



## GRETA STODDART

# ALIVE ALIVE O

When people we love die, somewhere in the grief there may be a sense of wonder: we can't believe it, where have they gone, what are they now, what does that make us? We are led to question the designs and very limits of life itself.

**GRETA STODDART** was born in 1966 in Oxfordshire. She grew up in Belgium and Oxford before going on to study drama at Manchester University, then at the École Jacques Lecoq in Paris. She co-founded the theatre company Brouhaha in London, touring the UK and Europe. She has lived in Devon since 2007.

Her first collection *At Home in the Dark* (Anvil, 2001) was shortlisted for the Forward Prize for Best First Collection 2001 and won the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. Her second, *Salvation Jane* (Anvil, 2008) was shortlisted for the 2008 Costa Poetry Award. In 2007 she was nominated by *Mslaxia* as one of the best ten contemporary women poets in the UK. Her third collection is *Alive Alive O* (Bloodaxe Books, 2015).



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Greta Stoddart's third collection *Alive Alive O* follows the human impulse to make sense of mortality. Death is reconfigured not so much to console us but as a way of playing out different scenarios, trying for variants in meaning and metaphor, that we may better know it. But for all their focus and attention on loss these are not poems of despair. In their intensity and spirit our mortal life becomes a thing to behold, even in – or because of – the face of death.

'Honest, observant poems from a collection which is both wonderfully unsettling and deeply life-affirming'  
– Costa Book award judges 2008.

'These unnerving poems do not contemplate strangeness as much as embody it' – STEPHEN KNIGHT, *Times Literary Supplement*.

'As a poet, Stoddart is not in the business of offering solutions; the closest she comes to doing so is obliquely, through the bright snap of the language in which she presents her dilemmas, the irresistible clarity of images so right they deliver an almost physical connection, joining poem and reader' – SARAH CROWN, *Guardian*.

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