

Chapter 1 : Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields by Ashley Capps | Ploughshares

In her first book, Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields, Ashley Capps sounds like the voice of a fresh generation of poets, where the familiar turns suddenly elliptical, straight talk goes engagingly crooked, and the lyric negotiates with the matter-of-fact.

I thought about my own Etc. The poem weaves in and out of various scenes signs read, social settings, bad jobs so that the figure of the ant at the end presumably a kind of hallucination, but possibly ants just eat human toenails. She uses her life as fodder almost exclusively in Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields, but she often does this in precise, well-crafted ways that pack an emotional wallop. She made the water sing for her; it flowed over her folded arms. Leave me out of it. Even now, in her unmarked container. Were they wery of their lives; could they, too, despair? Or like those second-vessel swine when Jesus exorcised two babbling men of their demons, driving the demons through a pack of bewildered hogsâ€™ the way they plunged? The truth we know now: I think of Karen, feeding and feeding her veins, how it is possible she saw us all suddenly thereâ€™miraculous and festive on some bright and other shore, like the life she had been swimming toward all along, trying to get right. Like those sailors long ago, that tropical disease, calentureâ€™ when, far from everything they knew, men grew sometimes delirious and mistook the waving sea for green fields. Rejoicing, they leapt overboard, and so were lost forever, even though they thought it was real, though they thought they were going home. The direction of this poem, one that Capps frequently heads in, is the identification with the outsider, the maligned and misunderstood, the one who might not ordinarily capture an abundance of pity. Her take on the situation is more Romantic, more bohemian. Fortunately, there is a whole list of friends readily available on the cell phone to affirm our well-being. Where would we be without our social networks? But here she appears in the jacket photo as so sweet and untrammled. It is difficult for me to imagine Capps as anything but the girl next door, yet I manage to think that I might offend her if I referred to her as a nice girl. Capps devours her life. She turns it over and over again, inspecting it for bugs hiding in the fissures. In this way, Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields can feel a bit confessional, but there is usually enough terrific image-work going on so that we know we are in the hands of a gifted writer, not just a person who sycophantically sucks her life dry. You come for the story, stay for the costume and set design. At times I must confess that the craft in her writing announces itself too strongly. For some reason, this term bothers me. I understand the image, and I even think it works. These two forces often mutually opposed pull at Capps throughout the book. Nothing was ultimately rebirthed, nothing redeemed. The disappointment with the physical world is shadowed by a fascination with it, but a fascination that ultimately does not provide any illumination. Capps writes shockingly in the last line: If we as readers are to project ourselves upon the cow, a natural thing to do in this case, then it can be gleaned from this poem that we are in the realm of a terribly grim and brutal existence. Capps obviously forgot to take her happy pills the morning she wrote that line, but its disturbing echo reminds this reader that we are not dealing with a writer who feels compelled to make that redemptive turn at the end of a poem. For this kind of sour gambit at the end of the poem, Capps may be thrown out of the company of the polite and the formal. Capps might not miss them, but it would be a shame if she were dismissed by the polite and formal for bad behavior, for not being well-adapted. And furthermore, what happened to the old bohemians? The making, shaping and treating of the self and all its intricacies is more important than how it is planted along the boulevard for everyone to gaze at. Capps is also lively and idiosyncratic. While she is wildly barreling through her life and looking for its messages, her prodigious talent for picking up on the discarded detail sustains the book. One wonders if she will be the kind of poet who, after writing the story of her life, will find anything else to focus on. Is this the one-hit wonder who, after using up what needs to be said about her life, will move on to other areas of inquiry? I suspect she will move on. I suspect Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields is just the opening act. Even if Capps finds she has no desire to write outside of her life, I suspect that she will be able to transform the minutiae of her life into an interesting read. Such is the fate of the idiosyncratic. Meanwhile, we should be grateful that Capps has emerged from the pack of contenders who might draw a circle around their lives in the hope that others find such a life

exemplary. The main thing that is exemplary about Capps is her ability to get into a stare down with her life and win.

Chapter 2 : Akron Series in Poetry : The University of Akron

In her first book, Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields, Ashley Capps sounds like the voice of a fresh generation of poets, where the familiar turns suddenly elliptical, straight talk goes engagingly crooked, and the lyric negotiates with the matter-of-fact. Desperate for something solid to believe in.

Chapter 3 : Clear Lakes Disguise Impaired Water Quality | Minnesota Sea Grant News

Winner of the Akron Poetry Prize. In her first book, Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields, Ashley Capps sounds like the voice of a fresh generation of poets, where the familiar turns suddenly elliptical, straight talk goes engagingly crooked, and the lyric negotiates with the matter-of-fact.

Chapter 4 : Devil's Lake | Book Review: Ashley Capps's Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields

Ashley Capps, Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields (University of Akron Press,) We get told not to judge a book by its cover all the time. And yet every once in a while, don't you see a book whose cover, for no reason you can discern, jumps out at you and says, "read me, and I'll be the best book you read this year."?

Chapter 5 : Project MUSE - Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields

by Ashley Capps Ophelia, when she died, lay in the water like the river's bride, all pale and stark and beautiful against the somber rocks, her hair an endless golden ceremony.

Chapter 6 : Ashley Capps (Author of Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields)

Overview In her first book, Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields, Ashley Capps sounds like the voice of a fresh generation of poets, where the familiar turns suddenly elliptical, straight talk goes engagingly crooked, and the lyric negotiates with the matter-of-fact.

Chapter 7 : Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields by Ashley Capps

Ashley Capps is the author of Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields (avg rating, ratings, 26 reviews, published).

Chapter 8 : Book Detail : The University of Akron

Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields Capps, Ashley Published by The University of Akron Press Capps, Ashley. Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields. Akron: The University of Akron Press,

Chapter 9 : Mistaking the Seas for Green Fields : Ashley Capps :

There is no room for boredom with Mistaking The Sea For Green Fields. Ashley Capps's collection reveals a poet capable and defined--a book worthy of recommendation for purchase and study by poets and non-poets, alike.