Artists of the 1960s who created work based on landscapes of urban peripheries and structures in various states of disintegration. The collection also includes a section of documentary poems about Detroit that were commissioned for *Virginia Quarterly Review*.

*Because it is an uninhabited place, because it
makes me hollow, I pried open the pages of
Detroit: the houses blanked out, factories
absorbed back into ghetto palms and scrub-
oak, piles of tires, heaps of cement block.
Vines knock and enter through shattered
drop-ceilings, glassless windows. Ragwort
cracks the street's asphalt to unsolvable
puzzles.*

Meitner also probes the hulking ruins of office buildings, tract housing, superstores, construction sites, and freeways, and doesn't shy from the interactions that occur in Walmart and supermarket parking lots.

*It is nearly Halloween, which means
wrong sizes on Wal-Mart racks, variety bags of
pumpkins extinguishing themselves on the stoop*

*children from the trailer park trawling our identical lawns soon
so we can give away nickels, light, sandpaper, raisins, cement.*

Erika Meitner was a 2009 National Poetry Series winner. Her work has appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Tin House*, *The Best American Poetry 2011*, *Kenyon Review*, and elsewhere. She is associate professor of English at Virginia Tech.

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