



Graywolf Press

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Graywolf Press

Table of Contents:

⌘ About Graywolf.....	3
⌘ Why Graywolf?.....	6
⌘ Review: <i>And Give You Peace</i>	7

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Founded: 1974 by Scott Walker

Where: Originated in Port Townsend, Washington, moved to St. Paul, Minnesota in 1985, presently located in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

First Publication: A full-length work of poetry called, *Instructions to the Double* by Tess Gallagher. It was handset, hand-printed, and sold fifteen hundred copies in four months.

Incorporated: 1984, non-profit

Distribution: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux in New York City.

In Charge: Fiona McCrae as of 1994

Fabulous Prizes: Graywolf Press Non-Fiction Prize, a “\$12,000 advance and publication by Graywolf will be awarded to the most promising and innovative literary nonfiction project by a writer not yet established in the genre.”

What They Publish: Creative Writing, Cultural Criticism, Essays, Gay and Lesbian Literature, Literary Criticism, Memoir, Novels, Poetry, Short Stories, and Translations (through a partnership with the Lannan Foundation.)

Who’s Behind Graywolf?

Fiona McCrae, Director and Publisher

Marisa Atkinson, Administrative Assistant

Sara Barnaby, Accountant

Katie Dublinski, Managing and Editorial Director

Leslie Koppenhaver, Sales and Business Manager

Erin Kottke, Marketing and Publicity Manager

Ethan Nosowsky, Editor-at-Large

Jeffrey Shotts, Senior Editor

Steve Woodward, Editorial Assistant

Mission Statement:

“Graywolf Press is a literary press that publishes about twenty-seven books annually, mostly collections of poetry, memoir, essays, novels, and short stories. Our editors are looking for high quality literary fiction, nonfiction, and poetry that combines a distinct voice with a distinct vision.”

Submission Guidelines:

Non-Fiction Prize:

Must be a United States resident who has previously published one book. Resubmitted manuscripts from previous years are not accepted unless requested specifically by the editors. Must be submitted by October 31st, 2009, for 2010 entry. Also must include a one paragraph biographical statement (including previous publications), a 2-4 sentence description of the project, a 2-10 page overview of the project (including what has been completed and what remains to be finished) and a minimum of 100 pages from the manuscript as a sample.

Poetry:

Focus on contemporary poets, translators, and perspectives. Rarely publishing anthologies, Graywolf is looking for completed works.

Prose:

Not accepted: Children’s or young adult, plays, self-help, how-to’s, genre fiction.
Looking for: Innovative fiction or creative non-fiction that “in some way take on the social and cultural challenges of contemporary life.”

Reading Period:

Submissions are accepted in January, May, and September.

Other Important Info:

No electronic submissions.

Include a SASE for reply.

Will respond between 3-6 months.

Graywolf accepts unsolicited manuscripts, but asks that you familiarize yourself with their collection before suggesting that your novel would provide a good fit. Graywolf also provides publication for several prize-winners. Information about these are available on the Web site.

Submit To:

Graywolf Press

250 Third Avenue North, Suite 600

Minneapolis, MN 55401

Why Graywolf?:

I stumbled across Graywolf because I was on a desperate search for respectable publishing houses outside of New York City, London, and all of the West Coast (What can I say? I'm picky.) Since I want to work in editing upon my eventual graduation from Columbia College, it became important for me to figure out where I could possibly be employed one day, and among the most important factors was of course: location, location, location.

So, in the midst of my many google searches yielding little to nothing, up came Graywolf. The website left a little to be desired, the simplicity of it presenting the misleading impression that it's not very established. However, upon closer inspection, I discovered nothing could be further from the truth. In existence for 35 years as a non-profit, Graywolf has accomplished everything a press of its size could ever want to and more. Publishing around 27 books a year, and garnering all kinds of respect within literary circles, Graywolf is everything you would aspire to be as an independent press.

Self-described as "a rare breed of publisher," Graywolf specifically takes on the novels with subject matters on the heavier side of the spectrum, (death, madness, grief,) not merely the fluff so often found adorning the shelves of contemporary book stores. I fell in love with their mission, their products, and even the little animation of the wolves milling about on their website. Fifteen minutes on their page, and I knew that it had jumped to the very top of my list of one of the places I absolutely, positively, must work.

