Poet continues her love affair with words and lingo in new collection

PITTSBURGH—Poet Barbara Hamby once said that learning to read was “the most miraculous thing that ever happened to me.” Ever since then, she explained in an interview with Story South, “I’ve never stopped collecting words... I never do anything or have anything happen to me that the thought does not cross my mind—how could I use this in a poem?”

The Floridian’s latest collection of words, On the Street of Divine Love: New and Selected Poems, has just been published by the University of Pittsburgh Press.

Former U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins praised her work by saying, “Hamby’s poems are wild, outspoken, seriously funny, motor-mouth rambles that take us through hoops of association to places both unexpected and unimpeachable. This new and selected offers a generous helping of poems so crackling with references and busy with verbal energy you might feel them buzzing in your hands.”

Hamby is the author of four poetry collections, including All-Night Lingo Tango and Babel, winner of the Donald Hall Prize in Poetry. Her book of linked stories, Lester Higata’s 20th Century, received the 2010 Iowa Short Fiction Award/John Simmons Award. She also coedited an anthology of poetry, Seriously Funny, with her husband David Kirby.

Hamby is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Kate Tufts Award, and numerous other honors. Her poems have been widely anthologized, including Best American Poetry 2000, 2009 and 2010. She is Distinguished University Scholar at Florida State University, specializing in poetry and fiction.

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On the Street of Divine Love: New and Selected Poems by Barbara Hamby, is published by the University of Pittsburgh Press.
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