

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the ARTS



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DEAF REPUBLIC



POEMS

Ilya Kaminsky



NEA Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the ARTS



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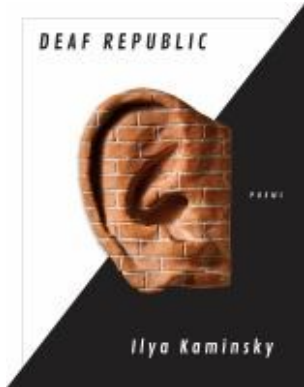
The National Endowment for the Arts Big Read—a partnership with Arts Midwest—broadens our understanding of our world, our neighbors, and ourselves through the power of a shared reading experience. Showcasing a diverse range of themes, voices, and perspectives, the NEA Big Read aims to inspire meaningful conversations, artistic responses, and new discoveries and connections in each community.

This spring, from April 1-30, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at RIT, in partnership with the Monroe County Library System, will host a series of events centered on the Big Read: Ilya Kaminsky's *Deaf Republic*.

Deaf Republic takes place in an unspecified time of political unrest in an occupied territory. The story unfolds in episodic poems, opening with the shooting of a young deaf boy at a protest. In response, the entire town adopts deafness as a strategy of resistance. The poems explore how language enables resistance to power and how the lives of the townspeople are scarred by political violence. Ilya Kaminsky, the author, is a hard-of-hearing Ukraine immigrant who grew up in Rochester.

The following pages include lists of resources related to the scope of *Deaf Republic* and are available to patrons within the libraries of the MCLS.

Deaf Republic and Similar Reads



[Deaf Republic by Ilya Kaminsky \(2019\)](#)

Deaf Republic opens in an occupied country in a time of political unrest. When soldiers breaking up a protest kill a deaf boy, the gunshot becomes the last thing the citizens hear--they all have gone deaf, and their dissent becomes coordinated by sign language.



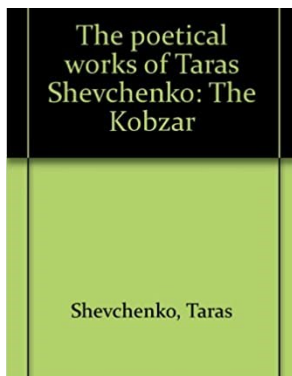
[Dancing in Odessa by Ilya Kaminsky \(2004\)](#)

Surreal enough to be true, these poems waltz through encounters within families and without. The people depicted are in equal measure brutal and tender, in narratives that are strangely innocent, compelling and convincing.



[Beauty is a Verb: the New Poetry of Disability \(2011\)](#)

A ground-breaking anthology that will bring fresh understanding to the American experience of poetry, beauty, the body, and disability. *Beauty is a Verb* is the first of its kind: a high-quality anthology of poetry by American poets with physical disabilities. Poems and essays alike consider how poetry, coupled with the experience of disability, speaks to the poetics of each poet included.



[Poetical Works by Taras Shevchenko \(1964\)](#)

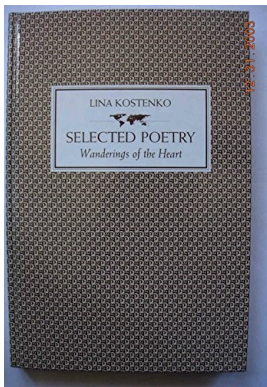
Taras Shevchenko was a prominent Ukrainian poet, writer, artist, public and political figure, as well as folklorist and ethnographer. His literary heritage is regarded to be the foundation of modern Ukrainian literature. Shevchenko is also known for many masterpieces as a painter and an illustrator.

Ukrainian Poetry



[Mesopotamia by Serhiy Zhadan \(2018\)](#)

A unique work of fiction from the troubled streets of Ukraine, giving invaluable testimony to the new history unfolding in the nation's post-independence years .



[Wanderings of the Heart by Lina Kostenko \(1990\)](#)

Lina Kostenko graduated with distinction from the Maxim Gorky Literature Institute in Moscow in 1956, and published three collections of poetry. These books became immensely popular among her Ukrainian readers, however they also forced her into publication silence as she was unwilling to submit to Soviet authorities.



[Master's Jest by Ivan Franko \(1964\)](#)

At an early age, Franko began composing poetry and plays. In 1875 he entered the university in Lemberg, where he became a socialist and contributed to political and literary journals and to populist newspapers. In his later years he grew critical of Marxist socialism and supported Ukrainian nationalism.



