



Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993

Heather McHugh

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993

Heather McHugh

Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993 Heather McHugh

Words and forms challenge each other in a collection of new poems and selections from the author's five previous books.

Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993 Details

Date : Published May 9th 1994 by Wesleyan (first published March 15th 1994)

ISBN : 9780819512161

Author : Heather McHugh

Format : Paperback 237 pages

Genre : Poetry, Female Authors, Womens

 [Download Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993 ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993 ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993 Heather McHugh

From Reader Review Hinge & Sign: Poems, 1968-1993 for online ebook

Kevin says

This book is one of my contemporary classics. James Joyce's poetry (verse poetry) never rose to meet what he could do in prose--it's a cruel twist of time that he couldn't have learned from McHugh. Existential as Beckett, jovial as Joyce--McHugh is the student who (re? out?)masters her masters.

Edward Nudelman says

It's been awhile since I read this book, but I always look for McHugh's poems. She is a very gifted poet with intelligence and discernment, a very strong voice. I highly recommend reading McHugh if you have never read her. Plus I believe she's a fellow at my alma mater, University of Washington!

palu says

Too much alliteration.

I like word-play, but hers often seems empty of anything more than momentary cleverness.

Matt says

When McHugh got the MacArthur nod last year, it made me scramble to find some of her work on the internets, but as anyone who's read McHugh knows, I think that's a bad way to read her work.... These are poems that I think require a level of attention, to sound as well as idea, that I can't quite sustain when I'm reading something on a computer screen. At any rate, I read enough to want to take the next step, and though it took months, I finally did, and boy was it rewarding.

What's sort of amazing is that McHugh has this huge body of work (and this collection goes only to the mid-nineties, I think) and that it's generally of such a high level of quality.... the only mis-fire here for me was *_32 Adults_*, which I felt better about being mystified by when I found out it was intended as a collaboration with a visual artist whose work is not reproduced here. Otherwise, this is a lots and lots of really dynamic poetry.

What makes up a McHugh poem? It's hard to explain, though I think she has a distinctive style, variations of which make up this book-- she's got a really wicked ear, so that her poems are both pleasingly varied in their sounds and rhythms. She's funny, and she loves odd words, and ordinary words in weird contexts. There are puns, and bent meanings, and all the rest sprinkled through these poems as a matter of course, the kind of thing that is just showy enough to knock you off your beam if you're looking to read through these poems quickly and move on to the next-- she's not afraid to shake you up.

Her work has presence, a kind of built-in performance aspect (in this book at least, it's hard to tell old poems

from new ones without seeing where they are grouped, but I think that the newer poems are more confident in that regard, less willing to pass for wallpaper, less retiring).

And finally, the poems are ambitious-- they don't seem to be about McHugh as much as they are about larger intellectual currents, questions of epistemology and empathy. They are smart, and gregarious, but maybe less like fireworks in terms of their intellectual content than they are on the basis of their sound. That said, they remain rich and interesting, challenging and thoughtful and just interesting.

It kind of blows my mind that I'm at least a decade behind reading what McHugh has done since this book, because this feels so much like a lifetime's worth of very good work.

Charmi says

I was put off by the incessant word play over substance/art and only got maybe 29 pages in before I gave up. Maybe I'll try it again another time. I often find a book that doesn't appeal to me one year becomes intriguing later on. This obviously wasn't my year to encounter & love Heather McHugh.

James says

Heather McHugh is the lover of words in the best way - that is to tease them into encouragement so they shine in such a new light and so does life.

Dave says

I was driving along in my car when I heard the author reading from this collection on the radio. I had to pull the car over, it was so engrossing. I'm not a huge poetry nerd, but this is something worth looking at.

George Tyson says

Let me begin with this disclosure: I've been a fan of Ms. McHugh's poetry since we went to high school together. In fact, we were both in the same 12th grade AP English class. From the beginning, Heather stuck me as fascinated with all aspects of words - their sounds and meanings but also how they shape our thoughts and perceptions as well as signify them.

In Hinge & Sign, I see that she's still fascinated with words but over the years she's learned to use them not just to dazzle us with her command of them but also to gently and sometimes wittily explore the same issues that have preoccupied so many great poets before her - the meaning of human life and its place in Creation. But Heather never pontificates. Instead, she gently probes among everyday thoughts and situations to find at least fragments of answers to some of our biggest questions. Indeed, her probing can be so gentle that it comes close to being over-powered by the magic tricks that she performs with language. But even when that occurs, the magic alone is worth the show.

Jenni says

There are a few good poems in this book and I used to like it much more, but it hasn't "aged" well with multiple readings. Her voice lacks spontaneity, and feels too calculated.

Tom Romig says

After reading Heather McHugh's shattering poem "What He Thought" in Billy Collins's Poetry 180 Anthology, I got hold of this marvelous collection, which includes selections from her first four books of poems plus new poems and previously uncollected poems. Because of her often startling and wise use of language and form, I find her work engrossing...even when I don't understand it! (A word of advice: skip her astoundingly pretentious preface, so self-consciously opaque that she writes herself into a hopelessly academic corner. But do savor the poems.)

S. says

I put off reading this for awhile, worrying it would be just flash and craft. I was afraid the pyjamas would be beautiful but there'd be no body inside them, you know? But there was a body, a fat breathing body, and instead of being exasperated I was impressed and inspired. Crafty, yes, and very Cheshire Cat, but not in a show-offy way.
