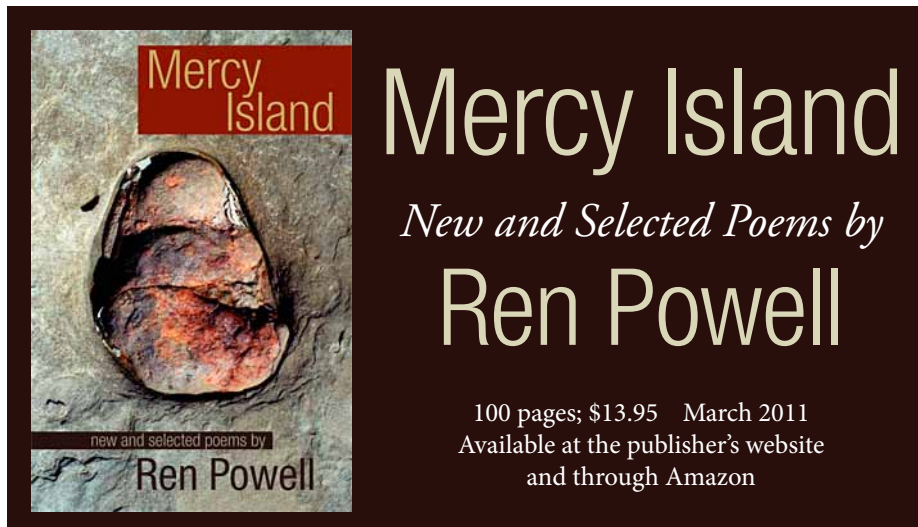


## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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# Mercy Island

*New and Selected Poems by*  
**Ren Powell**

100 pages; \$13.95 March 2011  
Available at the publisher's website  
and through Amazon

“Ren Powell takes the world in whole, ‘negotiates a new language,’ and gives it back to us in all its terror, strangeness, pain and beauty. Many of these poems read like fable: a woman with a gown of eggshells, a stone turtle that captures the essence of a childhood. Other poems testify to the resilience of the human spirit even after the unspeakable happens. I loved these poems for the freshness of the language, for their deep truths and most of all for their compassion.”

**Patricia Fagnoli**, author of six collections of poetry, winner of the ForeWord Magazine Silver Poetry Book of the Year Award, and Poet Laureate of New Hampshire, 2006-2009

Phoenicia Publishing is pleased to announce the March 2011 publication of Ren Powell's *Mercy Island: New and Selected Poems*, the author's first collection to be published in North America. These forty-one poems, written by Ren Powell between 1998 and 2010, depict a coming of age that begins in a claustrophobic American trailer park and expands into the kind of borderless existence shared by all emigrants and homesick travelers. Throughout this journey, the poet's fears—which are the fears we all harbor—are balanced by her unflinching witness to what is real, just, true, and beautiful. Even in the face of pain and disintegration, the poet refuses to relinquish her humor or her humanity.

**IN PERSON:** The author is available for media interviews and poetry readings, discussions, and book signings. Please contact the publisher for details.

“Like the ages-old ghazal, of which I counted three in this collection, Ren Powell's poetry evokes musicality and sung lament.

Like the couplets of a ghazal, the lines of her poems form discrete, seemingly unconnected units that nevertheless resonate a unity through their juxtapositionings.

Like one long ghazal, these poems are all strung together on a refrain; on a recurrence of barely suppressed chaos—nightmare, perhaps; not a spoken refrain, but an unspoken refrain—as if the narrator, only by ‘negotiating a new language’ is able to speak of the unspeakable, to say the unsayable.”

**Moira Richards**, South African poet and author; co-editor of *Letters to the World: poems from the Wom-po Listserv*, a collection of 259 poets spanning 19 countries and five continents

“There is an intoxicating blend of lyricism and narrative in Ren Powell's poems. With honesty and exhilarating invention, she writes of diverse subjects—a Palestinian poet, the flowering shroud of a spinster, a murdered 17-year old Mexican girl. What unifies these poems is intense energy and fierce craftsmanship.

At the heart of this collection is ‘Red-eared Slider’. Both accessible and elusive, sophisticated and scandalous, this poem returns to the speaker's childhood to contemplate the violent death of her brother.

Reading Ren Powell's poetry is like watching the changing light on the North Sea: the surface effects are stunning, the depths always in motion.”

**Ted Deppe** is the author of four books, most recently *Orpheus on the Red Line*, and coordinator of the Stonecoast in Ireland MFA program



**Ren (Katherine) Powell** is a writer, translator, poet, and native Californian living on the west coast of Norway. She has published four full-length collections of poetry and eleven books of translations, and her poetry has been translated and published in six languages.

Ren has a BA in Theater Arts and received her doctorate in Creative Writing from Lancaster University in England in January, 2011. She has taught theater and drama at a performing arts school for ten years and her dramatic works have been performed in the U.S., Canada and Norway.

The founding editor of the online literary journals *Protest Poems.org* and *Babel Fruit: Writing Under the Influence*, Ren also represented Norway on the International PEN Women Writers' Committee, and helped establish the International Cities of Refuge Network in Europe.