[The White Chalk of Days by Mark Andryczyk \(2018\)](#)

This anthology presents translations of literary works by Ukraine's leading writers that imaginatively engage pivotal issues in today's Ukraine and express its tribulations and jublations. It offers English-language readers a wide array of the most beguiling literature written in Ukraine in the past fifty years.



[Words For War: New Poems from Ukraine \(2017\)](#)

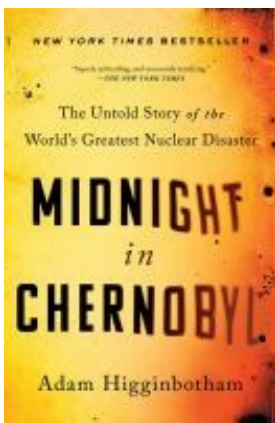
The poems collected in this volume engage with the events and experiences of war, reflecting on the themes of alienation, loss, dislocation, and disability; as well as justice, heroism, courage, resilience, generosity, and forgiveness. The anthology brings together some of the most compelling poetic voices from different regions of Ukraine.

Nonfiction by or About Ukrainians and Ukraine



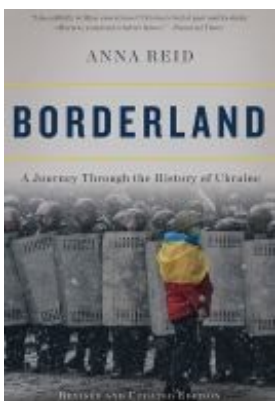
[Red Famine by Anne Applebaum \(2017\)](#)

Author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Gulag* and the National Book Award finalist *Iron Curtain*, Applebaum provides evidence that the terrible famine following Stalin's 1929 agricultural collectivization was not the result of cruelly misguided policy but deliberately engineered to punish rebellious Ukrainian peasants.



[Midnight in Chernobyl by Adam Higginbotham \(2019\)](#)

The April 25th, 1986 disaster in Chernobyl was a turning point in world history. It not only changed our perception of nuclear power and the science that spawned it, but also our understanding of the planet's delicate ecology.



[Borderland by Anna Reid \(2015\)](#)

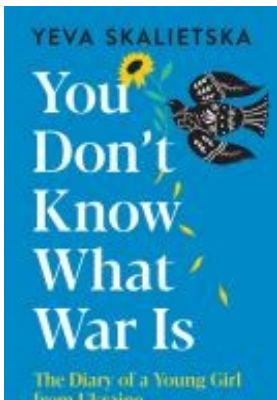
In this finely written and penetrating book, Anna Reid combines research and her own experiences to chart Ukraine's tragic past. Talking to peasants and politicians, rabbis and racketeers, dissidents and paramilitaries, survivors of Stalin's famine and of Nazi labor camps, she reveals the layers of myth and propaganda that wrap this divided land.

Nonfiction by or About Ukrainians and Ukraine



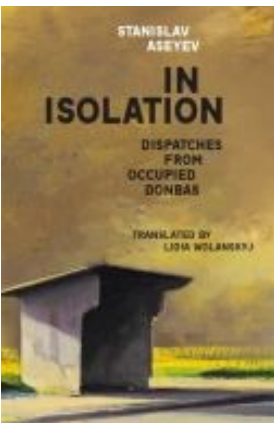
[Ukraine: What Everyone Needs to Know by Serhy Yekelchik \(2020\)](#)

This volume is an update of Yekelchik's *The Conflict in Ukraine*. It addresses relations with the West from the perspective of Ukrainians. It also explains how independent Ukraine fell victim to crony capitalism, how its people rebelled twice in the last two decades in the name of democracy and against corruption, and why Russia reacted so aggressively to the strivings of Ukrainians.



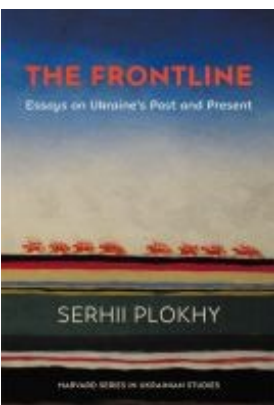
[You Don't Know What War Is by Yeva Skalietska \(2022\)](#)

Yeva Skalietska's story begins on her twelfth birthday in Kharkiv, where she has been living with her grandmother since she was a baby. Ten days later, the only life she'd ever known was shattered. On February 24, 2022, her city was suddenly under attack as Russia launched its horrifying invasion of Ukraine. Yeva and her grandmother ran to a basement bunker, where she began writing this diary.



