



Scriptorium: Poems

Melissa Range

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A collection of poems exploring questions of religious and linguistic authority, from medieval England to contemporary Appalachia

A National Poetry Series winner, selected and with a foreword by Tracy K. Smith

The poems in *Scriptorium* are primarily concerned with questions of religious authority. The medieval scriptorium, the central image of the collection, stands for that authority but also for its subversion; it is both a place where religious ideas are codified in writing and a place where an individual scribe might, with a sly movement of the pen, express unorthodox religious thoughts and experiences. In addition to exploring the ways language is used, or abused, to claim religious authority, *Scriptorium* also addresses the authority of the vernacular in various time periods and places, particularly in the Appalachian slang of the author's East Tennessee upbringing. Throughout *Scriptorium*, the historical mingles with the personal: poems about medieval art, theology, and verse share space with poems that chronicle personal struggles with faith and doubt.

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