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## Illustrating the Machine That Makes the World From J. G. Heck's 1851 Pictorial Archive of Nature and Science The VQR Poetry Series

By Joshua Poteat

University of Georgia Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 88 pages. Dimensions: 8.4in. x 5.5in. x 0.3in. In this book-length series, poems with titles such as *Illustrating the theory of interference* and *Illustrating the construction of railroads* are paired with nineteenth-century engravings depicting phenomena from geology to astronomy to mechanics. Yet the poems relate to the images in an oblique rather than a direct way. Poteat uses this framework to construct a mysterious and engaging book that inhabits many worlds at once, bridging the real and the imagined, the traditional and the experimental, the surreal and the ordinary. As each diagram and scene gives rise to a poem that intertwines the life of German artist and printer J. G. Heck imagined, as little is recorded with Poteat's own, the book reveals a preoccupation with landscape that encompasses both the precision of Heck's carefully labeled sine waves and brass devices as well as the eeriness of his depictions of skeletal hands or dogs tearing apart a wounded boar. Poteat's intense interest in the natural world is set against a sense of a world behind the world, where each living thing is properly named and the Spirit glows purposefully above the forest, ready to heal...



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