

## Advance Endorsements of *Flourish*:

Of *Flourish*, National Book Award winner and MacArthur Fellow Terrance Hayes writes:

Dora Malech wields an elegant knife. A reader wowed by her brilliant imagery might overlook the terror in a line like, “Though his eyes are open, the dead man is not all that moved by the stars.” These poems examine the violence about us. Malech’s landscapes are full of “bloody lullabies,” “sweet asylum,” “lexical kaleidoscopes,” and sentences “bursting *at* as if all else / were seams, field sown to open, / reveling in its unraveling.” *Flourish* is dazzling.

Ilya Kaminsky, editor-in-chief of *Poetry International* and author of the prize-winning collection *Dancing in Odessa* and writes:

What a brilliant, absolutely brilliant, book. Page after page one finds lines one wants to write down: “My man does his crying on a fast horse.” Unsettling, new. I was startled, in a very different way, by this: “gray-green fireworks of epiphyte / which, despite my best neglect, still live.” Here is a book of poetry that isn’t afraid of danger. It is poetry that knows “how good it feels to play at this, / violence and darkness, / the beast that harbors something sweet.” It knows that music is sent “in your ear as in your war,” it knows that we are “warned as we [are] warned.” This poetry is unafraid to see us clearly, without any sentiment. To see, for example, that “this white sky’s an invitation / and requests the honor of your presence.” And to see, at the same time, that “though his eyes are open, the dead man is not / all that moved by stars.” In this time of war and injustice, what can one poet do? How can that one “pair of wings on fire” lift us out of our current, impossible, predicament? Open this book to find out. Find that there is, after all, what this poet calls this “pesky tenderness.” Open this book and see for yourself how “gratitude that one expends expands.” With these pages, you might start your day by “corkscrewing up to pour more sunlight,” to “celebrate / the act we make of the temporary fact of us.” This is real poetry, friends. But what *is* real poetry? I know I am reading that *good*—when I can’t stop quoting it. So don’t listen to me. Instead, open this book on any page – and you will learn how to go on “in a conspiracy / to sound.”

Rick Barot, poetry editor of *New England Review* and author of books that include PEN Open Book Award winner *Chord*, writes:

Announcing what's most at stake in its own title, *Flourish* is about the ardent encounters that irradiate a life into meaning. In poems about the textures of the world, the currents of thought and feeling within the self, and the intricate amplitude of language itself, Dora Malech is engaged in a project of enlargement steeped in granular attentiveness. As the title poem, with serious wit, proposes: "sweet alyssum, / sweet asylum." Dazzled and mournful often at the same time, Malech's poems keep asking, "you—will you attend?" And in their intensities—imaginative, emotional, ethical—these poems keep saying *yes*.

And Erika Meitner, director of the Creative Writing Program at Virginia Tech and author of four acclaimed books of poetry with a fifth forthcoming from BOA Editions, writes:

In Dora Malech's *Flourish* we encounter a speaker who brilliantly pinpoints the pulses and currents that undergird spaces, events, people, the political, the natural world, and the self. These poems believe deeply in the power of words as spells, prayers, songs, and talismans—and they interrogate the nature of language itself as the nexus of existence, torquing and bending signifiers and sounds until they radiate with insight. There is a danger, a fire, a smolder beneath these poems and their dazzling beauty and music—this is a book of awareness, of light and growth and small gestures—a book of resilience that lets us deep into the speaker's internal life, her contemplative strength and optimism.