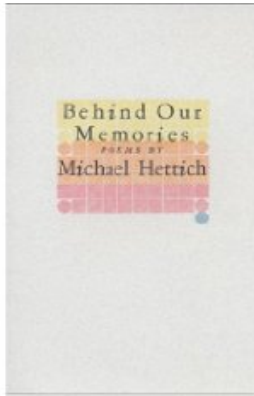


**Behind Our Memories by Michael Hettich**



Behind Our Memories  
By Michael Hettich  
ISBN 0-938566-93-8  
Adastra Press  
16 Reservation Road  
Easthampton MA 01027

Review by Steve Glines

It's the Strathmore laid paper, 80 lbs. at least that catches your eye. The paper is hand folded into a single hand sewn signature binding a beautiful little volume of Garamond letterpress type titled "Behind Our Memories," by Michael Hettich. It catches your eye. The cover is also done in letterpress but in 5, yes, 5 subtle colors. The book, the binding, and the colophon all say old time, even Victorian quality and it is.

The book carries a simple dedication, "for Colleen" and after reading the first, second ... poem you know Colleen must be his wife. This simple volume is a love story, not sappy, not sentimental but almost mater of fact images we can feel of two young lovers being in love. We see this from the perspective of newlyweds, as well as a father of a young butterfly-chasing daughter. It's refreshing and not in the least bit cynical but rather fits the almost classical image promised by the letterpress cover. It's old-fashioned love and it's pleasing without being "pretty," its worm without being hot and it's loving without being "feminine." Yet in spite of its Victorian promise it's very much 21st century.

Christmas in the Woods

Our twelve year old daughter walks around the cabin wearing a red velvet sweater with fake zebra collar and silky underpants, singing. Her toenails are bright red. Outside small birds flit through the trees in the gray light, and beyond down the bluff, the river pulls.

*Wilderness House Literary Review 4/1*

The radio in the bedroom is tuned to a discussion of refugee repatriation in various unfamiliar countries. In the kitchen my wife washes dishes and sings Christmas carols with out daughter. I pour us more coffee. Yesterday, a friend explained the coming extinction. He shared all the details:

Squirrels and weeds, he said, and pigeons will be our wildlife. Since then I've been making lists of what I need to see. My son has started videotaping everything we do and say, as though he might save us that way.

And so I'll sing with my wife and daughter – smiling at the camera, in this cabin in the woods – to celebrate the season, and to remind us someday, how happy we were.

This is the kind of book anyone will enjoy reading and when you're done give it to someone you love ... it's worth at least 20 points ... but who's counting.