

# Contrapuntal - Christopher Kondrich

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CONTRAPUNTAL by Christopher Kondrich | Free Verse Editions, Series Editor: Jon Thompson | "An understanding of the nature of consciousness reveals itself to be more elusive the longer one tries to approach it. The closer we get, the more vivid the confusion is. And this is the case regarding not only our handle on consciousness, but also the one we have on identity and even on reality itself, both of which depend upon consciousness-and all three of which, ultimately, prove more malleable than we might care to admit. They can be, and are often, altered by pharmaceuticals, self-scrutiny, the influence of others, one's own force of will, illness, and even just through our constant interplay with what we call the world. In CONTRAPUNTAL, an enormously ambitious and masterful debut, CHRISTOPHER KONDRICH has shaped this material into a work of such inventiveness, wit, wisdom, bravura, tenderness and beauty, it leaves me in awe. Or rather, it brings me back to a level of awe I had forgotten I had access to, restoring to their original size my hopes for what a book of poetry might accomplish. I am inordinately grateful for this book." - TIMOTHY DONNELLY | "Before the book begins, the book begins, with contrapuntal movement: "So I take my hand, / and even though I know my hand, / I know I know it, / it feels like your hand." Throughout the remaining books of this book, a singular duality continues to play, and it is a play of the body, of hands-"I can feel the sounds / between my hands / as I clasp them to play." In this latter poem, toward the end of the collection, the play on "play" and "pray" is especially apt and emotionally wrought, and-caught up as it is with music, with playing of sounds into emotional sense-such play is both profound and continually delightful. This is a book that needs to be known." - BIN RAMKE | "Christopher Kondrich's CONTRAPUNTAL is an eerie world of dysymphony and desire, in which the actors have lost their way among objects and senses. Scraps of sound and thought float free, unmoored from belief, and suggest we find a way to bring weight back to the human world. This is a strangely comforting dystopia, pleasing to linger in, a place made of mood and novelistic smoke, the characters in it so clearly our own." - ELENi SIKELIANOS | CHRISTOPHER KONDRICH is a PhD candidate at the University of Denver and an editor for Denver Quarterly. His poetry has been published in American Letters & Commentary, Barrow Street, Boston Review, Cimarron Review, Free Verse, Meridian, Seneca Review, Verse Daily and

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