



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: M'Bilia Meekers
225.578.5104 / mmeekers@lsu.edu

New Poetry Collection Reckons with Captain Cook's Voyages to Tahiti
*LSU Press will publish *Passing Worlds* in August*

"Faithful to the bones of fact and perceptively fleshing them out, in *Passing Worlds: Tahiti in the Era of Captain Cook* Elizabeth Holmes finds a rhythm in the story and the tectonic grind of one culture on another."—Sarah Lindsay

"Elizabeth Holmes's compelling narrative of early expeditions to Tahiti, as well as her emotionally complex depictions of both the explorers and the islanders, make *Passing Worlds* a riveting and unforgettable book. In their masterful weavings of documentary material and lyrical transformations, the poems invite us to ponder the central importance of cultural difference and miscommunication in our understanding of history. With both fascination and dismay, we follow the ill-fated incursions of one world into another."—Martha Collins

Baton Rouge—Deeply researched and deeply felt, *Passing Worlds: Tahiti in the Era of Captain Cook* is a poetic reimagining of the first encounters of Europeans and Tahitians during the historic voyages of Captain James Cook. Although the expeditions brought back impressive stores of knowledge and new plant and animal specimens, those scientific rewards came at a high human cost. Examining both imperialism and exploration, Holmes illuminates the cultural exchanges, clashes, miscommunications, and friendships that developed during these European sojourns, including the Tahitians' impressions of their strange visitors, the ways the British played into island politics, and how the "discovery" of Tahiti—with its easy life, absence of poverty, and liberal sexuality—influenced European ideas.

Part narrative, part lyric, the poems speak in multiple voices, bringing to life a fascinating cast of characters, from the black servants and common sailors to the aristocratic naturalist Joseph Banks, a female Tahitian leader, and an island girl caught in a system of sexual commerce. Marking the 250th anniversary of the launch of the *Endeavour*, which carried Captain Cook on his first voyage around the world, *Passing Worlds* is a poignant and imaginative depiction of a key point in a historic voyage and of a society whose delicate balance was altered and finally devastated by the impact of a far different one.

Elizabeth Holmes is the author of two previous books of poetry, *The Patience of the Cloud Photographer* and *The Playhouse Near Dark*. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Southern Review*, and many other journals. She lives in Ithaca, New York.

20 August 2018
108 pages, 6 x 9
978-0-8071-6823-3
Paper \$19.95, ebook available
LSU Press Paperback Original
Poetry

To request a review copy or set up an interview with the author,
please contact M'Bilia Meekers at mmeekers@lsu.edu.

###