



Rife: Poems

Stefanie Marlis

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Stefanie Marlis' first book of poetry, *Slow Joy*, won the Brittingham Prize from the University of Wisconsin in 1989 and the Great Lakes Colleges Association New Writers Award in 1990. She has received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as three California Prizes: two Marin Arts Council Awards and the Joseph Henry Jackson Award. Her work has been published in numerous journals, including *Zyzzuya*, *Arshile*, *American Poetry Review*, *Poetry*, *Manoa*, *The Gettysburg Review*, and *Volt*. Marlis has taught at the College of Marin, San Francisco State University, and the University of San Francisco. She now makes her living as a freelance copywriter. In this capacity, she has recently written a book called *The Art of the Bath* for Chronicle Books. Marlis now lives in San Anselmo with her dog, Io.

"Marlis . . . is a good-natured and empathetic poet whose light philosophizing begins in simple things: buttons, sand, stars, flowers. . . . In her tranquil verse, Marlis prefers a world 'where kindness is possible,' where we must soften ourselves for love. The abundance suggested by the title ('there's so much of so much') is spoken to by a lexicon of 15 impressionistic 'definitions,' each of them an association of images built up from a word."-*Kirkus Reviews*

"*rife* is Stefanie Marlis's most complex book, her most experimental. It spins faster on postmodern prayerwheels. The title poem is one of a series of 'definition' poems, poems that seem to spark off the dictionary and its 'free play of signifiers.' And these poems have an open-ended, indeterminate quality that feels new in her work. The poem oscillates between 'abundance,' with its connotations of richness, and 'rife,' with its more weedy, out of control association."-*Poetry Flash*

"*rife* beautifully indulges the joy in wordplay all language lovers have. In each poem is a delightful discovery, a surprise in recognizing the event and the exactness of the poem's meaning and imagery. Stefanie Marlis has exceptional talent in both metaphor and revelation; her images subtly build into fresh vision. The poem 'The World' describes bravery in the attempt to rewrite a friend's life, like 'a threaded needle pu

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