[In Isolation: Dispatches from Occupied Donbas by Stanislav Aseyev \(2022\)](#)

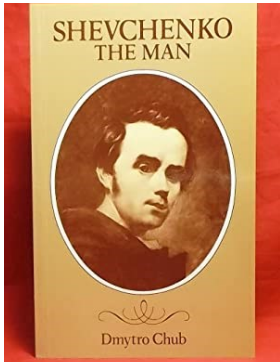
In this collection of dispatches, Stanislav Aseyev attempts to understand the reasons behind the success of Russian propaganda among the residents of the industrial region of Donbas. For the first time, an inside account shows the toll on real human lives and civic freedoms that citizens continue to suffer in Russia's hybrid war on its territory.



[The Frontline: Essays on Ukraine's Past and Present \(2021\)](#)

The Frontline collects essays in a companion volume to Plokhy's *The Gates of Europe and Chernobyl*. The essays present further analysis of key events in Ukrainian history, including Ukraine's relations with Russia and the West, the Holodomor and World War II, the impact of Chernobyl, and Ukraine's contribution to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Nonfiction by or About Ukrainians and Ukraine



[Shevchenko, the Man by Dmytro Chub \(1985\)](#)

Few poets have shaped the cultural destiny of their country more profoundly than Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) shaped that of Ukraine. His magically persuasive poetry taught his contemporaries to perceive and despise the injustice suffered by people and nations in the empire of the tsars.



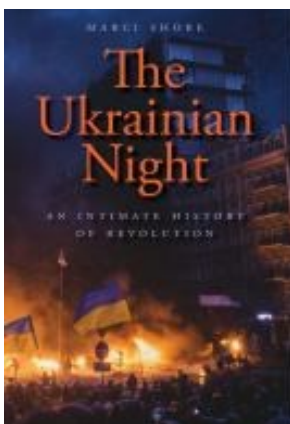
[Lesya Ukrainka by Konstany Bida \(1968\)](#)

The Ukrainian national poetess Lesya Ukrainka (1871-1913) has contributed greatly to the development of Ukrainian Modernism and its transition from Ukrainian ethnographic themes to subjects that were universal, historical and psychological.



[Invasion: The Inside Story of Russia's Bloody War and Ukraine's Fight for Survival by Luke Harding \(2022\)](#)

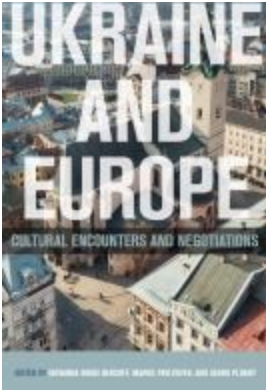
In a breathtaking narrative of what is likely to be a turning point for Europe--and the world--bestselling author Luke Harding reports firsthand on the invasion of Ukraine as senseless violence was met with astounding resilience--from, among others, the country's embattled president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy--and the courage of a people prepared to risk everything to preserve their nation's freedom.



[The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution by Marci Shore \(2017\)](#)

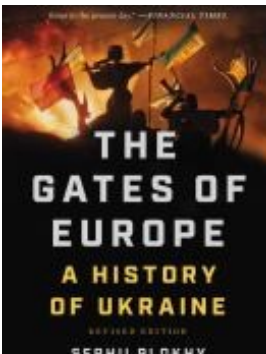
What is worth dying for? While the world watched the uprising on the Maidan as an episode in geopolitics, those in Ukraine during the extraordinary winter of 2013-14 lived the revolution as an existential transformation: The blurring of night and day, the loss of a sense of time, the sudden disappearance of fear, the imperative to make choices. In this lyrical book, Marci Shore evokes the human face of the Ukrainian Revolution.

Nonfiction by or About Ukrainians and Ukraine



[Ukraine and Europe: Cultural Encounters and Negotiations \(2017\)](#)

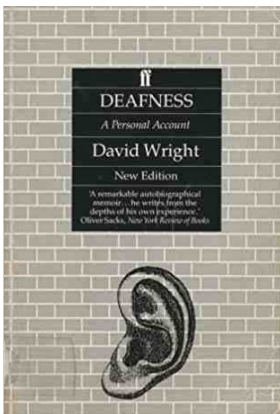
Ukraine and Europe challenges the popular perception of Ukraine as a country torn between Europe and the east. Twenty-two scholars from Europe, North America, and Australia explore the complexities of Ukraine's relationship with Europe and its role in the continent's historical and cultural development.



