

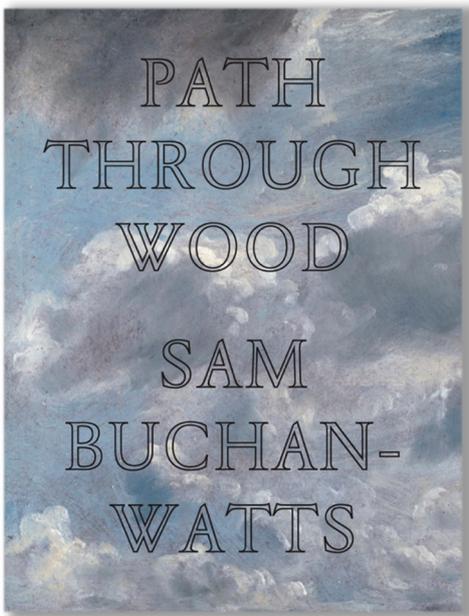
PRESS RELEASE: POETRY

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# Path Through Wood

Sam Buchan-Watts

Published: 12 October 2021  
225 x 170mm, 76pp. | £12.00 RRP  
ISBN: 978-1-913513-11-5



In Sam Buchan-Watts' debut collection considers the capacity contemporary lyric poetry has to reflect social change. The many ethical dilemmas these poems enact listen in to the noise which society makes to distract itself – from carceral space to questions of asylum, masculinity and the boundaries of aesthetic play.

Described by the Guardian as a 'sceptical, serious, versatile writer', Buchan-Watts variously inhabits poetic form, exposing the interplay of sound, sense and desire. Returning repeatedly to the figure of a vulnerable boy approaching the thicket of adolescence, these are poems that are listening in when they're not supposed to, distracted when they should be listening in, and finding secret listeners behind the arras. In this disquieting terrain we must hold ourselves to account for what we hear and what we make of what we hear.



**Sam Buchan-Watts** is the author of *Faber New Poets 15* and co-editor, with Lavinia Singer, of *Try To Be Better* (Prototype, 2019), a creative-critical engagement with W. S. Graham. He is the recipient of an Eric Gregory Award (2016) and a Northern Writers' Award for Poetry (2019). In 2018 he undertook a fellowship at the Yale Center for British Art and he is currently a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at Newcastle University.

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Praise for *Path Through Wood*

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'This is poetry of stylish incisiveness and fascinating intelligence. Buchan-Watts has digested a wide range of disparate and incongruous influences and inspirations only to speak in his own unusually distinctive voice. The tempered exuberance of these poems – their new kind of storytelling, their strangely evocative coherence – is at once alluring and disarming. It is a very remarkable book.'

– **Adam Phillips**

'This is a book poised between delicacy and ferocity, itinerary and distillation: like the cloud forms and studies evoked here, these poems are shifting, mutable, provocatively shimmering condensations. Refugees, prisons, questions of asylum; intimacies and boundaries; boyhood, masculinity, what it is to be "one with others": all here, in ways rich, strange, sensuous, sonically gorgeous.'

– **Maureen N. McLane**

'In this accumulating revelation of a book, Sam Buchan-Watts makes visible music from the kinds of vernacular incantations that define our restless path through the dark wood at the center of human life. Poetry will feel the impact of *Path Through Wood* for many years.'

– **Douglas Crase**

'Contemplation and violence, and the purpose of art are among the complex themes in this formally inventive and persistently alert, allusive collection that had me enthralled.'

– **Daljit Nagra**

'One of the most playful and cerebral poets of our time, Sam Buchan-Watts in his debut *Path Through Wood* generates a nervous energy that reflects our age of anxiety about the interconnectedness between existence and extinction, liberty and injustice, sense and nonsense, sound and sight, clouds and trees. His poems evaporate and condense like dreamworks that reveal the intimacy and puzzlement of listening, colouring, remembering and desiring. Fearlessly inventive and microscopically curious, he observes the physical and metaphysical worlds through "the threshold between inner and outer ear", with wit, style and candour.'

– **Kit Fan**

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## About Prototype

Prototype was founded in 2019 by Jess Chandler, co-founder of the independent publishing houses Test Centre and House Sparrow Press. Established to continue and develop the work begun by Test Centre, Prototype is committed to creating new possibilities in the publishing of fiction and poetry through a flexible, interdisciplinary approach. Through the discovery of high-quality work across genres, Prototype strives to increase audiences for experimental writing.

Recent titles include Caleb Klaces' acclaimed debut novel *Fatherhood* (longlisted for the Republic of Consciousness Prize), Jen Calleja's *I'm Afraid That's All We've Got Time For*, Otis Mensah's *Safe Metamorphosis* and Turner Prize-winning artist Helen Marten's *The Boiled in Between*. Forthcoming are novels by Lucie Elven and poetry collections by Lila Matsumoto and Lucy Mercer.

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