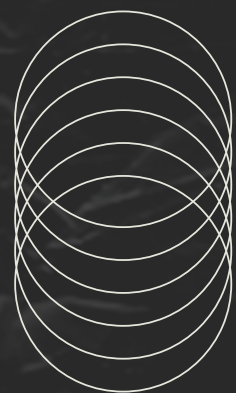


# PRESS KIT MATERIALS



This press kit contains information for Skyler Osborne's forthcoming poetry collection *REJOICER*. Please find the following included: author biography, advanced praise, a letter to the reader, excerpts, and ordering information.



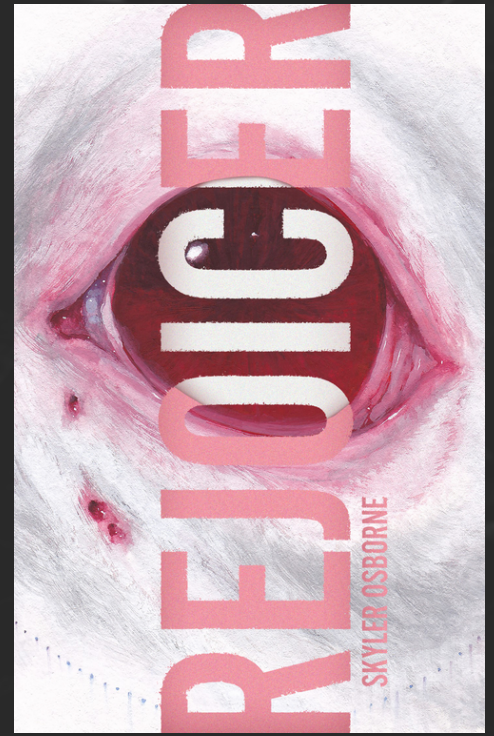
# REJOICER

# AUTHOR BIO & BOOK INFO

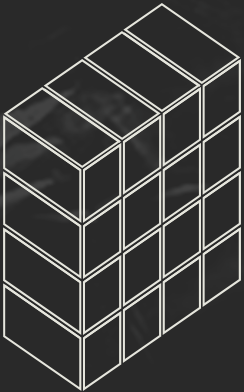
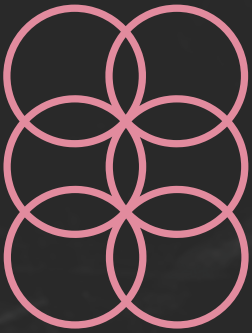
**REJOICER** is a stunning debut collection of poems that exist at the intersection of surrealism and reverence. Skyler Osborne's striking language and unforeseen imagery will ask readers to consider what is *holy*, what is mundane, and what our place in the middle is.

~  
"Part dreamscape, part dirge, and all rapturous music, *REJOICER* adds another voice to the fierce tradition of American Surrealism."

— Michael McGriff, author of *Eternal Sentences*



**Skyler Osborne** was born and raised in the Midwest. He received an MFA in Writing from the Michener Center for Writers at the University of Texas at Austin. His work has appeared in *Best New Poets*, *The Colorado Review*, *The Greensboro Review*, and *Salt Hill*, among other publications.



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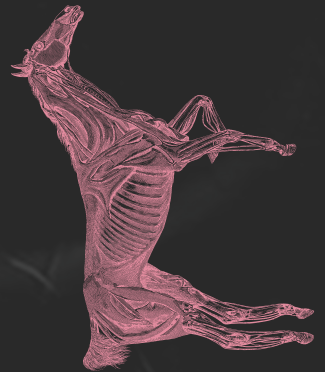
# ADVANCE PRAISE

"Here is an angel 'cashed out in the evergreens, an astonished child spreading its wings with a stick.' Here is a sleeping brain "beaming like a car in a swimming pool" or cicadas "rhyming on the willows." In these lush and urgent poems, Skyler Osborne meditates on the complexities of religious and ritual imagination, on guilt and magic and the vagaries of memory. These are wonderful poems, rich in imagery and metaphor, always gesturing toward the unknowable and profound. *REJOICER* is a brilliant first book, surprising me at every turn. I will read it again with pleasure."

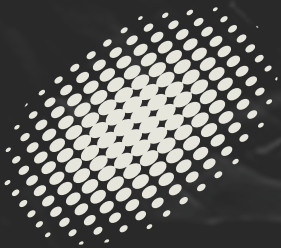
—Kevin Prufer, author of *Churches*

"In *REJOICER*, Skyler Osborne's first collection of poetry, we witness a speaker's struggle to find meaning, and even something approaching the divine, in our troubled times. Set in the Midwest, amid urban blight and a dark family history, the beautiful and the terrible are often impossible to disentangle: 'In the air where you have loved me/bees scatter like the Leonids/from the arms of boys/burning hives in the alley.' Osborne directs us to confront a human and natural world at odds in these visionary lyrics, as well as our own complicity in these destructive collisions. 'I know I've made a lot of mistakes,' the poet writes. 'Every day I stack rocks and forgive one thing.' Ultimately, these poems show us that empathy and forgiveness for the living, even with all our flaws, give us something worth rejoicing in."

—Rebecca Dunham, author of *Cold Pastoral*



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## LETTER TO THE READER

Dear Reader,

Where I came from, self-expression was neither admired nor respected. I kept the poems I wrote furtively at night in my pocket like the collective, metaphorical key to...something. I didn't know what. At our born-again school, we were restrained. Some of us knew it, but most did not. Music was mostly restricted—dancing to it, certainly, and even singing it, except for hymns, our voices quivering with the love of the Lord. In poetry, I found a new kind of music. The Bible and Psalms had their rhythms, of course, but more enchanting to me were the poets and writers they taught as examples of what not to do. These real literary people, our overseers told us, were blasphemers and fornicators. Contact was close to sin. Privately, I planned to write myself free. It took so long to learn to receive the earth as it is.

