

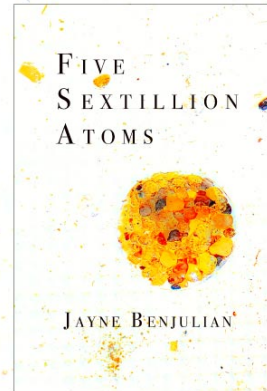
FIVE SEXTILLION ATOMS



JAYNE BENJULIAN

MEDIA KIT

INTRODUCTION



In *Five Sextillion Atoms*, poet Jayne Benjulian distills matters of public and family history into the deeply personal: the rich inner worlds of child and mother. In poems of formal compression, tautness, acuity of imagery and epigrammatic exactitude, we encounter the death of a mother, father who betrays his children, followed by motherhood peeled of its idyllic fantasies. These starkly honest poems are pared down to the core. Nuanced and gripping, *Five Sextillion Atoms* is the debut of a skilled portraitist and satirist.

“In a single drop of water there are five sextillion atoms, yet Earth in relation to the rest of the universe is infinitely smaller still by comparison. Jayne Benjulian takes this astonishing fact for the title of her first collection of poetry and aptly so, for these poems hold vast reaches of perception, loss, personal and family history, all with admirable compression. Diamond edged, fiercely honest, Benjulian's work pulses with lyric intensity.”

—Daniel Tobin, author of *World Tree*

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For media inquiries & bookings, please contact Clare Morin, info@claremorin.com / (207) 233 8612

SELECT PRAISE

“Five Sextillion Atoms is a highly distinctive and gripping book notable for the ways in which it combines the stories of family history with larger matters of public history. I was struck repeatedly by the formal compression of the poems, the tautness and acuity of the imagery and the epigrammatic exactitude of the closings. While the concerns are often highly elegiac, the poems scrupulously avoid sentimentality and effusions. Benjulian has terrific skills as a portraitist and satirist, and many of the poems are sly and wry examples of these talents.”

—David Wojahn, author of *Second Things*

“What distinguishes Benjulian's debut collection is the enormous range of history—personal and world—it covers and does so by employing spare, unadorned language, and does so while withholding all but essential narrative, and does so by focusing the reader's attention to vivid, precise details that arise from memory and present day occurrences, details that are tiny and large at once. *Five Sextillion Atoms* deserves our attention and our praise.”

—Martha Rhodes, author of *The Beds*

ABOUT JAYNE



Jayne Benjulian has always been a writer. She grew up in suburban backyards near New York City and spent summers swimming in the Atlantic Ocean. Drawn to coastlines, she also lived on the West Coast—on an island, in a cabin in the hills, and a house under the redwoods. She began writing as a young girl, leaving letters under the mattress to read years later and see who she had been. Her work appears in numerous journals, including *Agni*, *Barrow Street*, *Poet Lore*, *Ms.*, *Nimrod International*, *Women's Review of Books* and *Poetry Daily*.

Jayne's careers have been as varied and many as places she has lived: she served as chief speechwriter at Apple, investigator for the public defender in King County, Washington, and director of new play development at Magic Theater. She was an Ossabaw Island Project Fellow; a teaching fellow at Emory University, where she earned an MA; a lecturer in the Graduate Program in Theater at San Francisco State University; and a Fulbright Teaching Fellow in Lyon, France. She holds an MFA from the Warren Wilson Program for Writers. She lives in Massachusetts and hikes the Berkshire Hills with her long-haired German shepherd, Ophelia, but she misses her big, brash Pacific Ocean. *Five Sextillion Atoms* is her first collection.

www.JayneBenjulian.com

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