

*Brooklyn Poets Anthology*, various authors

rev. by Alyssa L. Sell

Brooklyn Arts Press

From Brooklyn Arts Press comes the *Brooklyn Poets Anthology*, filled with ambitious poetry from poets of diverse communities. The *Brooklyn Poets Anthology* is a collection of poems from various poets including Elisabet Velasquez with “New Brooklyn,” a poem that rejuvenates the atmosphere of Brooklyn’s downtown and relives community memories. Then there are poems of true narrative, such as Nicole Sealey’s “The First Person Who Will Live to Be One Hundred and Fifty Years Old Has Already Been Born.” The *Brooklyn Poets Anthology* follows the tradition of a collective literature that can connect a community in a sense of familiarity and altruism, resembling cultural arts and local festivities. Surprisingly, it’s not only all poetry; there is also narrative and other prose writings within the anthology.

Many of the poems of the collection incorporate ambitious themes and elements through form and craft. A great example of literary prose poetry in this collection is Emily Moore’s “O Hot Women of New York.” This poem alludes to the themed setting of New York and is written in the form of an ode, with rhythm throughout created via detailed enjambment: “O hot women of New York / it’s good to see you in your spiky hairdos / carrying your mugs of coffee made at home—you are so frugal!” Many of these poems speak of the nature of the world, from the curious to the content. There is a combination of repeated themes of acceptance and portraying discrimination, through emotional narratives, as well as comical commentary. As we can see the varying of poems between Emily Moore and Todd Colby, with his poem “My Understanding” containing lines like, “My understanding of this evening / is rudimentary at best: when it gets dark / people get all batty, / and then they bellow. / People in Brooklyn understand volume. / Perhaps it is natural to be giddy / and full of dread.”

The *Brooklyn Poets Anthology* represents and situates the urban community of Brooklyn through captivating modern remnants of “a day in the life of being a New Yorker”-type poems that can relate to nationwide issues and understandings. This anthology is a book for the unique, the learner, the socially impactful, and the poet.