[The Gates of Europe by Serhii Plokhy \(2021, updated\)](#)

As Ukraine is embroiled in an ongoing struggle with Russia to preserve its territorial integrity and political independence, celebrated historian Serhii Plokhy explains that today's crisis is a case of history repeating itself: the Ukrainian conflict is only the latest in a long history of turmoil over Ukraine's sovereignty.

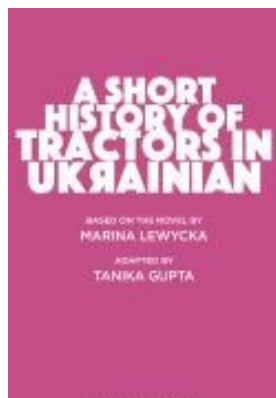
Nonfiction by Deaf Authors



[Deafness by David Wright \(2019\)](#)

This is an account of David Wright's early education at a school for the deaf, and subsequent university career at Oxford, where he was a contemporary of Sidney Keyes, Keith Douglas, John Heath-Stubbs and Dom Mintoff. The second part traces the history of deaf education from its beginnings in the 16th century, and ends with an outline of recent developments, such as the Mary Hare Grammar School for the Deaf and the Audiology Research Unit at Reading.

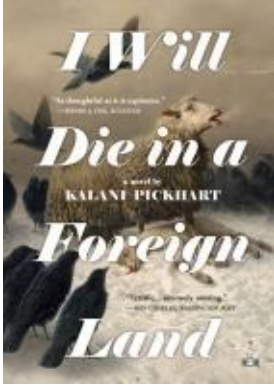
Ukrainian Plays



[A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian by Tanika Gupta \(2017\)](#)

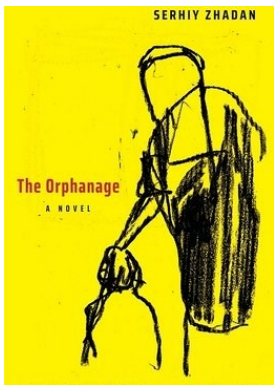
Nikolai, an 86-year-old retired Ukrainian engineer and tractor historian in Peterborough, has fallen in love with 36-year-old Valentina. His daughters, Vera and Nadezhda, unite in horror to defend their father and what remains of his pension. But is Valentina a refugee searching for better opportunities, or a bogus visa seeker trying to cheat a vulnerable old man?

Fiction by Ukrainian Authors



[I Will Die in a Foreign Land by Kalani Pickhart \(2021\)](#)

While unfolding an especially moving story of quiet beauty and love in a time of terror, *I Will Die in a Foreign Land* is an ambitious, intimate, and haunting portrait of human perseverance and empathy.



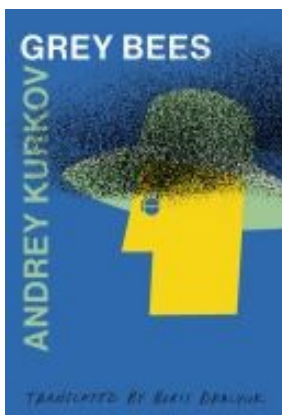
[The Orphanage by Serhiy Zhadan \(2021\)](#)

A searing novel that excavates the human collateral damage wrought by the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine.



[The Museum of Abandoned Secrets by Oksana Zabuzhko \(2012\)](#)

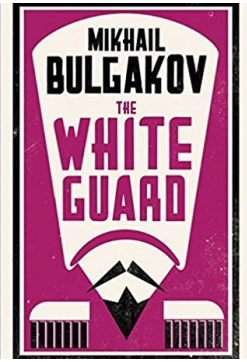
Spanning sixty tumultuous years of Ukrainian history, this multigenerational saga weaves a dramatic and intricate web of love, sex, friendship, and death. At its center: three women linked by the abandoned secrets of the past--secrets that refuse to remain hidden.



[Grey Bees by Andrey Kurkov \(2022\)](#)

With a warm yet political humor, Ukraine's most famous novelist presents a balanced and illuminating portrait of modern conflict. Little Starhorodivka, a village of three streets, lies in Ukraine's Grey Zone, the no-man's-land between loyalist and separatist forces. Thanks to the lukewarm war of sporadic violence and constant propaganda that has been dragging on for years, only two residents remain: retired safety inspector turned beekeeper Sergey Sergeych and Pashka, a rival from his schooldays.

