ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

POETRY

Poems Galore: Poetry in Modern Era Politics History and Spirituality
George Peltekian
978-1-4343-4850-0
Two Stars (out of Five)

The title of George Peltekian's poetry collection is accurate: it's packed full of *Poems Galore*. This poet is bold: he tackles such big dog topics as God, politics, and human nature, and he does so with straight-up, often humorous narratives. The poems in this collection make strong claims and offer no apologies for their passionate takes on such controversial topics as abortion. Likeminded individuals may find the heart-on-its sleeve attitude refreshing, and dissenters may recoil from the blunt declarations of right and wrong.

This poet's humor is endearing. He starts this collection with the witty poem, "Bio Synopsis!" (punctuation is Peltekian's). This poet understands the importance of context. The first poem includes interesting background information about his life. Though the details sometimes reinforce the journal-feel of the collection, they provide interesting background information and interesting lines like, "(If you are wondering why) Armenian born in Jerusalem."

A love of language is clear; if this collection were a home, it would be decorated within an inch of its life. The poems' punctuation is as widespread as the poet's political and spiritual beliefs. If the dash is Emily Dickinson's secret weapon, then Peltekian's is the parentheses. These asides are best used to add echoes or provide context for a situation. Lines like, "Life went on in sorrow but they remembered to sing / (For bells to ring)" work because of the parentheses: the asides literally ring. However, there are times when the punctuation is unneeded. A secret weapon is can only work so many times before its effects are dulled.

Nearly all of the poems in this collection follow some sort of rhyme scheme. The sound play in this collection sometimes results in some great pairings. For instance, the poem "My Big Brother and I!" includes the interesting interaction between the rhymes of "hesitation" and "transition." However, the rhyming in these poems is not always necessary. For instance, in "The Reflection of the Heart!" Peltekian writes: "Colors are like shadows they move around with each passing day / They fill the atmosphere with emotions and change the ocean / Into blue and gray." The first two lines are long but the third seems shortened not because the line is

especially beautiful, but because it’s needed for the rhyme.

If there’s kryptonite to this collection, it’s the poet’s need to disclose anything and everything he is thinking, as well as his overuse of exclamation and question marks. It’s as if Peltekian thinks every poem needs a frame, as if everything needs to be noted. Instead, these poems might benefit from some clipping.

Reading George Peltekian’s poetry collection is like listening to the radio: sometimes you nod your head in agreement or shake your head in disagreement; there’s the catchy rhymes reminiscent of the best and worst jingle jangle of jingles, and sometimes there is great beauty found in the passion of opinion.