*REJOICER* is everything inside of that life and after. It is of two minds. It's presented in two parts. There were two lives at war when I began to write—two worlds: a structured past pressured by religiosity; and the volatile, possible landscape of imagination. I saw a clear sense of biography shifting formally, further into a subconscious, and therefore hyper-real space. In part one, I wanted to establish tangible locations, strict environments strained by the constructs, the God(s), and bodies that govern them as they lose control, if they ever had it. The first half of *REJOICER* is a purging. By part two, the voice has been scattered. It will stay there and end in shock.

So it is; the book begins and ends with figurative beheadings. A familiar, sacred force guides those separations, and I think they are constantly re-connected by an unknowable cosmic power or the world outside the self—one constantly bursting into the surreal.

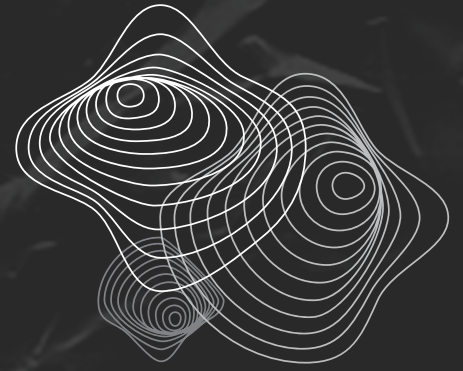
My process was and is vague at best. I walk until I'm affected, until I'm blown away. The poems lash out from their solitude and vulnerability to nature. They concentrate on the demolition of perceived reality. Still, they look to contain. They look for stability and forgiveness.

The book is an effect of my fundamental upbringing as much as it is an exultation of everything. An ecstatic threat. A hymnal, maybe. My own bright guide.

Thank you so much,  
Skyler



# POEM EXCERPT



## Sainted

Slow work on the 6th day,  
the mouth cut out before the creation of razors.

A single body swaying in a field until it is led  
elsewhere to heal over sleep like black caps of water.

It takes weeks in the kingdom to come back laughing.  
I need to leave the room during silent films to throw up

because of the simulacrum.

When I broke my arm jumping off the Public Works building,  
a hawk mauled the head of another hawk.

A stranger took me aside to tell me I could  
meet the Lord if I loved the whole world,

even those without worship. If I helped him  
and told the truth in supplication.

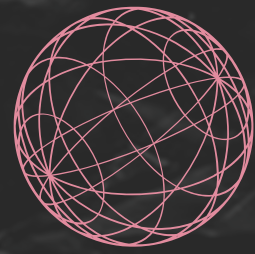
We used to go to church 3 times a week to howl  
back at the organ. My hands were in my pockets,

or live behind the curtain where they found me sparking  
matches as they walked toward me—

pink bouquets, white bouquets, singing.

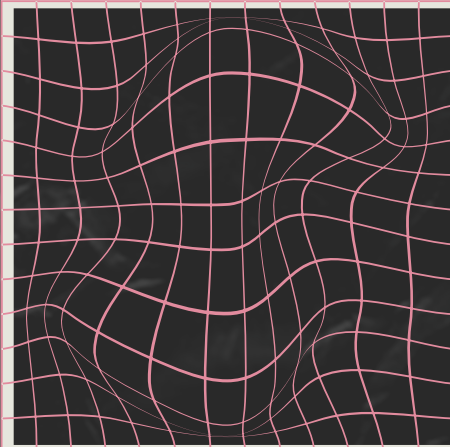
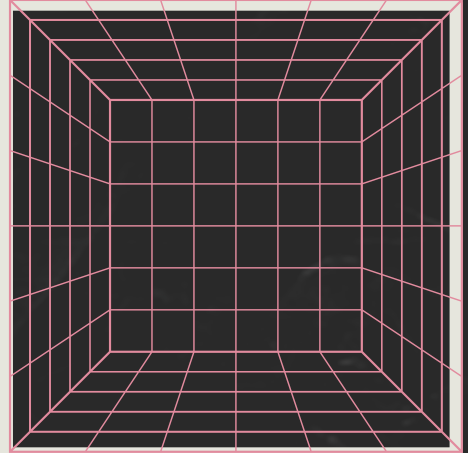


# ORDERING INFORMATION



\$14.99 USD

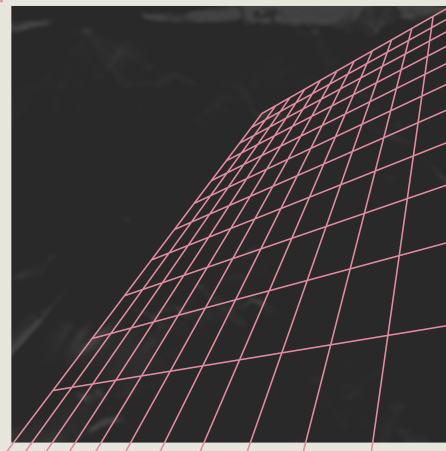
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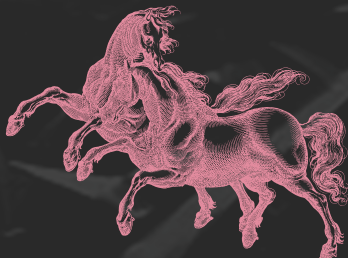
ISBN  
978-1-949065-27-5

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