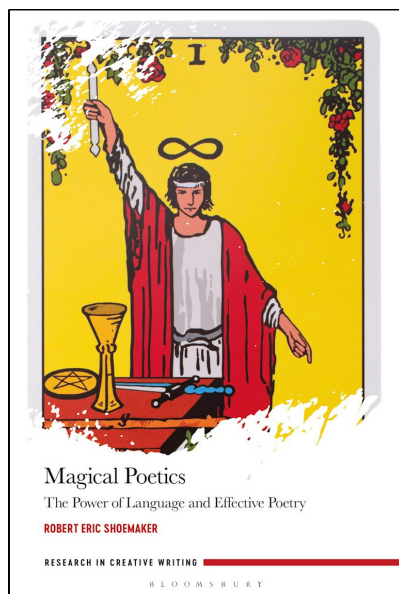




Magical Poetics

The Power of Language and Effective Poetry

Robert Eric Shoemaker

"This book is a brilliant reminder of the origins of poetry, almost to the point of saying that magical poetics is redundant, because for too long we forgot that magic and poetry are the same. Robert Eric Shoemaker restores our understanding of occult connections of song from flesh. I cannot recommend this book highly enough."
CAConrad, author of Listen to the Golden Boomerang Return

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Just like a magician, spiritual guide or modern-day witch, poets use their craft to tap into the inherent power of language as an agent of change, willing words to construct and alter reality through intentional acts and performances.

Through an examination of the linguistic, historical, and affective poetics of magic, this book shows how pragmatic magical practices from the ancient and Medieval worlds, and poetry from the English Romantics to the present day, leverage the same linguistic qualities to bring about change.

Making the case that contemporary poets, especially poets of disenfranchised identity groups, write with language meant to *do something*, Robert Eric Shoemaker highlights how these writers successfully incant through language, using techniques such as metaphor, symbolism, chant and other magics, to change their readers by leveraging slippages of meaning. Drawing on the long histories of magical, religious, and ritual language, from modernist poets through the English Romantics and stretching back to poems and spells from the Middle Ages and ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Jewish traditions, this book establishes a theoretical, analytic, and practical framework for magical poetics. An introduction to the theory and topic, *Magical Poetics* manages and expands on important poetic legacies, establishes frameworks of contemporary practitioners and aids today's writers and readers in seeing the importance of poetry in the everyday, positioning them as part of the larger lineage of poet-hierophants who may work to change the world with words.

Robert Eric Shoemaker is the author of *Ca'Venezia* (2021), *We Knew No Mortality* (2018), and *30 Days Dry* (2015). His forthcoming books include *The World of Edgar Allan Poe*, *The Ecstasy of Saint Sebastian*, and his translation of *Catherine of Siena: Prayers*. He completed a PhD in humanities from the University of Louisville, USA, an MFA in creative writing and poetics from Naropa University, USA, and a BA in theatre and performance studies from the University of Chicago, USA.

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