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## The Men from Praga

By Anne Berkeley

Salt Publishing, United Kingdom, 2009. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 212 x 136 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*.Shortlisted for The Seamus Heaney Centre Prize This sharp and unpredictable collection opens in the Cold War. Berkeley's father was a V-bomber navigator, a conflicted inheritance of pride and guilt which informs the opening poems. While parents struggle to keep life normal, the secrets and occluded horrors of the period play out in vividly imagined children's games. One locus of memory is a ruined mansion, sliced into many apartments, through which the adult narrator looks back on the past unsure of what really happened, only that the child did not understand. The second part of the book develops the theme of shared humanity from the Warsaw fishermen of the title poem to a hi-tech dystopia of the near future, by way of a dissolute Norwegian, a translated Baudelaire, a contemporary woodworker, and a petrolhead on the A1M. The array of voices - boastful, baffled, sardonic - employs Berkeley's experience as a poetry performer with *The Joy of Six*. In poems that frequently wrongfoot the reader, the Empire shrinks to an opera audience, the Royal...



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