

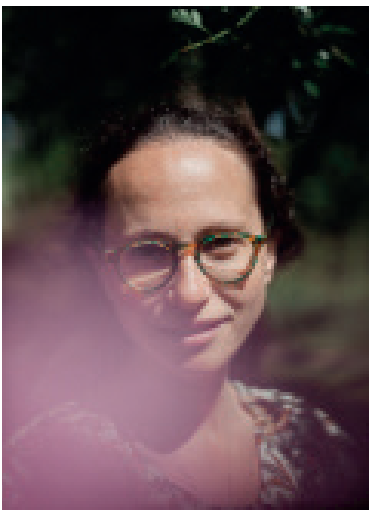
# ARTIFICE

*Lavinia Singer*



*Artifice* is an exploration of the art of making. Its poems celebrate the artistry of craftsmanship: how works relate to beauty, and how they might inspire or ensnare. They consider issues of artificiality and authenticity, 'the man-made' and 'the natural'. They warn of artfulness, in the sense of cunning or deception. And they wonder at the mystery of art and language, that which resolutely remains unknown or ineffable.

For *Artifice* is as much riddle as revelation, stirring delight and discomfort as it delves into the nature of aesthetics and the creative process. How are works made and how do they make us, in turn? What worlds can be built from words? This book dwells in possibility, presenting an ambiguous space for contemplation, connection and, ideally, hope – for 'to marvel is the beginning of knowledge' (E. H. Gombrich).



Lavinia Singer is the author of the pamphlet *Ornaments: A Handbook* (If a Leaf Falls/Glyph Press, 2020) and co-editor of *Try To Be Better* (Prototype, 2019), a creative-critical engagement with the work of W. S. Graham. Her poetry has been awarded the Newdigate Prize, the SMV Heritage Poetry Competition, the Pre-Raphaelite Society Poetry Prize; shortlisted for the inaugural White Review Poetry Prize, the Margaret Hewson Award for New Writing and the Jane Martin Poetry Prize; and longlisted for the National Poetry Competition. She works as an editor of poetry at Faber. *Artifice* is her first full collection of poetry.

For press enquiries please contact Rory Cook at [rory@prototypepublishing.co.uk](mailto:rory@prototypepublishing.co.uk)

8 March 2023

RRP £12

Paperback

ISBN: 978-1-913513-35-1

## PRAISE FOR *ARTIFICE*

'These are stunning poems drawn out of a richness in language that melds with notions of craftwork and the microcosm. Singer invites us to discard what is known of the world, and to rebuild it through traversing spaces of beauty and art.' – **Denise Saul**

'Through their deep attention and engagement with ever-changing surfaces and the materiality of representations, the poems in *Artifice* open outwards into encounters with the mystical and divine. This startling debut collection offers the reader a set of compasses that orient us towards that which is veiled, the unspeakable and unknown – what more could we ask for?' – **Lucy Mercer**

'In this daring, exquisitely crafted collection, poems are plotters, pathfinders, and forms of enchantment in a darkening world. *Artifice* glitters with moments of revelation, which emerge from the mysteries of invention, the perils of climate crisis, the weight of passing time. Over five distinctive parts, it explores what it is to be artful in the twenty-first century, from conjuring ancient forms to making new ones tremble. Here, the eye is reminded of all that continues to deceive it, of all the wonders that have yet to dance before it, of all the ways in which it does not know. Always on the edge of becoming something else, Singer's poems are thrillingly unsettled and searching. In her hands, poetry bears a wide horizon of astonishment.' – **Natalie Ferris**

## EXTRACT

### Work Study

The work takes her to Amsterdam, LA and Seoul. Or else, it's work in the studio with the old toilet bowls stuffed with soil and seedlings, cold light streaks each morning, the school playground crashing up next door. A recurrent cat. It's true she works most days, the routine becoming normality, just work. This: her office, her desk. Here's the most recent, what she's been working on for weeks now – months? – existing before it's itself, bleeding paint. So, how does it work – I mean, physicalities, substance shift, where daily work turns to more than just that? The brush pots, clippings, tinted tea mugs and dead colour worked into wall creases, packages marked 'sold' stacked by catalogues webbed in dust; out of, I'd almost call it junk, the whole works, it is made – the Work.

## ABOUT PROTOTYPE

Prototype, established in 2019, is committed to creating new possibilities in the publishing of fiction and poetry through a flexible, interdisciplinary approach. Recent prose titles include Yuri Felsen's lost modernist novel *Deceit*, in its first English translation by Bryan Karetnyk, Lucie Elven's acclaimed debut novel *The Weak Spot*, and *The Boiled in Between*, the debut novel by Turner Prize-winning artist Helen Marten. Recent poetry titles include *Journeys Across Breath*, the first volume of collected poems by Stephen Watts, Lucy Mercer's debut collection *Emblem*, which was The Poetry Book Society's Summer Choice for 2022, and Lila Matsumoto's *Two Twin Pipes Sprout Water* was a Poetry Book Society Recommendation for Winter 2021. Recent titles from House Sparrow Press, an imprint of Prototype, include Derek Jarman's *Through the Billboard Promised Land Without Ever Stopping*.