Porch Light

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James Merrill House and the Angels Inside: Voice as Cosmology

A Collection of Poems and Critical Exegesis

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Abstract

Porch Light is a collection of poems that contains an enquiry into the relationship existing between mysticism, science (especially cosmology) and spirituality. Yet these poems also seek to discover this often problematic poetic-scientific hybrid space through the lens of human relationships and quotidian events ranging from cups of tea to sideshow suspension.

James Merrill House and the Angels Inside: Voice as Cosmology is an exegesis wrapped in a memoir and is based around my experience of visiting James Merrill House in Stonington, CT in 2011. Through an exploration of both James Merrill’s apartment and his long-poem The Changing Light at Sandover, I begin the process of examining my own poetic engagement with angels, the esoteric and popular science. With reference to Merrill’s long-poem, and by examining the work of poets such as joanne burns, Jack Spicer and Jorie Graham, I enter into dialogue with the poetic practices and thematic concerns contained within my own collection of poetry, Porch Light.