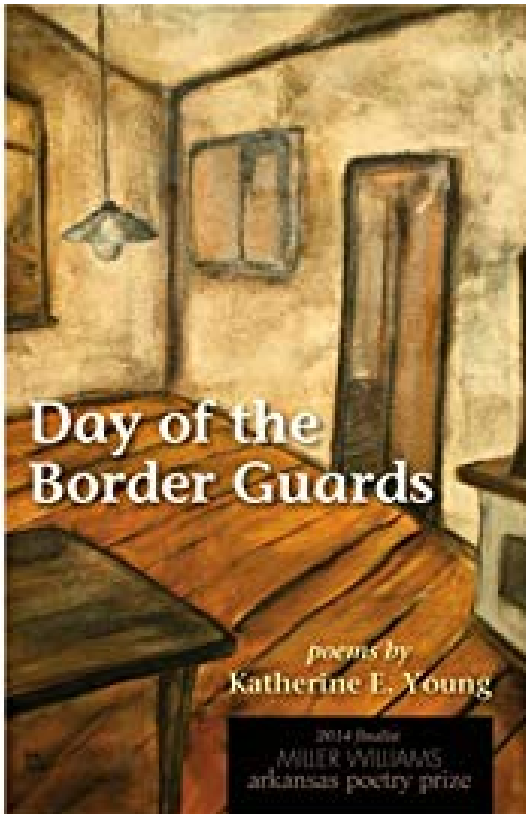


Day of the Border Guards: Poems



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Day of the Border Guards, the debut collection from Katherine E. Young, is set entirely in Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union. The ghosts of Russian writers Pushkin, Mandelstam, Tsvetayeva, and many others wander through these poems, making tea, fighting with their relatives, cursing faith lovers. Bulgakov's heroine Margarita describes meeting the Master; Lermontov's grandmother worries that the young poet is wasting his life. Lady Macbeth is alive and well and living in post-Soviet Georgia. Enemies stalk the margins: hostile warlords, informants, the secret police. A man falls through the ice into a ruptured hot-water pipe, nuclear reactors melt down, an airplane lands on Red Square.

Perestroika arrives and departs, like other fashions. A marriage falters. The phone rings in the middle of the night in a Siberian hotel. The corpse of a gypsy king boards a plane for Moscow. Young, who also translates Russian poetry and prose, has lived and worked in Russia and the Soviet Union off and on since 1981: not surprisingly, then, these poems—originally published in *The Carolina Quarterly*, *The Iowa Review*, and *The Massachusetts Review*, among others—willfully skip across borders of language, culture, and literary tradition, exploring Russian and North American poetic traditions and celebrating both.