



Poetry and Freedom: Discoveries in Aesthetics, 1985–2018

By Paul Oppenheimer

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A ground-breaking exploration of the aesthetics of poetic freedom

“Paul Oppenheimer is an eclectic and lively scholar and thinker. His collection of essays *Poetry and Freedom: Discoveries in Aesthetics, 1985–2018* is a lucid, readable and exciting manuscript. It reflects a sophisticated and deep understanding of poetry across eras and civilizations, from surrealism to the medieval lyric, from Eliot to Goethe, from Virgil to Josephine Jacobsen, and an interesting selection of contemporary poets including D. Nurkse, Marie Ponsot and Diane Wakoski. The book is a rare pleasure to read, offering the insights of a truly original mind in clear and passionate prose. A new essay revisiting Oppenheimer’s groundbreaking work on the sonnet lends the volume additional importance.” —Annie Finch, Author of *The Ghost of Meter: Culture and Prosody in American Free Verse*; Co-author of *An Exultation of Forms and New Formal Poets*; and Professor of English, University of Southern Maine, USA

This book offers a ground-breaking exploration of the aesthetics of poetic freedom. The range is broad, from antiquity to the present and from Europe and the Middle East into the poetry of the English-speaking world. Revealing questions about the elusiveness of poetic freedom—what does the term actually mean?—are repeatedly tested against the accomplishments of major poets such as Whitman, Dickinson, Rilke, Dante and Virgil, and their public yet intensely private originality. The result is a fresh, and well-nigh revolutionary, way of seeing literary and modern history, or an initiation into the more striking gift of aesthetic freedom.

About the Author

Paul Oppenheimer is a professor of comparative literature and english at The City College and The Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

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