



More Than This

Poems

DAVID KIRBY

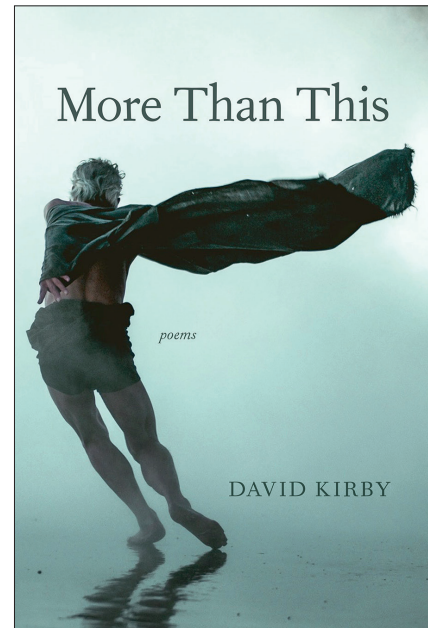
PRAISE FOR DAVID KIRBY

"Kirby . . . reminds me of the way a poem can work: how its language can say one thing and mean another, and how we can be moved by the musicality of words, finding meaning in their sound."—Nataasha Trethewey, *New York Times*

"The world that Kirby takes into his imagination and the one that arises from it merge to become a creation like no other, something like the world we inhabit but funnier and more full of wonder and terror."—Philip Levine, *Ploughshares*

More Than This, like David Kirby's previous acclaimed collections, is shot through with the roadhouse fervor of early rock 'n' roll. Yet these rollicking poems also contain an oceanic feeling more akin to the great symphonies of Europe than the two-minute singles of Little Richard and other rock pioneers, as Kirby seeks to startle, to please, to unwind the knots that we get ourselves into and make it possible to begin anew. Little goes unnoticed in these poems: death is present, along with love, friendship, food, religious ardor and philosophical skepticism, nights on the town and quiet evenings at home. With *More Than This*, his twelfth collection, Kirby takes readers back in time and out in space, offering quiet wisdom and a sense of the endless possibilities that art and life give us all.

Then there's Christine McIntire's church. Christine is the most beautiful girl in our class. She's more excited about our project than we are, and when we ask her what kind of church hers is, she says, "Just come." The people in Christine McIntire's church begin with a prayer, but in minutes they're screaming and throwing themselves around the room and tearing their clothes. They're stormy petrels, these people. They're going to Graceland. A man runs through hell in a gasoline sport coat. A woman scrambles across the trunk of the death car like Jackie Kennedy trying to retrieve the back of her husband's head. The people in Christine McIntire's church drive trucks for a living and stamp out sheet metal and sweat long days in those chemical plants by the river that are killing them slowly. They're homesick for a place they've never been. They're what Bill and I want to be, passionate about what matters to them and, after that, indifferent. They're in love, these people, they're all shook up.
—from "Bill and I Go to Christine McIntire's Church"



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Poetry

DAVID KIRBY, the Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of English at Florida State University, is a recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, along with several Pushcart Prizes and other honors. His numerous books include *The Biscuit Joint*; *Get Up, Please*; and *The House on Boulevard St.*, a finalist for the National Book Award.

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