

Katharine Kilalea

Writer - Fiction

Katharine Kilalea grew up in South Africa and moved to the UK to study for an M.A. in Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia. Her debut poetry collection, *One Eye'd Leigh* (2009), was shortlisted for the Costa Poetry Award and longlisted for the Dylan Thomas Prize for writers under 30. She worked for many years in an architecture practice and is completing a PhD at the University of Sheffield on the experience of space in poetry. She lives in London.



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Publications

Poetry

Publication Details	Notes
One Eye'd Leigh 2009 Carcenet Press Ltd	"One Eye'd Leigh" is a book of portraits, experiments and objects made of words. They find their locations between Cape Town and London, between the dawn of the new millennium and the present day. Guided by a biographical thread, in her first collection Kate Kilalea borrows the techniques of a craftsman to transform material into new shapes: an artist's concentrated gaze at the very particular subject in her portrait poems; an embroiderer's delicate craft of stitching to create a paced poetry, meticulous in detail. Her language is familiar, her forms transparent. She leads readers through a landscape in which the lucid angles of a chair might express love more precisely than the lines of a sonnet. It is the ways in which these poems turn what is familiar into something strange and new, what is stable fluid, and how out of light darkness is seen to shine, that make these poems powerful, haunting and original.

Fiction

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Ok, Mr. Field	Mr. Field wants a new life, a life cleansed of the old one's disappointments. A concert pianist on the London scene, his career is upended when the train he is travelling on crashes into the wall at the end of a tunnel. The accident splinters his left wrist, jeopardizing his musical ambitions. On a whim, he uses his compensation pay-out to buy a house he has seen only once in a newspaper photograph, a replica of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye on a stretch of coast outside Cape Town. Together with his wife, Mim, Mr. Field sets out in the hope that the house will make him happier, or at least less unhappy.
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But as time passes, the house--which Le Corbusier designed as "a machine for living"--begins to have a disturbing effect on Mr. Field. Its narrow windows educate him in the pleasures of frustrated desire. Its sequence of spaces, which seem to lead toward and away from their destinations at once, mirror his sense of being increasingly cut off from the world and from other people. When his wife inexplicably leaves him, Mr. Field can barely summon the will to search for her. Alone in the decaying house, he finds himself unglued from reality and possessed by a longing for a perverse kind of intimacy.
