



Prolog Pages

Donald Wellman

Paperback, 118 pages

January 2009

US\$14.95/C\$16.95

ISBN: 978-0-9808873-8-9

Ahadada Books

URL: <http://www.ahadadabooks.com/>

Available January 1, 2009 direct from the publisher or via:

Small Press Distribution

1341 Seventh Street, Berkeley, CA 94710

URL: <http://www.spdbooks.org/>

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Phone: 800.869.7553

Prolog Pages are various in the complexities of their bundled themes: travel, observations from everyday life, allusions to the accomplishments of poets and artists. Wellman sometimes calls to the figures who populate his poems, expressing sympathy with the emotions that he detects in their person or their work. Unexpected bursts of conversation catch his ears. His material is the rough stuff of notebooks and journals, here from travels in Mexico and Spain (although New York City, Chicago and Angola appear as reference points too). Collages of fragmentary observation ruled by temporal juxtaposition and expediency become disciplined exercises in pared down constructions.

Praise for Donald Wellman

Olson asked us to learn how “to dance sitting down.” And Don Wellman knows that walking the actual world-beat teaches us the rhythms we need when we sit down to dance the poem onto the page. Or as Zhuanzi (4th century BCE) writes: “The man who runs breathes through his throat; the true man breathes through his heels.” In this book Don Wellman walks and runs through those anti-yankee territories slung beneath the anglo-american waist/waste-line, from Spain to Mexico, in & through time, and then, breathing through his heels he dances sitting down, dances these rich, rich poems onto the page, a first-rate achievement, for all to read and follow.

—Pierre Joris

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“My baroque methods / approximate redemptive confusion.” Wellman travels the world in such good company: Delacroix, Vargas Llosa, Olson, Said. But where others might see the world through the traveling theory of a Said, Wellman sees these other writers, and himself, through the lenses offered him by the places in which he finds himself. This is not the tradition of redemption by imposing oneself on the other; rather it is a writing through of the manifold confusions of redemption. He discovers “new perceptions of his motives,” and so will readers visiting this book.

—Aldon L. Nielsen

Prolog Pages is a fantastical bricolage documenting encounters with persons and sites in an outward journey yet one that exhilarates and humbles the traveler and in so doing alters him inwardly. This book is a haunting collection of witnessings by an author who is smart and candid; his hunger for experience is fulfilled in the end by the actual that has achieved mythic grandeur.

—Burt Kimmelman

These poems begin at the foot of ruins, where the sea of inner experience splashes against a “cosmological tide.” Objects, rhythmically wash up and draw away. ... There is no sense of capture, envelopment, or ever a true understanding of the Other, only recognition staked out against the gravity of the exotic. Wellman submits the sublime to the measure of form, and in return, he achieves the distance constellations require.

—David Michalski

About Donald Wellman

Born in Nashua, NH, USA, he attended University of New Hampshire, served in the US Army (1968-71), and completed a Doctor Arts at the University of Oregon in 1975 (concentrations in Old English, Middle English, and Modern Literature). He has taught in the Caribbean and in the Boston area. He is currently professor of Writing and Humanities at Daniel Webster College. From 1981 to 1995, Wellman directed O.ARS, a literary and cultural organization, publishing anthologies of poetry, visual poetry, experimental prose, and commentary. Each volume explores an aspect of postmodern poetics. From its inception O.ARS published works of experimental or sur-fiction, visual poetry and other forms of writing associated with the international avant-garde, as well as what has come now to be known as language writing.

Wellman’s poetry and criticism have appeared in a variety of venues, including the on-line journal Jacket. An e-book entitled *Baroque Threads* has been published by Mudlark. *Fields*, a selected poems, spanning twenty years work, appeared in 1995 from Light & Dust. Wellman has given conference papers and published criticism on key modernist poets such as Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, and Charles Olson. He has also written and published on contemporary world poetry, especially that employing hybrid forms. In both his poetry and prose, Wellman engages a field poetics, using tropes like margin, frame or overlay to explore the ways in which cross-cultural contact or liminality produce meaning. He has translated contemporary poetry from French, German and Spanish sources. Current translation projects include *Jardín cerrado* by Emilio Prados and several works by Antonio Gamoneda, 2006 winner of the Cervantes prize. His translation of Gamoneda’s *Stone Slabs* is soon to be released by the University of New Orleans Press

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