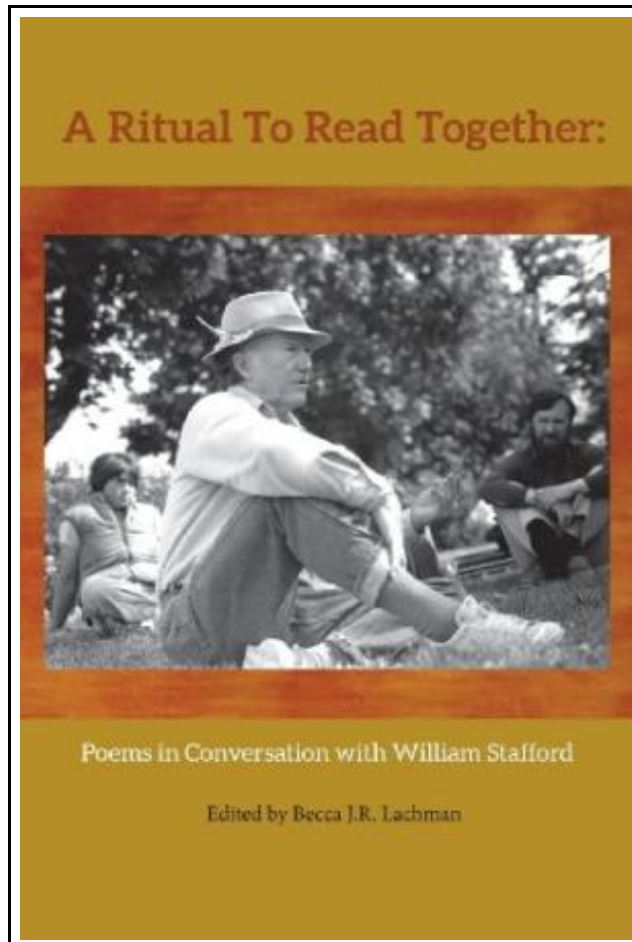


A Ritual to Read Together: Poems in Conversation with William Stafford



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(Ms. Lora West Jr.)

A RITUAL TO READ TOGETHER: POEMS IN CONVERSATION WITH WILLIAM STAFFORD



Woodley Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 198 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 5.9in. x 0.6in. One summer, William Staffords class at Centrum in Port Townsend decided to name their one-week community Worthy Company, for they were aware of and held a common purpose in advancing the verbal epiphanies of each writer in their circle. In this book, that ritual and commitment live on. Writers and readers in our world are on a rough and challenging road, but they are often in good company, advancing together the idea that imagination, words and poems can make inroads against the dehumanizing violence of our time. Instead of consoling platitudes and aggressive certainties, this worthy company believes in the benefits that honest language and humane imagination bring to us all. One could think of this collection as a multi-faceted letter to William Stafford some twenty years after his death. Its a letter that tells him not only how each poet is faring, but also how important Staffords writing, ideas, and teaching continue to be. For those who were his friends, it also registers how much his personal presence is missed. But this collection is neither elaborated elegy nor mere hagiography. What Becca J. R. Lachman has done as editor is bring together a set of contemporary poets whose work is in conversation with William Stafford. Sometimes the conversation occurs as direct address, other times as vivid recollection, and yet other times as dream vision or ghostly visitation. Some of the poems launch forth from a Stafford line or two, while others pause to reflect upon some aspect of Staffords life. However, many of the poems make no direct reference to Staffords life or writing. Instead, they offer us an indirect conversation, often a meditation on some dimension of contemporary life that Stafford himself would have...



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