So that's why this report on Graywolf is in your hands right now. It's the result of a little pickiness, mixed with a dash of boredom and the perfect picture of the future of independent publishing: success and a steadfast belief in a respectable mission, beyond hunting profits.

And Give You Peace

Jessica Treadway

Graywolf Press

ISBN: 1-55597-315-9

241 Pages

Reviewed by: Hannah Becker

The title of Jessica Treadway's debut novel, *And Give You Peace*, comes from the Catholic hymn, "May the Lord Bless You and Keep You." "Do you know that hymn?" the main character asks, "The words move across the music with a sharp, sweet pain, which, once you've felt it, stays as a memory in your bones," (Treadway 137). The description of the hymn perfectly encompasses the life of Anastasia Dolan, the oldest of three daughters struggling to cope with the failing marriage of their parents, Margaret and Tom, and the obsessive compulsive tendencies of their father which eventually lead to his murdering his youngest daughter before taking his own life. Treadway paints an authentic picture of the breakdown of a dysfunctional family, while still maintaining likeability for the characters. Treadway keeps the reader engaged both intellectually and emotionally involved, and once you've finished following Anastasia through her tale, it is difficult to rid your heart of the intensity of her emotions.

The narrative, told in the past tense, is disjointed and fractured, alternating between the direct timeline leading up to the deaths and the following months of attempted recovery. The narrator fills in relevant memories of the more distant past to provide a fuller picture of the family members and their dynamic. The memories are helpful in building a complete emotional picture of the lives of the three sisters, Meggy, Justine, and Anastasia, without distracting from the murder/suicide story arc. Apart from the scattered bits of life before the tragedy, the timeline sticks to the six months post-accident. It's only the final chapter that jumps ahead significantly in time, twelve years after the deaths. It feels like you're being told a story directly, with additional bits of information sprinkled in when it's important to beef up the background, or to add significance to a particular moment. There's nothing extraneous, nor out of place. Each instance fits.

Interwoven in the multi-layered narratives are poetic descriptions that draw the

reader into Anastasia's level of consciousness and understanding of her family's struggles. In her depiction of her sadness and subsequent recovery, she states,

Slowly, the days regained a shape and texture I remembered from before the deaths: they had a beginning, middle, and end, instead of the amorphous stretch of consciousness during which I yearned only to be asleep, (Treadway 128).

This is one of the most beautiful and accurate ways of describing depression I've ever encountered.

Treadway provides Anastasia as a beautiful subjective lens through which the reader observes the Dolans' world, both before and after the tragedy that changed their lives. Anastasia presents the events in an analytical way. In addition to the matter-of-fact tone the text takes on, each chapter is prefaced with an obscure question and answer, in the form of a newspaper "have you ever wondered?" section. For example, chapter two starts with the query, "Is there a 'method' for eating animal crackers?" The questions have no apparent connection to the movement of the story apart from the brief mention that Margaret worked as a journalist answering questions for a local paper. I think it adds something extra to the narrative, breaking up the blocks of the heavy subject matter with interesting tidbits of information. It also goes along with one of the themes of the novel, seeking answers.

The analytical tone is effective because it provides the reader with a level of trust that would be otherwise difficult to achieve in such a sensitive situation. A family member detailing the lives and deaths of her baby sister and father could potentially be presented in a very biased way, but the stoic tone in which Anastasia presents the details allows for complete narrator reliability, along with the added benefit of perspective created by looking back on the past. When recalling events of the funeral, she notes,

...the last time we had left a daughter of hers, a sister of mine, in was in that sunny cemetery, the grass so green and vivid, that I was aware, even through my numbness, how I hated to flatten it under my feet (Treadway 125).

The novel explores the process of trying to make sense of the act that appears to be senseless. It's a story often told, and not necessarily always told well—the author falling victim to allowing too much emotion to seep into the text, or presenting a story that is cliché. However, Treadway manages to find the right formula to avoid these pitfalls, creating a brutally honest and poignant story that burrows into your heart and

stays with you long after you finish the final page. Anastasia is looking for the pieces of herself left behind in the wake of disaster, and the reader is more than happy to get lost in the beautiful tragedy and follow her along for the ride.