



Thievery (Akron series in poetry)

Seth Abramson

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A few rare holdouts to the contrary, American culture is loud, unsubtle, insensitive, needy, exhausting, cheaply convenient, unreflective, and above all, distracted. What has been happening behind the scenes during all the years we haven't been paying attention? What world have we given ourselves and what have we given up in that shallow exchange? Such observations are deeply implied by the poems in Seth Abramson's *Thievery*. At the bottom of this book is the sense that we've been ripped off and don't even know it yet. That we have allowed it has left us stunted, morally and spiritually, with no greater sense of wonder than a Styrofoam cup. Abramson is not preaching, however: he is telling the melancholy, lonely truth.—Maurice Manning, *The Common Man*

Here is a book that is truly quietly deeply subtle. It appears to operate along the lines of here is how one thing follows another; it appears to rely on anticipated cause and effect to spring us forth from one fraction of a split second's thought to the next. There are many and then actions in this book. What follows comes as a surprise sometimes even when it shouldn't. For instance, at one poem's conclusion it says: An archer shoots. That's what an archer does. And this is astonishing. And then it is almost heartbreaking and then one must do a double take and then there is poetry.—Dara Wier

In *Thievery*, his third and best book so far, Seth Abramson implicitly locates the source of the disaffection by which we are guided, not in the disasters of the twentieth century, which reconfirmed it, but in an unnameable and centuries-gone past. And by doing so he acknowledges that disaffection as the presence most familiar to us—indeed, its presence makes us familiar to each other: 'To be lost is to be connected / interminably.' These are grim and yet also startled poems, at home in a broken world and yet again and again and always surprised by its brokenness, and radiant with the sense that even the world in which one feels at home must be changed for the better.—Shane McCrae, *Blood*

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