Fiction by



[The White Guard by Mikhail Bulgakov \(2021\)](#)

Set in the Ukrainian capital of Kiev during the chaotic winter of 1918-19, Bulgakov's first full-length novel tells the story of a Russian-speaking family trapped in circumstances that threaten to destroy them. As in *War and Peace*, the narrative centers on the stark contrast between the cosy domesticity of family life on the one hand, and wide-ranging and destructive historical events on the other.



[Lucky Breaks by Yevgenia Belorusets \(2022\)](#)

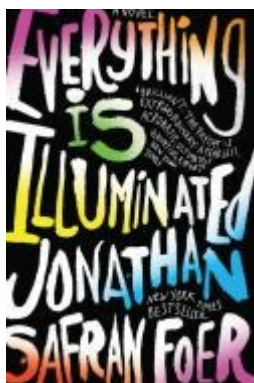
Out of the impoverished coal regions of Ukraine known as the Donbass, where Russian secret military intervention coexists with banditry and insurgency, the women of Yevgenia Belorusets's captivating collection of stories emerge from the ruins of a war, still being waged on and off, ever since the 2014 Revolution of Dignity.



[Death and the Penguin by Andrey Kurkov \(2001\)](#)

Victor is depressed: his lover has dumped him, his short stories are too short, and the light has gone off in his dingy apartment. His only companion is Misha, the penguin he rescued from Kiev's Zoo, when it couldn't feed the animals anymore. Misha is the silent witness to Victor's despair, and joins in his celebration—fish and vodka—when Victor's luck seems to turn: he is commissioned to write obituaries. The weird thing is that the editor wants him to select subjects who are still alive, the movers and the shakers of the new, post-Communist society.

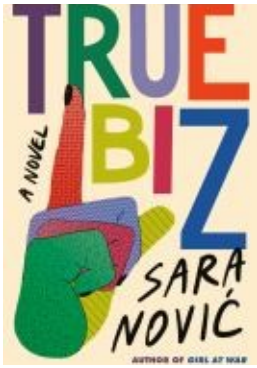
Fiction About Ukraine



[Everything is Illuminated by Jonathan Safran Foer \(2002\)](#)

With only a yellowing photograph in hand, a young man—also named Jonathan Safran Foer—sets out to find the woman who might or might not have saved his grandfather from the Nazis. Accompanied by an old man haunted by memories of the war, an amorous dog named Sammy Davis, Junior, Junior, and the unforgettable Alex, a young Ukrainian translator who speaks in a sublimely butchered English, Jonathan is led on a quixotic journey over a devastated landscape and into an unexpected past.

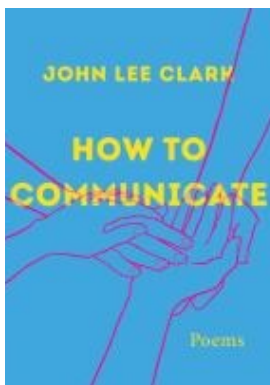
Fiction by Deaf Authors



[True Biz by Sara Novic \(2021\)](#)

True biz? The students at the River Valley School for the Deaf just want to hook up, pass their history final, and have doctors, politicians, and their parents stop telling them what to do with their bodies. Absorbing and assured, idiosyncratic and relatable, this is an unforgettable journey into the Deaf community and a universal celebration of human connection .

Poetry by Deaf



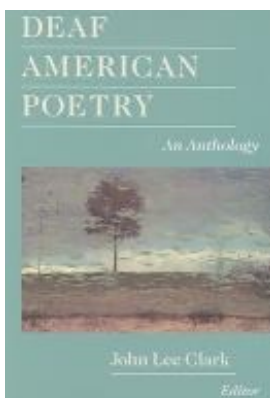
[How to Communicate by John Lee Clark \(2022\)](#)

A stunning debut that "brims with the talent and generosity of a living classic" (Ilya Kaminsky), from an award-winning DeafBlind poet. Formally restless and relentlessly instructive, *How to Communicate* is a dynamic journey through language, community, and the unfolding of an identity. Clark pivots from forms inspired by the braille slate to sensuous prose poems to pathbreaking translations from ASL and Protactile, a language built on touch.



[Deaf Lit Extravaganza by John Lee Clark \(editor\) \(2013\)](#)

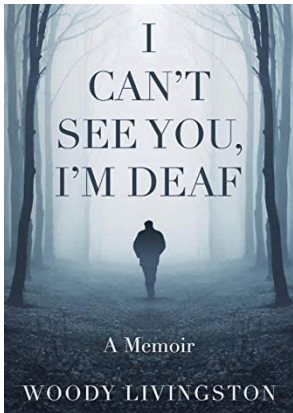
This celebration of short stories, poems, and essays gives us a glimpse into the Deaf signing community, something that literature by hearing authors featuring deaf characters has rarely done. Between these covers, a Deaf couple fights over their son's language use, an Australian woman joins the community as an adult, a Deaf woman's body is fished out a dumpster, and a British Deaf poet wants to keep "zombies"--hearing people--out.



