

From this Earth

Kent Manske & Nanette Wylde



From this Earth is a collaboration of Kent Manske and Nanette Wylde conceived, written, and produced while sheltering-in-place during the 2020 pandemic and while wildfires raged across California. It is a story of transformation. An individual journeys through a devastated landscape seeking relief, motivated by an inner impetus.

This original, 13 part poem was informed by conversations between naturalists Robin Wall Kimmerer and Helen Macdonald; the social justice activist groups Women's March and Black Lives Matter; and Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers as recorded in the book *The Power of Myth*.

The 13 landscape images are photographs of sculptural forms the artists created from local craft industry production waste. Sculptural media include glass, flower petals, spices, hair, bluejeans, toasted barley, burlap sacks, onion skins, corn husks, pet fur, hops, metal shavings, theatre props, fabric scraps, dryer lint, eggshells, grape skins, grape stems, avocado skins, avocado seeds, coffee grounds and oyster shells.

The book contains 15 sections including one each for title and colophon. There is one section for each of the 13 poem parts. Each poem part begins with a heading printed on the cover of its folio. Each folio opens to a paired landscape image and text. Decorative paper separates each section.

Media: Pigment printed on Rives BFK Tan and Epson Enhanced Matte papers, banana leaf paper interleaving, collaged handmade papers for cover designs. French link stitch sewn on tapes, exposed spine.

Size: 5 x 15.25 x 1.5" (13 x 38 x 4 cm)

Edition: Edition of three, each with unique hardcover design

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Kent Manske kent.manske@preneo.org 650.454.4570

Nanette Wylde nwylde@preneo.org 650.454.4714

From This Earth

by Nanette Wylde

Pilgrimage

She went looking for water and found diamonds.
They wept through her fingers like an ancient storm.
Neither hot nor cold, they told a story of a time not yet come.

Witness

They took more than they needed. They transformed more than could be returned.
The earth loved them. They didn't notice.

Solastalgia

There is an ache wrecking through. A parchedness of thought.
Attenuated senses. Dry stillness. Barbed wire in the gut.
A wasteland expanding. Rust and dust.

Orientation and Prediction

The body wants to move. The mind moves with it.
She knew where her feet were.
She was in the fastlands.
Still, she needed a field guide.

Grief

Trudging. Questioning. Seeking a voice, a change, a noticeable difference.
Each step heavy. Each horizon bleak.

Wrangling

Itsy natty things buzzed at her eyes, stuck in her salt slick skin streaming from heat.
"What purpose have you? What purpose have you?"
The mutter was audible if a being were near enough to hear.

Observation

On the upside ahead was full with time.
Ekhe. Ekhe. Ekhe.
Shrill. Regular. Who else heard it besides herself?
What type of call?

Filtering

As she entered the wood a slip of sweet air fluttered across her cheek.
She breathed in deeply. It was clean.

Unwrapping

She opened to red green pillars receding into the eye of sky.
Birdsong. Melodic. Enchanting.
It led her to a memory. She stayed with it for a good long while.

Biophilia

She took solace, was nourished by green and living things.
She learned to love different.

Frameshift

Is it stealing or giving, my life and your life together feeding.
So many things we cannot know.
So many that we can.

Attention and Intention

Submerged, her own heartbeat flooded her ears, and this is what it told:
The task is to know what is. To create relationships and name them.
To tend. To connect. To assist migration.
To build nest boxes for refugees. To help forests walk northward.

Cultivation

With this she unfolded.
Unlearning and learning at every turn.
She sought for the seeds as much as the fruit. Deepening with earth.
When the rain came she was ready.