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## The Third of May

*Painting by Goya*

Blood on hills red  
with poppies. When you try praying,  
crows pluck up your words,  
fly off. At night, mamelukes,  
men with families back home,  
crack guns over faces. Your arms  
rise above your head. Flesh  
must sink to bullet level. The shooters  
don't stop—it's necessary

to make sure. Behind you,  
a city doesn't shake or fall. Buildings  
look as they did yesterday.  
So much the same but smells

unbearable. Soldiers have  
more work to do.

— from *Loplop in a Red City*

### ADVANCE PRAISE FOR LOPLOP IN A RED CITY

These wonderful poems go way beyond mere ekphrasis. They're little masterpieces in their own right, bursting with exuberant life from the page and into our memories without our having to know anything about the paintings that inspired them. Indeed, change the titles and we'd still have gorgeous works of literary art. — Robert Cooperman, author of *In the Colorado Gold Fever Mountains*, winner of the Colorado Book Award for Poetry

"It was like seeing twice," Cézanne wrote, about the act of painting. Kenneth Pobo's *Lop Lop in a Red City*, offers us a taste of super powers: his poems present lyrical, verbal play, and we also gain new insight into art, art history, and the painters who created the great works. My own particular favorites are the witty poems about Odilon Redon. Ask me tomorrow, and I may go with Van Gogh. Luckily, we don't have to choose. Pobo's poems will provide artistic companionship in the days and years ahead. — Marilyn Kallet, author of 17 books, including *The Love That Moves Me*

Ken Pobo's *Loplop in a Red City* is a breathless whirl of art history that compels us to pause in front of paintings through the lenses of individual poems. There are brilliant daubs of color here, moments where lyrical poems respond to art. Perhaps the concerns of painters are similar to those of poets: who am I, and what has this creative journey meant?

— Patricia Clark, Professor and Poet in Residence at Grand Valley State University, author of *My Father on a Bicycle* and *The Canopy*

### DESCRIPTION

The poems in Kenneth Pobo's *Loplop in a Red City* spring from artworks old and new, figurative to abstract, Vincent Van Gogh to Leonora Carrington to Max Ernst. Like those works, the poems in *Loplop* are agonized and idyllic, uneasily at home in the surreal, animated, beautiful, and complex.

### AUDIENCE

Poetry readers, art lovers; educators in writing, art, art history and interdisciplinary courses

### ABOUT KENNETH POBO

Kenneth Pobo's work has appeared in *Hawaii Review*, *The Fiddlehead*, *Mudfish*, *Indiana Review*, *Madison Review*, *Caesura*, *Eclectica* and more. He is author of over 20 poetry collections and chapbooks, including his collection *Bend of Quiet*, which won the 2014 Blue Light Press Book Award. He teaches creative writing at Widener University in Pennsylvania.