

The Hundred Grasses: Poems - Leila Wilson

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Wilson writes from the periphery of an open field in this extended investigation into longing and loss, love and doubt. As the poet muses, "we wonder / what we're not / in the field," and reading The Hundred Grasses, we are made to wonder as much about what exists within us as how we were shaped by what we lack. For Wilson, the act of looking can animate what is seemingly static. Stillness becomes not absence but fullness. These poems shape sounds culled from the empty spaces they inhabit, giving sense to life's silences. In the author's words: I am interested in locating my poems' subjects within the midst of open space and exploring the tensions that arise from this positioning. I am drawn to the struggle between foreground and background, as well as the foggy median (or prohibitive hedge) that serves to locate my subjects' thrust. My poems are rooted in the flatlands and lowlands: the Midwestern lawns, lakes, fields, and creeks of my childhood, and the Dutch farms, canals, and seascapes near my family's home in Holland. Much of my poetry focuses on those instances when a space exerts itself beyond recognition, when it seems to estrange itself so that it may be renegotiated. For me this is a process of embedding my examination in the musicality of language and paying close attention to the breath of a line.

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