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NOTHING BUT LIGHT: Poems I Krista J.H. Leahy & Barbara Schwartz

Nothing But Light explores the sacred feminine through the poets' shared visits to places and people of spiritual revelation—a mosque, a temple, a shaman, a tree. Its poems form a guidebook to expansive and numinous spaces of body and spirit.

PRAISE

I admire this collaborative collection for its intensity, its formal rigor, and for the many worlds it reveals as it negotiates the space between language, the body, and the divine. Here is a poetry that does not stand still as it powers its way through the propulsive rhythms of time. — Daniel Borzutzky, *The Performance of Becoming Human* (National Book Award)

I'm compelled by the vulnerability of these collaborative poems, how they powerfully articulate bodily experiences: the erotic, childbirth, a cancer diagnosis, chemo, miscarriage: "My blood has dried out / I write with air." The poets pay unusual attention to the divine, writing poems that are a form of prayer (sometimes irreverent), as they invoke and invent a pantheon of female deities, drawing from Judeo-Christian and world mythology. **Ruminating on mortality, they memorably ask, "What matters the temporary / Habit of skin and bones?"** — Rachel Galvin, *Elevated Threat Level*, (finalist National Poetry Series, Alice James Books' Kinereth Gensler Award)

This book is a song: a rolling, rollicking dialogue with emerging selves as they take their place among a textured female lineage, confirming a "world-blown pregnancy." **In poems that move from the ecological to the erotic, *Nothing But Light* re-wilds the feminine, invoking the divine while grounding the reader firmly in the work of the body:** "what if goddess is the in. The way through. // Relationship itself." As the book builds a kind of generative path towards grace, where mythic ancestors (Gaia) converse with modern counterparts (Virginia Woolf), what's exposed are deeply moving meditations—on cancer survival, on motherhood and the return of the prodigal daughter, on the regenerative properties of joy—guiding the reader to profound and unexpected places. — Joe Pan, *Operating Systems*

In Krista J.H. Leahy and Barbara Schwartz's *Nothing But Light*, the Feminine Divine has been brought out from under the dustcover of myth and wrenched into vibrant life. These poems celebrate pleasure, creation, collaboration, a span of traditions, the life cycle entire. Wisdom holds hands with humor and with darkness here: the book is sure to awaken its readers, devout or doubting, with its multiple voices, its shimmering images, its profound explorations. — Kathleen Ossip, *July*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Barbara Schwartz is the author of the chapbook *Any Thriving Root* (dancing girl press, 2017). A finalist for the [JOURNAL] 1913 Poetry Prize, her hybrid poetry manuscript *What Survives Is the Fire* is a Boomerang Theater's First Flight New Play Festival selection, its debut performance at Congregation Beth Elohim in 2023. Her poems have appeared in *Denver Quarterly*, *Upstreet*, *Nimrod International Journal of Prose and Poetry*, *Carolina Quarterly*, *Quiddity*, *Tinderbox Poetry Journal*, and elsewhere. Barbara is an education consultant and lives with her family in Brooklyn, NY.

Krista J.H. Leahy's poetry has appeared in *The Common* (Dispatches), *Free Lunch*, *Raritan*, *Reckoning*, *Tin House*, and elsewhere. Her prose has appeared in *Clarkesworld*, *Farrago's Wainscot*, *Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*, *Year's Best Science Fiction and Fantasy* and elsewhere. She lives in Brooklyn, NY, with her family.