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## WASTELAND HONEY: Poems I Robert Clinton

WASTELAND HONEY: POEMS offers to us the living and dying world with which we contend—or to which we surrender. Robert Clinton’s arresting and eccentric metaphors linger, with the burning touch of a thistle.

### PRAISE

Delicious paradoxes are the very texture of Robert Clinton’s refreshing and consistently surprising WASTELAND HONEY, just as paradox and self-contradiction are all too often the texture of our oxymoronic lives. Like his “venomous anemones,” Clinton’s poems stimulate our taste buds while they unfailingly—even ruthlessly—keep our minds and hearts both off balance and alert. —Lloyd Schwartz, *Who’s on First?* (Pulitzer Prize in Criticism)

Robert Frost wrote, “If it’s a wild tune, it’s a poem.” Robert Clinton’s WASTELAND HONEY is loaded with wild tunes. When they are sung in the service of an immediately recognizable subject they knock your socks off, and when they’re ambiguous they stir your curiosity. — Michael Ryan (Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize), *New and Selected Poems*

With grateful nods to his biblical rhythms and fables, we enter Robert Clinton’s new collection. The speaker is in keen touch with the outdoors, both its hardships and its balm. Schopenhauer wrote, “The fullness of meaning and significance in music’s language is revealed in its repetition signs... for to comprehend music fully, we must hear it twice.” WASTELAND HONEY is well worthy of repeated readings. — Sarah Gorham, *Alpine Apprentice and Study in Perfect*

The combination of heart-on-sleeve humanity with linguistic happiness offers the full range of poetic pleasures. Robert Clinton’s poems take chances and get away with it. They are the work of a thoroughly sophisticated and original mind. — Linda Bamber, *Metropolitan Tang: Poems; Taking What I Like: Stories; and Tragic Women, Comic Men: A Feminist Analysis of Shakespeare’s Plays*

Clinton is a no-nonsense poet; his intentions are serious and deeply felt. Loosen the girle of your expectations and give yourself over to the lush sound/sense of WASTELAND HONEY’s magical world. You won’t be disappointed you did. — Mark Pawlak, *My Deniversity: Knowing Denise Levertov*; editor *Hanging Loose*

In WASTELAND HONEY’s startling and powerful poems, magical women, talking flowers, and other surreal images mingle with all-too-real signs of a world gone askew. Extinctions have happened, are happening, will happen, and “every life is a loss to come.” But in tonal tension with the wasteland of this excellent book’s title is the honey. Sweet is the hope that sees a creek where barbed wire runs, sweet the language that makes familiar things glow amid the wreckage. — Pamela Alexander, *Slow Fire*

### ABOUT ROBERT CLINTON

Robert Clinton, born and raised in upstate New York, has an MFA in creative writing from Goddard College, and has twice been a Fellow at the MacDowell Colony. His poetry collection *Taking Eden* was published by Sarabande Books, and his poems have appeared in *Wisconsin Review*, *Decomp*, *Antioch Review*, *Stand*, *Plume* and *The Atlantic*, among other journals.