ABOUT SIXTEEN RIVERS PRESS
Sixteen Rivers Press is a shared-work, nonprofit poetry collective dedicated to providing an alternative publishing avenue for Northern California poets. Founded in 1999 by seven writers, the press is named for the sixteen rivers that flow into San Francisco Bay.

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Stella Beratlis

Dust Bowl Venus

“Like the seasonal lake bed on which the city of Modesto sits, like the many hands ‘making mud out of dry soil,’ every poem in Stella Beratlis’s Dust Bowl Venus aches toward tenderness. Here, to grow, and to love, is to risk vulnerability. These ‘bone and ligament narratives’ of grief and yearning, illness and healing, perseverance and resistance, beat with so much heart in this fiercely beautiful book.”

—Erin Rodoni

In Dust Bowl Venus, her second powerful collection of poetry, Stella Beratlis explores California’s Great Central Valley, the landscapes of fear and hope in the cancer diagnosis of her daughter, and the landscape of regret—what we have let go and what we have gained from letting go. This book is filled with imagery and emotion that build and curve and accumulate, leaving us breathless, glad for the shifting of the earth that gave us these poems.

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Dane Cervine

The World Is God’s Language

“The World Is God’s Language reveals a sanctified world built of memory, history, and grace, where God is evanescent, transient but eternal, and where, Cervine makes clear, we are ‘just visiting.’”

—Gary Young

Dane Cervine’s prose poems are like snapshots, each one revealing an unexpected insight. Sometimes sexy and/or irreverent, always deeply philosophical, these poems are steeped in the place and culture of Northern California while ranging the world from Japan to Bali, Indonesia to India, Central America to the American South. Generous and humane, the work in this collection reminds the reader that poetry can be both joyous and profound.

$16 paperback • ISBN: 978-1-939639-26-4 • 92 pages

A Sample of the Poets’ Work

from What Grows Here

3. Holy Basil

At the intersection of Texas and Crows Landing
he stands, rosemary in pocket, the man who grows the basil.

All of his life packed—the work of it, the sore knees, the sweat—
into orderly cylinders of regret, fresh with summer’s bursting heart. He muses on the city’s blurred stars:

the songwriter who—

the baby who—

the Marine who—

... All of those sacred, incomparable ones, those who live, die, and live again, they are here;
they are making mud out of dry soil.

—Stella Beratlis

World Yoga

Yoga in the outdoor Pagoda hexagon with my eighty-year-old mother. The thin summer screen decorated with orange & green butterflies keeps the bugs out, still lets the world in.

A smiling stone Buddha watches every move. Sixgunshots echo from a rifle in the hills, a hunter stalking squirrel, birds, even deer? My mother doesn’t mind. Death, she says, is just another way the world moves.

—Dane Cervine