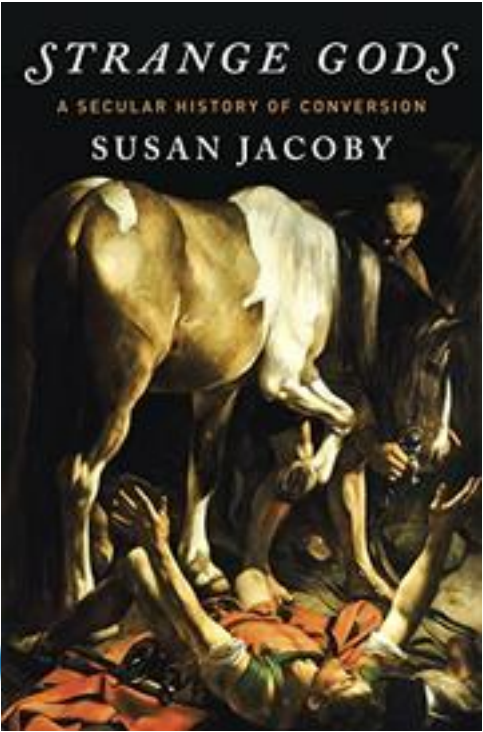


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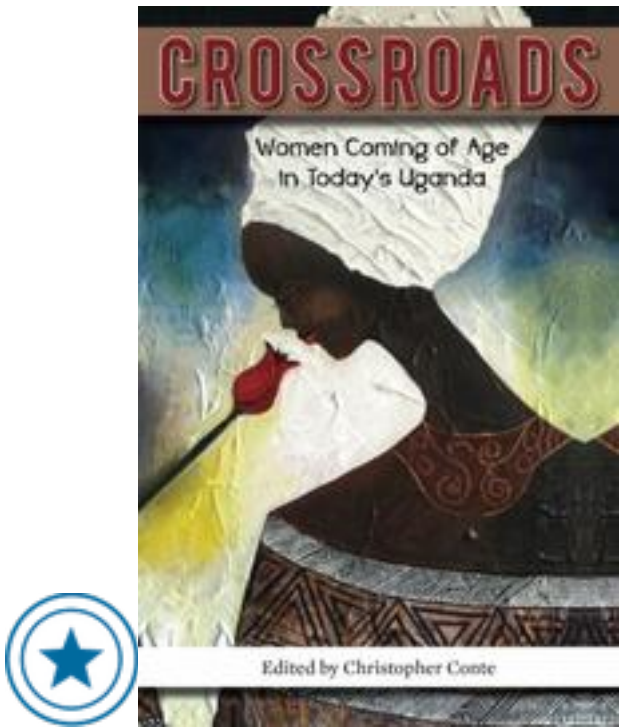
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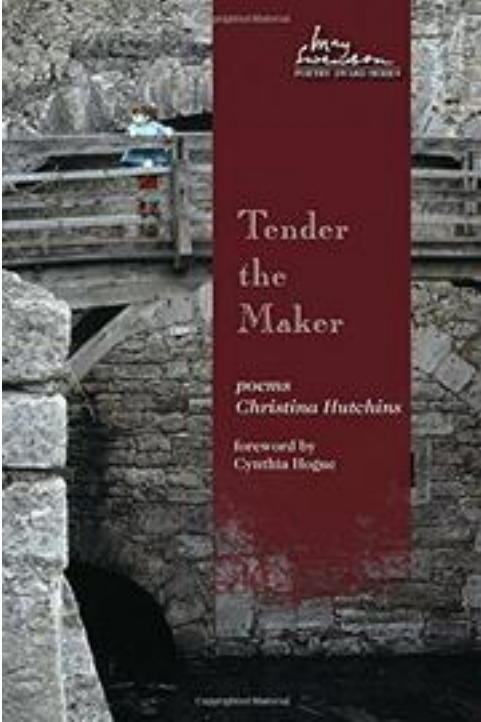
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KIRKUS REVIEW

In this winner of the May Swenson Poetry Award Series, Hutchins (*The Stranger Dissolves*, 2011, etc.) explores the impact of memories in emotionally and linguistically complex poems.

With heart-rending images, Hutchins uses the power of the ordinary (“How dare the ordinary be brutal and needing us”) to create textured connections. She moves from highly personal experiences to shared histories. Worn shoes epitomize the effect of a father’s Alzheimer’s disease and death in “Cleaning Out The Garage in 1968”: “and it was an old shoe / dried into the same stiffness / laces untied and dangling and / shadow where your foot should be / the leather tongue / still molded to the known / curve of your high instep.” In “Linseed,” she stands witness to the persistence of nature in the face of the evil of the Holocaust: “Who knew at Auschwitz the grass would be/ so very green?” Her attention to language adds to the intricacy of her poems, whether by exploring language itself in “Between Pages of the Dictionary” or playing with it in “The Music Inside”: “ ‘Ring,’ I said. / I sang, ‘wrangle, wrung.’ ” She expertly weaves melodic language with references to nature, music, history, nursery rhymes, mythology, religious tracts, and more, which gracefully and pointedly guide readers through her themes. However, the intended depth of some references is not always obvious. In “Eye of the Storm, Pescadero Coast, 1972,” readers easily feel the plight of farm workers, “Along worn cliffs / in the farm workers’ small-windowed shacks, stoves / burned into the dark of the day. / It was Sunday, but only the storm made it / Sabbath. In flooded fields, unharvested / Brussels sprouts clung to their stalks.” Only through endnotes, which aren’t used for all references, do readers discover the poem alludes to California’s record 1972 rainstorms when Cesar Chavez fasted to support the United Farm Workers’ boycott and the 1939 farm workers strike led by Filipino labor leaders. The collection will be of interest to all readers, but it will be best suited to academics and serious poetry lovers.

An elegantly crafted, dense work that invites readers to travel on spiritual, philosophical, and historical journeys.

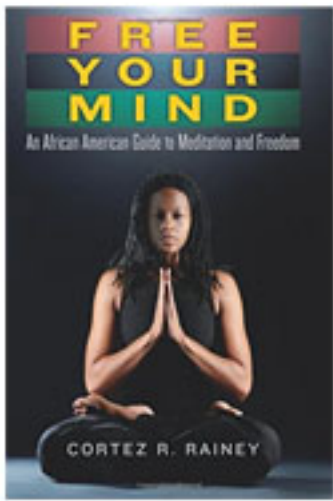
Pub Date: March 15th, 2015
ISBN: 978-1-60732-438-6
Page count: 80pp
Publisher: Utah State University Press
Program: [Kirkus Indie](#)
Review Posted Online: Nov. 19th, 2015

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HISTORY
Released: July 16, 2015
Reviewed: Sept. 22, 2015

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