



# Divine Ratios

Poems

JACQUELINE OSHEROW

## PRAISE FOR *DIVINE RATIOS*

“In the poems of *Divine Ratios*, lyric form, like passionate intellection, becomes as natural as breathing. Jacqueline Osherow is splendidly intoxicated with the plenitude of the sensuous world and the history of humans making sense through art, and grants us privileged access to this abundant realm. She is a national treasure. We have no one like her.”  
—Linda Gregerson

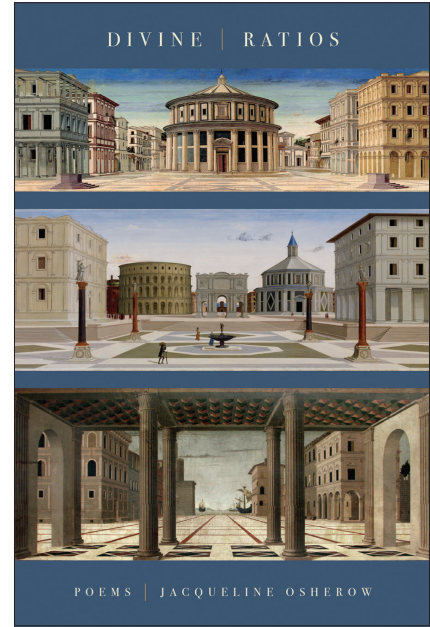
“There is such wisdom and music in all of Jacqueline Osherow’s work, but I am especially partial to *Divine Ratios*, for these poems’ expansive lyricism, their big-hearted cosmologies. . . . Boundless gratitude for these poems’ music and deep generosity of spirit.”—Ilya Kaminsky

“*Divine Ratios* is proof that Osherow’s ear remains an astonishing gift any poet writing in English would envy.”—Jericho Brown

The reach of *Divine Ratios* is global, ranging from Tang Dynasty China and the Florentine Renaissance to contemporary Baltimore, post–World War II Berlin, and the landscapes of the Mountain West. The speed and mobility evoked in this new collection by Jacqueline Osherow are not only physical—a traveler’s movement in a crowded, thrilling world—but imaginative, and its poetic idiom is no less varied, as a breezy conversational tone serves as a counterpoint to traditional form. With striking juxtapositions of natural and cultural wonders, this enrapturing volume asks, what is the right proportion—or “ratio”—for living in a world of such splendors, horrors, and possibilities?

### Camouflage

An abandoned feather: a dried-out leaf;  
a branch: a shed antler; a toad: a stone;  
in the high tawny grass a tawny bas-relief  
of half-hidden pronghorns on the run;  
geese overhead: gridlocked drivers, close,  
leaning on their horns; thunder: a truck  
barreling down my street, rattling windows  
(an enormous semi, when the earthquake struck).  
A branchless tree trunk is an obelisk  
until its top lifts off, flaps hulking wings  
and glides: a great horned owl prowling at dusk.  
Soon, perhaps we’ll learn—a cricket sings  
or is that just evening’s quickening pulse?—  
to rise and reappear as something else.



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Poetry



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**JACQUELINE OSHEROW** is the author of eight previous collections of poems. She has received grants from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Ingram Merrill Foundation and was awarded the Witter Bynner Prize from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. She is Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Utah.

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