

Hiatus

Shira Dentz

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by Evelyn Reilly

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Poetry always lends itself to a feeling of the physical; it's the impulse to make language physical that often makes one want to make poetry in the first place. Both Julie Carr's *MEAD* and Evelyn Reilly's *Hiatus* can be said to be different shades of the physical. If there were words to describe these shades, they would be like colors. The sensation of musicality one is left with after reading Reilly's sound-driven *Hiatus* is acutely different: it's piercingly visceral. What makes the cumulative sensation of these two books strikingly differ is curious, particularly because of their uncanny similarities. Both take on the subjects of marriage in man-woman relationships, femaleness, the self as a conglomerate of voices and the sensibility of uncertainty and openness, and use dance as a metaphor. Stylistically, there are also similarities between the two books — and Reilly incorporates a line from Hopkins' "Epithalamion." Both authors weave other people's quotes into their poems, recycle certain words throughout their books, play columns of words against one another, and write poems that are almost entirely sound-based. Each book, however, has a formidable individuality. One of the definitions of 'hiatus' at the front of Reilly's book states: "the occurrence of two vowel sounds without pause or intervening consonantal sound, as in 're-examine'." This is, in fact, the *place* of Reilly's poems, a considered and endlessly reflective clarity, the sound-equivalent of white light refracting into rainbow and back.

Poems by **Shira Dentz** have appeared and/or are forthcoming in *Colorado Review*, *FIELD*, *Seneca Review*, *Chelsea*, *American Letters & Commentary*, *Salt Hill Journal*, *The Journal*, *HOW2*, *Barrow Street*, *Luna*^o and *Phoebe*. In 2002 she received the Poetry Society of America's Lyric Poem Award. Her poetry has aired on National Public Radio and has been featured on Poetry Daily, and her manuscript has been a semifinalist for the Walt Whitman Award and a finalist at Alice James Books. She has worked as a graphic artist, editor and NYC public high school teacher, and is currently in the Iowa Writers' Workshop.