[Deaf American Poetry, An Anthology \(2009\)](#)

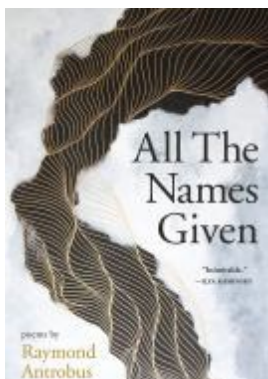
This anthology showcases for the first time the best works of Deaf poets throughout the nation's history, 95 poems by 35 masters from the early 19th century to modern times.

Poetry by Deaf Authors



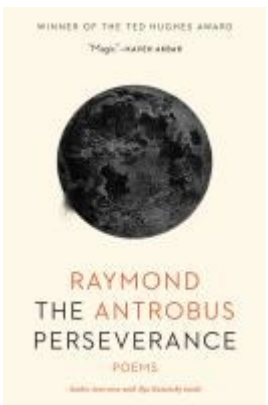
[I Can't See You, I'm Deaf by Woody Livingston \(2019\)](#)

Woody Livingston earned a college degree, had a short but successful stint as a prizefighter, traveled to Russia three times during the height of the Cold War, played hockey for charity with the Washington Capitals, and flew a small airplane...all while being completely deaf and going blind.



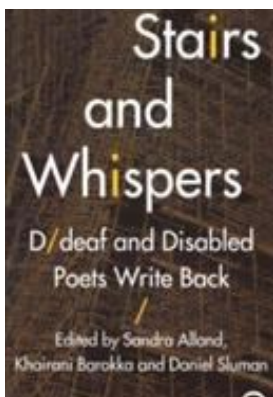
[All the Names Given by Raymond Antrobus \(2021\)](#)

On the heels of his much-lauded debut collection, Raymond Antrobus continues his essential investigation into language, miscommunication, place, and memory in *All The Names Given*, while simultaneously breaking new ground in both form and content. The collection opens with poems about the author's surname--one that shouldn't have survived into modernity--and examines the rich and fraught history carried within it.



[The Perseverance by Raymond Antrobus \(2021\)](#)

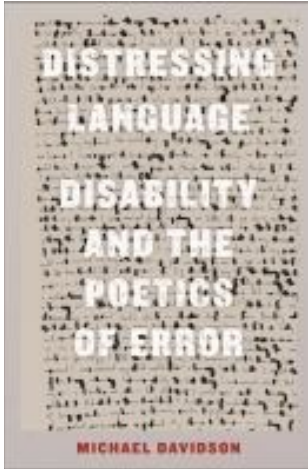
In this extraordinary debut collection, award-winning poet Raymond Antrobus interrogates anger, grief, illness, vulnerability, deafness, and race through a commanding engagement with language, tongues, listening, and sound. It's a book about communication and connection, about cultural inheritance, about identity in a hearing world that takes everything for granted, about the dangers we may find--both individually and as a society--if we fail to understand each other.



[Stairs and whispers: D/deaf and Disabled Poets Write Back \(2017\)](#)

A ground-breaking anthology examining UK disabled and D/deaf poets. Packed with fierce poetry, essays, photos and links to accessible online videos and audio recordings, it showcases a diversity of opinions and survival strategies for an ableist world. With contributions that span Vispo to Surrealism, and range from hard-hitting political commentary to intimate lyrical pieces, these poets refuse to perform or inspire according to tired old narratives.

Poetry by Deaf Authors



[Distressing Language: Disability and the Poetics of Error](#) by Michael Davidson (2022)

Distressing Language is full of mistakes--errors of hearing, speaking, writing, and understanding. Michael Davidson engages the role of disability and deafness in contemporary aesthetics, exploring how physical and intellectual differences challenge our understanding of art and poetry.

Poetry Anthology Edited by Ilya Kaminsky



[The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry](#) edited by Ilya Kaminsky (2017)

In this remarkable anthology, introduced and edited by Ilya Kaminsky and Susan Harris, poetic visions from the twentieth century will be reinforced and in many ways revised. Here, alongside renowned masters, are internationally celebrated poets who have rarely, if ever, been translated into English.