Poet finds wisdom in the garden in his new collection

PITTSBURGH—Poet Ross Gay described his third collection *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude* as a sustained meditation on that which goes away—loved ones, the seasons, the earth as we know it. “This is a book that studies the wisdom of the garden and orchard,” he said, “those places where all—death, sorrow, loss—is converted into what might, with patience, nourish us.”

Gay hopes his exploration of gardening and planting will intrigue readers who ordinarily might not reach for a poetry book.

. . . and thank you to the man all night long / hosing a mist on his early-bloomed / peach tree so that the hard frost / not waste the crop, the ice / in his beard and the ghosts / lifting from him when the warming sun / told him sleep now; thank you . . .

“These poems are shout outs to earth’s abundance: the fruits, blooms, meals, insects, waters, conversations, trees, embraces, and helping hands—the taken-for-granted wonders that make life worth living, even in the face of death,” said Evie Schockley in praise of Gay’s work. “Lyric and narrative, elegy and epithalamion, intoxicated and intoxicating—expansive, but breathlessly uttered, urgent. Ross Gay has much to say to you—yes, dear reader, you—and you definitely want to hear it.”

Aimee Nezhukumatathil commented, “Gay offers up a muscled poetry of a thousand surprises, giving us a powerful collection that fireworks even the bleakest nights with ardency and grace. Few contemporary poets risk singing such a singular compassion for the wounded world with this kind of inimitable musicality, intelligence, and intoxicating joy.”

Gay is assistant professor of English at Indiana University and the author of two other poetry collections: *Against Which* and *Bringing the Shovel Down*. His poems have appeared in *American Poetry Review, Atlanta Review, Harvard Review, Gulf Coast,* and *Ploughshares*, among other publications. Gay also teaches in the low-residency MFA program at New England College and is a Cave Canem Fellow.

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*Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*, poems by Ross Gay, is published by the University of Pittsburgh Press.

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