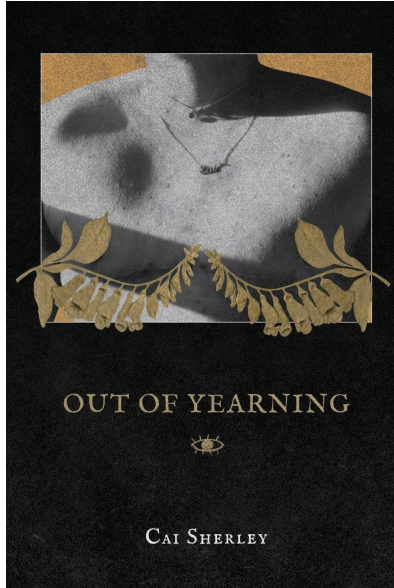


NEW FROM SIBLING RIVALRY PRESS

a chapbook of poetry

OUT OF YEARNING

CAI SHERLEY



SRP BRIDGES SERIES #3

Curated by Kay Ulanday Barrett

ISBN: 979-8-950353-04-8

Publication Date: October 15, 2026

Retail Price: \$15.00

6 x 9" Paperback; 44 Pages

Distributed by Ingram and Sibling Rivalry Press

Author is available for appearances and interviews

Publisher Contact: info@siblingrivalrypress.com

Author Website: www.caisherley.com

Trade, library, and educational discounts available

Desk copies available for educators

SYNOPSIS

In *Out of Yearning*, Black trans poet Cai Sherley transforms yearning into revelation. These luminous poems navigate gender transition, Black ancestry, family, music, grief, and ecstatic self-discovery through forms as inventive as their vision. By turns intimate and celebratory, Sherley's work refuses shame in favor of embodiment, tenderness, and the powerful act of claiming the body as one's own. A stunning debut, *Out of Yearning* marks the arrival of a vital new voice in contemporary American poetry, one we believe will help carry the art form into its future.

BIOGRAPHY

CAI SHERLEY (he/him) is a Black trans poet-educator with roots in Boston, Massachusetts. A two-time Pushcart Prize nominee, his work can be found in *Beestung*, *Best New Poets*, *swamp pink*, *Peach Mag*, and *Tupelo*, among others, as well as the anthology *I Feel Nothing Like Good: Poets Against Genocide*. He has found homes at The Watering Hole, Brooklyn Poets, Tin House, Lambda, and the Chicago Poetry Center, and is a member of both the Crossroads Writers Collective and Trans Corner Poets. His work centers Black trans life, past and present, in the United States. He received an MFA in Creative Writing from NYU and lives in Western Massachusetts.



DISTURB/ENRAPTURE
WWW.SIBLINGRIVALRYPRESS.COM

Keywords: Trans Poetry, Queer Poetry, LGBTQ+ Voices, Gender Identity, Gender Transition, Black Trans Poetry, Black LGBTQ Voices, Trans Liberation, Self-Creation, Survival and Resilience, Body Politics, Lineage, Family, Courage



half-light

i dare to imagine him inside me—
a boy with my mother's lashes
& ribs unafraid of touch, his
body in the full light.
broad-shouldered & grin wild,
soft palmed & clean shaven,
a foxglove in the meadowing night.
the new moon
offers its torch
to the sound of his tenor,
the train moving in harmony
with his breakless body.
i dare to imagine him
inside me, the skies
changing until we are one
effigy, colored into the same
taught indigo; another strange blue.



SIBLING RIVALRY PRESS
DISTURB/ENRAPTURE

***Out of Yearning* is the third of the Bridges Series, hosted by Sibling Rivalry Press, an annual chapbook series curated each year by a different poet invited to serve as guest editor and curator. Each curator selects four authors whose chapbooks will be published by Sibling Rivalry Press, creating space for new voices, unexpected conversations, and vibrant literary community. Rooted in SRP's core belief that poetry builds bridges and saves lives, the series seeks to connect writers across identities, geographies, generations, and experiences while championing work that is fearless and transformative.**

The 2026 curator is Kay Ulanday Barrett.

DISTURB/ENRAPTURE
WWW.SIBLINGRIVALRYPRESS.COM

PRAISE FOR OUT OF YEARNING

If “songs are telephone wires to the dead,” as Cai Sherley tells us, then *Out of Yearning* is an entire album of chants to a universe of trans hearts—past, present, and future. They do so with physicality and gorgeous lyric, filled with the sacred work of loving ourselves and those like us. I can honestly say I have been deeply changed by these poems.

—Samuel Ace, author of *Meet Me There*

Out of Yearning is a delightfully trans set of poems that feel like a deep breath. With formal versatility and inventive syntax (“Laughter spills like gin from glasses / Ringwormed with salt”), this chapbook will make you want to listen to LaBelle, touch the lines on your chest, and thank god and the gays for good poetry.

—KB Brookins, author of *Pretty: A Memoir*

There is a colorful, ethereal syncopation to Cai’s corporeal excavations; in his work, like the tenderest fingertips ghosting over new scar tissue, we find a new rhythm of becoming. Equal parts Black jubilee and reverent solemnity, *Out of Yearning* finds its voice through whispering the burgeoning, impelling truths-of-self and bellowing the sorrowful hymnals of those truths gone long unsung. Cai displays an uncanny dexterity of craft, an unflinching fidelity to bearing witness, and an unrelenting penchant for dreaming. *Out of Yearning* is bursting, elegiac—and truly, it is poetry for healing.

—Kelsey L. Smoot, author of *SOULMATE AS A VERB*

Quick, there’s new sermon and illumination out and Cai Sherley ushers all of it! Across delineations of space and time, *Out Of Yearning* takes vulnerability and precision, channeling Black and trans innovations with a memorable poignancy. Each line is a beckoning and reveling, catapulted by elation and grief in a breathtaking rotation. As a consummate poet, Cai doesn’t just explore but unfurl with a poetic craft that cascades and questions utilizing various forms—cento, triolet, haiku, ghazal, and more genre-bending skill seamlessly at his disposal. Through ghosts, song, and future making, readers will feel altered and can’t help but re-consider what it means to not only to dream, but to map lineages with your full chest, with scars and all. What a celebration: What a supreme debut work!

- Kay Ulanday Barrett -

Curator of the 2026 Bridges Series, winner of the 2022 Cy Twombly Award for Poetry, and author of *More Than Organs*, a Lambda Literary Finalist & Stonewall Honor Award Book.