

KORE PRESS

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Award-Winning Poems of Poverty, Grief & Sanctuary in California Cotton-Country



December 11, 2017: *Trailer Trash*, selected for the 2016 Kore Press First Book Award by Robin Coste Lewis, is Oakland poet July Westhale's first collection about the cotton-country of Riverside County, Southern California in the 1980s/90s. A book about poverty, ravaged landscape, and gender, *Trailer Trash* touches on a fuller, dustier California than Hollywood would have you believe.

Not only a work of class and struggle, this is also a book of triumph, beauty, and constructed worlds. An interface with grief and sanctuary in equal measure, these poems create a deeper understanding of origin stories. Never be ashamed of where you come from, they say, even when where you come from is broken, and dry, and made of tin.

Contest judge Robin Coste Lewis states that "Westhale refuses to look away from the true complexity of gender and poverty, or more specifically, what it actually means to grow up both poor and girl. One could argue that class is precisely what women within patriarchy write. What else could we write, century after century, when it took us so long to own property or even vote?"

July Westhale is a poet and essayist who works to reconcile the disparity between academia and the poor/working class, and engages in larger conversations about breaking down borders between the two. She teaches Creative Writing, works in reproductive health/patient advocacy, and writes expansively in several genres (YA, Creative Nonfiction, Journalism).



Author photo by Julia Sparenberg

Praise for *Trailer Trash*:

"An unpretentious, deeply psychological lyric. . .running back and forth between the poles of exquisite and horrifying with courageous agility."

—ROBIN COSTE LEWIS, AUTHOR OF *VOYAGE OF THE SABLE VENUS*

"An amazing grace of injury and its aftermath."

—BRIAN TEARE, AUTHOR OF *THE EMPTY FORM GOES ALL THE WAY TO HEAVEN*

"The heart of this book, perhaps surprisingly, is the tremendous love that transforms *something familiar but annihilating* into its opposite by the end."

—SHARON BRYAN, AUTHOR OF "SHARP STARS"

Trailer Trash by July Westhale

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The author will be on a reading tour (called the "Trash Tour") in cities across the US, Feb-May 2018. See details here:

<https://korepress.org/koreauthor/july-westhale/>