

Poetry by **Naoko Fujimoto**

Editor's Choice Selection

WHERE I WAS BORN

poems

NAOKO FUJIMOTO

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Where I Was Born: Poems (March 2019)

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The author is available for interviews.

Naoko Fujimoto was born and raised in Nagoya, Japan. An exchange student, Naoko received a B.A. and M.A. from Indiana University. A RHINO associate editor, her Naoko Fujimoto Poetry & Art site introduces readers to graphic poetry, showcases books and project developments and shares other influential poets and their accomplishments.

Minami Kobayashi (b.1989) is a Japanese artist currently living and working in Chicago. She received a MFA in Painting and Drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a BFA from Tokyo University of the Arts. minamikobayashi.

"Naoko Fujimoto's sensuous poems in *Where I Was Born* speak to the 'Death of little things,' the griefs that accumulate inside families, across ordinary days, in the course of living regular lives. Thus the title points not only to a place, but to a condition, one in which the speaker must learn to accommodate loss—of birth country, of parents and grandparents, of unborn children, of time and opportunities, of dreams, of body parts, of voices, of names, of maps, and of the trail of breadcrumbs that might lead us out of the woods. In these brilliant and often-clipped lines, the world is unreal and unreliable... Yet this speaker does not give up on the world, even when the answers are distant and hard to see: 'I squinted my eyes / as a satellite would look for new life.' This is a beautiful and necessary book."



Photographer: Gail Goepfert

Linda Dove, author of *Fearn*, *This Too* and *In Defense of Objects*

"What does it mean when death is so present in the landscape of life that one's mind moves swiftly from the passing of a great-grandparent to the smell of the neighbor's grilled food and thoughts of hunger? What does it mean when loss is so integral to life that one pauses to think of a lover or licks tangerine juice from one's fingertips while comforting an ailing family member? Fujimoto's book engages these questions as she takes us through a landscape of continual loss...In her delicate and unassuming style, Fujimoto records the small, daily moments of family life, wherein so much pain is born out of so much love. Her playful, emotionally keen and contemplative book *Where I Was Born* is one to be read and held close to the heart."

Dara Elerath, published author, *American Poetry Review*

"*Where I Was Born*, Naoko Fujimoto's disarmingly honest first full-length poetry collection, is a sensorial feast. Leaving no stone unturned, Fujimoto trains one observant inner eye on family—examining losses and loves that resonate with each of us, even as they remain uniquely her own—while keeping another eye on history's long shadow across generations. Hiroshima, the marble from a Ramune soda bottle, and Japanese calligraphy collide with Lake Michigan, Dove soap, and an apartment in Lawrenceville, Illinois—alchemizing a poetry both global and personal that is riveting, musical, and iridescent as 'the silver sheen of snails after June rain.'"

Angela Narciso Torres, author of *Blood Orange*

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