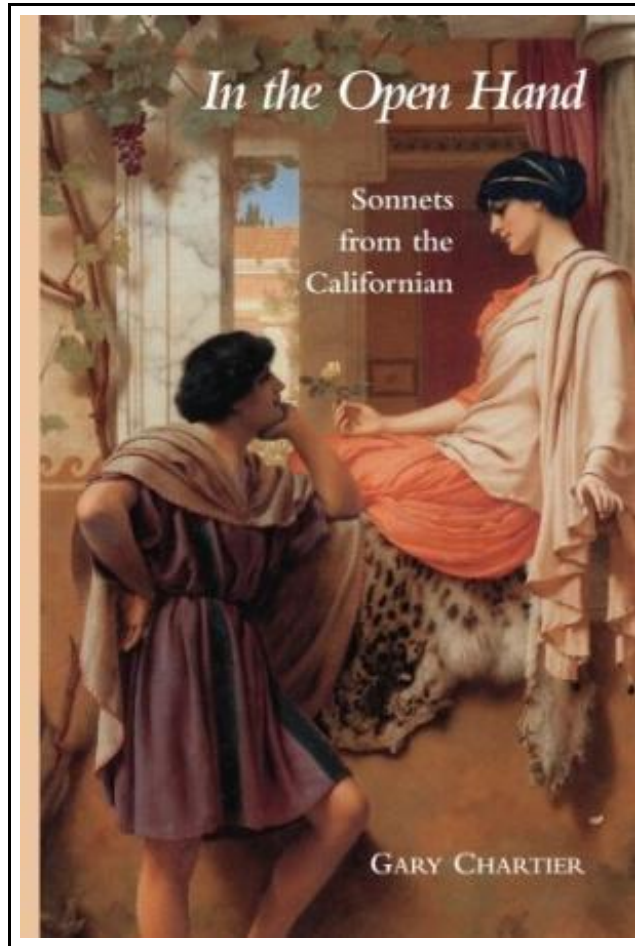


## In the Open Hand: Sonnets from the Californian



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Steepletop Press, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*.This open-ended narrative, embodied in a sequence of sonnets, traces the arc of love, elegantly examining the peregrinations of delight, desire, devotion, attachment, friendship, and care. In the Open Hand sensitively limns the ongoing dance between intimacy and distance, between welcoming embrace and respect for otherness. Reveling in a love of language and ably deploying the language of love, it engages honestly and compassionately with fear even as it brims with hope. W. H. Auden said A poet is, before anything else, a person who is passionately in love with language. With this as a working definition, Gary Chartier shows himself to be a consummate poet. Here in this volume of sonnets he addresses, almost always, a nameless you with whom he shares moments and thoughts and dances. But whoever the you is, the real focus of the poems is the language itself. Chartier's subject matter (these are love poems) only serves to display his uncanny ability for word choice and line construction. The words themselves often seem like something out of Shakespeare, Donne, or some other poet of a by-gone era. The sentiments, too, remind me of metaphysical poets pining for a closer connection to a beloved. The content, though, really serves to show the exquisite beauty of language itself. The vocabulary is impressive and the rhymes, often with clever non-stop line endings, are imaginative and fresh. If you, too, love the English language and want to see it displayed in sonnet form, read these poems and then re-read them. They are a bit like a short scene from Rear Window where Grace Kelly bends down to kiss Jimmy Stewart. Every time I see the...

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