



TRETHEWEY

United States Poet Laureate

NATASHA TRETHEWEY

AN AFTERNOON WITH

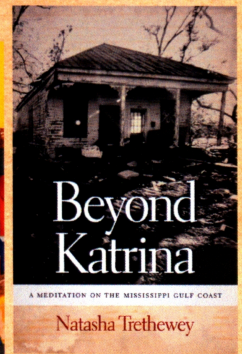
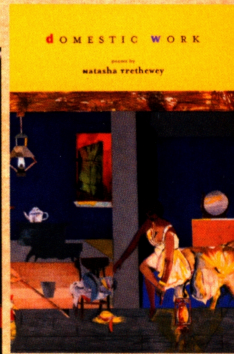
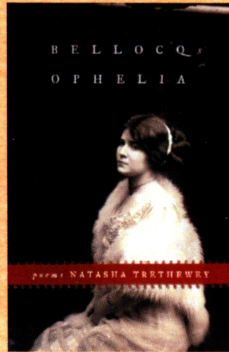
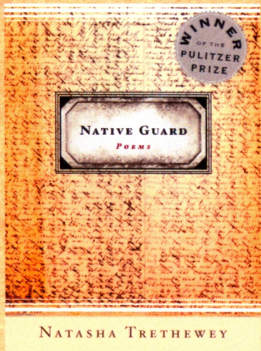
In the dream, I am with the Fugitive
Poets. We're gathered for a photograph.
Behind us, the skyline of Atlanta
hidden by the photographer's backdrop —
a lush pasture, green, full of soft-eyed cows
lowing, a chant that sounds like *no, no. Yes,*
I say to the glass of bourbon I'm offered.

We're lining up now — Robert Penn Warren,
his voice just audible above the drone
of bulldozers, telling us where to stand.
Say "race," the photographer croons. I'm in
blackface again when the flash freezes us.
My father's white, I tell them, *and rural.*
You don't hate the South? they ask. *You don't hate it?*

"Pastoral" — From *Native Guard*

TRETHEWEY

LAFAYETTE
COLLEGE



NATASHA TRETHEWEY, a native of Gulfport, Mississippi, is the nineteenth Poet Laureate of the United States (2012-2014) and the author of four collections of poetry, *Domestic Work* (2000); *Bellocq's Ophelia* (2002); *Native Guard* (2006) – for which she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize – and, most recently, *Thrall*, (2012). Her book of creative nonfiction, *Beyond Katrina: A Meditation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast*, appeared in 2010. She is the recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Beinecke Library at Yale, and the Bunting Fellowship Program of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard. A faculty member at Emory University, she is Robert W. Woodruff Professor of English and Creative Writing.

In his citation appointing Trethewey Poet Laureate, Librarian of Congress James Billington wrote, “Her poems dig beneath the surface of history – personal or communal, from childhood or from a century ago – to explore the human struggles that we all face.” Now in her second term as Poet Laureate, her signature project is a feature on the PBS NewsHour Poetry Series known as “Where Poetry Lives.” In this series, Trethewey travels with Senior Correspondent Jeffrey Brown to various cities across the United States, exploring the connections between societal issues and poetry, literature, and her own personal experiences. She also serves as the State Poet Laureate of Mississippi (2012-2016).

THE 2014 JOHN L. HATFIELD '67 LECTURE



A READING WITH COMMENTARY BY

Natasha Trethewey

United States Poet Laureate

