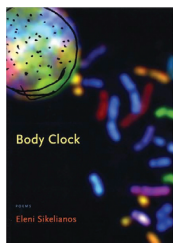


a stupid boyfriend / or stupid anyone else.” The most powerful of her rebellions is her decision to abort her own child as she slowly transforms into a more bitter amalgamation of her parents. Little Ace’s narrative awakens lastly, silently watching his grandfather “until he is startled awake / how he must love life.” Carr allows the aborted Little Ace some despair, the natural consequence of such envy, for “what use is a father without arms feet face / who was never viable / but cut and scraped out of memory.”

No matter the narrator, Carr overwhelms readers with a commanding sense of language, plot, and terse syntax. However dismal the circumstances, these speakers are scenes from history, their hardships not notable to anyone but themselves until Carr gives them voice. Solidly crafted, even the most terrible vignette stares at us from *Ace*, telling us “I want to live / though the dead are piled all around me / stacked like junked cars in the jagged embraces of their kind / and stillness.” *J. Noel Trapp*



Body Clock

Eleni Sikelianos

Coffee House Press

Softcover \$18.00 (150pp)

978-1-56689-219-3

Eleni Sikelianos is one of the rising stars of American poetry. Her previous work, *The California Poem*, also from Coffee House Press, was greeted with great acclaim for its experimental forms, close attention to California flora and fauna, and the exuberance of its language and sounds.

With this new book, Sikelianos continues her experimentation with the format of the poem and her language is still sensual and hypnotic. But she has some new themes. While *The California Poem* was suffused with loss—of nature, of self—*Body Clock* is filled more with the presence of Time and the Body: her own body, her new baby’s body, and the body of Time itself (which she even draws, as she also draws “minutes”).

Body Clock needs to be read carefully: one suggestion, read through it first, rapidly perhaps, or skipping and then focusing on particular sections, letting it wash over you much as you would a live music performance. Then return to the beginning and read with close attention, marking the lush language, the witty turns of phrase, the sharpness of her eye for nature, her ability to “narrate” in unexpected and compelling ways, the movement of an assured mind through the massive inputs of our modern world.

This book should be read by all lovers of poetry, especially by young poets beginning to think about the Poem, what it is and means. Handsomely designed, as are all Coffee House Press books, this is a book to keep and savor. *James DenBoer*



Before Saying Any of the Great Words: Selected Poems

David Huerta

Mark Schafer, translator

Copper Canyon Press

Softcover \$20.00 (400pp)

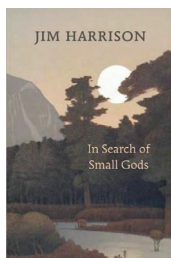
978-1-55659-287-4

In an early poem, David Huerta, describes his own work and the context in which he writes: “Under a leaden sky, words and syllables / were dancing in my throat.”

Huerta, one of Mexico’s leading poets (and the son of another famous Mexican poet, Efraín Huerta), is carefully translated here by Mark Schafer. Schafer makes Huerta, who might be seen as “difficult,” accessible to readers without sacrificing any of the startling images, leaps of meaning, and emotional resonance the poet uses to great effect.

This book of selected works begins with early poems (Huerta published his first book while still at university), the next section provides selected parts of his astonishing poem *Incurable* (said to be the longest poem ever written in Mexico at nearly 400 pages), and the final section, titled “After *Incurable*,” provides us with shorter, more concentrated, more lapidary poems, which nevertheless maintain Huerta’s uncanny ability to write words, syllables, lines and poems, packed with personal emotion and sharp insights.

Copper Canyon Press continues its highly regarded and important task of providing English-language readers with the best of poetry from Mexico, as well as many other parts of the world. As usual, the book is handsomely designed, and the typography is clean and pleasant to read. Those who are interested in the poetry of our close neighbor to the south, or simply good poetry, will find David Huerta’s latest collection a remarkable and satisfying read. (January) *James DenBoer*



In Search of Small Gods

Jim Harrison

Copper Canyon Press

Hardcover \$22.00 (120pp)

978-1-55659-300-0

In Search of Small Gods is filled with what is most loved about Harrison’s work....nods to pure attentiveness. When he rises, Harrison bows to the cardinal directions and to the vertical in order to place himself on the earth. These poems are paying constant attention to landscapes, all kinds of characters, including the main character, himself. In “Very Small Wars” Harrison writes, “It occurred to me that if I were a vehicle I wouldn’t be a Maserati but a John Deere or Farmall tractor,

nothing special.” Admittedly, thinking of him in the body of a Maserati is laughable...he is after all, “little Jimmy down on the farm.”

This book stands as an incredible addition to a body of work, relentless in its pursuit of staring down the void. Harrison is also at work with thinly disguised social comment: “They’re amputating the head of the poor girl / to put on a rich girl who needs to survive.” But a good many of the poems are about the importance of the flesh and the enduring nature of the soul. Most memorable is “Advice,” a long prose poem about the advice coming from an Ojibwe alcoholic, filled with Harrison at his best—eating raw deer heats, seventy year old Remington’s held together with duct tape, pet garter snakes, lovely women, and the landscape of the Upper Peninsula.

These are lusty and irreverent poems, by turns sad and melancholy, or just as easily joyous in the celebration of the mind free to roam in the consciousness of the natural world. As expected, they penetrate deeply into the soul of one of our finest living poets who is at usually at work trying to find the sweetest way to take his leave. This is a book that needs to be read repeatedly, almost as mantra, as a way of seeing those small gods in our lives who are there at every turn, every curve of a lovely leg, every song that erupts from a vigilant heart. It is also a book of songs made by a man who is conscious that he needs to sing himself away. Dying is an art and he knows it. (April) *Michael Delp*



Things On Which I've Stumbled

Peter Cole

New Directions

Softcover \$14.95 (96pp)

978-0-8112-1803-0

Peter Cole is well known for his many translations from Hebrew and Arabic. He is also a 2007 MacArthur Foundation Fellow, and co-editor of Ibis Editions (Jerusalem). In this major new book, he goes on a poetic and autobiographical search for the answers to large questions. What he “stumbles” toward, what he hopes to find, he does find: that the asking for answers is the answer itself, transmuted by poetry:

...as knowing is
not what’s there but how we lift it
up with the winches of syntax and sense,
up in the eye of desire for linkage
of every sort...

The title poem is a tour-de-force that combines fragments from ancient Hebrew texts discovered mouldering in a Cairo synagogue’s storeroom with the poet’s own commentary on issues of religious belief, art, history, love, and loss. The forms of Cole’s poems seem always communicative of his content, and vary widely between long sequences and very short pithy verses; he takes on formal patterns such as the