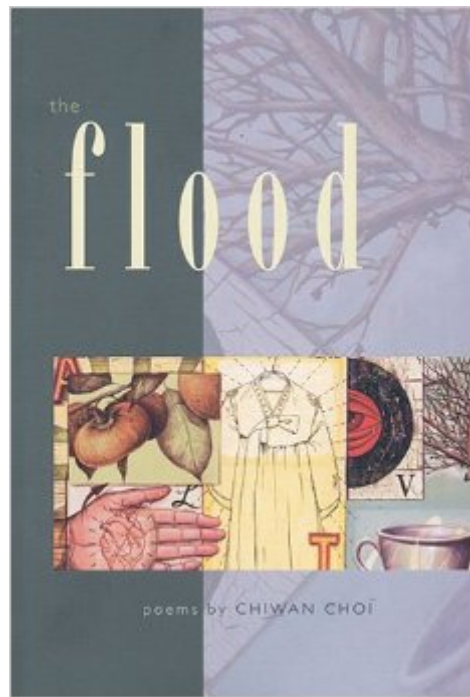


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# The Flood



## Synopsis

When I first started working on *The Flood*, the title piece from this collection of poems, I thought it was about the World, about Politics, about Race, about all the things that begin with capital letters that make up Life. And in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina came and left such destruction, opening up old social wounds and sins in the process, I thought this was my chance to be big, to be grand, to tackle the important subjects that important artists are seemingly never afraid of. I was going to make my statement. I was going to be heard. I was going to leave my mark. With this statement, Chiwan Cho begins to describe the impulses behind this most promising and powerful collection of poetry. His voice gives his poems a deep level of intimacy, while his economy of language distinguishes his work as authentic and accessible. This collection is a journey to discover the poet, Chiwan, as a man, as a Korean, as a son, as a husband, as a writer. He embraces the smallest moments in his life—finding key details, examining them, breaking them down and rebuilding them, to see if, somewhere in the smallest fragments, both trivial and tragic, the poet can discover himself, reflected, resonating with his father teaching him how to survive. Chiwan says that in the process of writing the poems in *The Flood*, he often repeated to myself Ezra Pound's Canto 117, the line "That I have lost my center/fighting the world." By the time Chiwan polished each line in each poem, he'd found that center again, even if it was for a fleeting moment. "Over eight years after I wrote the first words of this poem I thought I'd never finish, I found what I had lost. My core. My heart," Chiwan says. "It was never about wars and tyrants and poverty nor about any of the Isms that want to suffocate us each and every day. I realized how far off the track I'd gone without realizing it."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Flood is an engrossing and moving poetry collection. It's vivid, direct and accessible, and is something even non-poetry lovers would enjoy. I really loved that there was a long poem, The Flood, after all of the short ones - I thought that was a cool way to mix it up and also to showcase more of the author's talents. It was nice to see Choi really resist formal constraints and do whatever he wanted or needed to make sure that last poem said everything.

The Flood is a beautiful collection that is honest and raw. There are so many beautiful images and concepts in the collection that deserve hours of contemplation and praise. I have had the great opportunity to see Chiwan Choi read and it did not disappoint. The work is modern and I would definitely recommend it to anyone who is looking for poetry, either newcomers or old alike.

Poems in this, Choi's first\* book-length collection, quickly get down under the surface and way under your skin. Some are like stones tossed into a clear lake. Others are dazzling diamonds. All are worthwhile. For me, the ones which mention his father resonate the most deeply. Here are a few lines from his poem, Secrets: in the sun we won't need each other. in the sun we will know what we're hiding. Get your hands on a copy of this book; the rewards are there for the taking.\* Choi is no new newcomer to the Los Angeles poetry scene, by any stretch.

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