

Measures of Expatriation (Paperback)



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Reviews

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(Mr. Ladarius Stoltenberg)

MEASURES OF EXPATRIATION (PAPERBACK)



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Carcanet Press Ltd, United Kingdom, 2016. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English. Brand new Book. 'Expatriation: my having had a patria, a fatherland, to leave, did not occur to me until I was forced to invent one. [...] This luxury of inattention, invention, and final mismatch. a 'Trinidad' being created that did not take my Trinidad away (my Trinidad takes itself away, in reality, over time). that is expatriation, no? An exile, a migrant, a refugee, would have been in more of a hurry, would have been more driven out or driven towards, would have been seeking and finding not.' In Measures of Expatriation Vahni Capildeo's poems and prose-poems speak of the complex alienation of the expatriate, and address wider issues around identity in contemporary Western society. Born in Trinidad and resident in the UK, Capildeo rejects the easy depiction of a person as a neat, coherent whole - 'pure is a strange word' - embracing instead a pointilliste self, one grounded in complexity. In these texts sense and syntax are disrupted; languages rub and intersect; dream sequences, love poems, polylogues and borrowed words build into a precarious self-assemblage. 'Cliche', she writes, 'is spitting into the sea', and in this book poetry is still a place where words and names, with their power to bewitch and subjugate, may be disrupted, reclaimed. The politics of the body, and cultures of sexual objectification, gender inequality and casual racism, are the borders across which Capildeo homes, seeking the modest luxury of being 'looked at as if one is neutral ground'. In the end it is language itself, the determination to speak, to which the poet finds she belongs: 'Language is my home, I say; not one particular language.' Measures of Expatriation is in the vanguard of literature arising from the aftermath of Empire, with a fearless and natural complexity....



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