ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

POETRY

Peaces
Craig Gallagher
978-1-4259-5434-5
Four Stars (out of Five)

A touching tribute to his mother, Craig Gallagher's slim volume, *Peaces* (a play upon "pieces"), contains a multiplicity of insightful epiphanies interlaced with refreshingly creative imagery. Anyone interested in spirituality, poetry, experimental writing or discovering "peaces" should find the collection a wellspring of inspiration and originality to be dipped into and savoured again and again.

Most poetry is a personal journey and Gallagher's prose poem paragraphs are his, taken on a kaleidoscopic trip with "too many ghosts, too many hauntings, and too damn much to feel." Along his introspective quest he introduces us to the dark shadows of the Poisoned Prince, asks Pretty Princess Baby, "why so sad?," laments the loss of his mother and confesses "how my spirit was taunted because of my own paranormal intentions." He describes the hourglass on his mind and the ghost in his heart while "time ticks in the clock of [his] soul." He refers to his spirit guide, sees visions of "another face up in the clouds," and in "Meet Me by the Moon" he invites us to share how, "The show will never be too soon for as long as you meet me by the moon."

In some pieces/peaces like "Maybe Mystic" and "Somewhere Out in the Blue," Gallagher explores the ethereal. In others, like "Bottom of the Cup," "Steak and Eggs" and "Morning Rain" he finds the universal in the mundane. In numerous instances his imagery is uniquely unexpected. Take, for instance, the shadow that "sneaks across the walls," or "the children with pockets full of hope," or "the candle flame centred in the mind of an owl." And on page after page, while images pile upon images and punctuation and grammar take a back seat to emotion and inspiration, the rhythm and rhyme run rampant. Though his alliteration can sometimes appear jaded, as in "Belief is building a pyramid of priceless protection …" at other times, as in "A lonely look a solemn stare straight up to the moon," or "The holiday of witches that are wise to be wicked is approaching," it is priceless. So is his painting of old clichés with new colours.

In *Auguries of Innocence* British poet William Blake set the bar for romantics when he

wrote about seeing "… a World in a Grain of Sand and a Heaven in a Wild Flower." In his own way, and with his own vision of his *Peaces* in his pieces, Craig Gallagher has set his own bar, a setting which he promises is "To Be Continued" —hopefully, a promise he'll keep.

M. Wayne Cunningham