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**JUDGE RAE ARMANTROUT CHOOSES
MARY-ALICE DANIEL AS
2022 YALE YOUNGER POETS WINNER FOR
MASS FOR SHUT-INS**

New Haven—Yale University Press is pleased to announce a winner in the 2022 Yale Series of Younger Poets competition. The judge, prize-winning and critically acclaimed poet Rae Armantrout, has chosen Mary-Alice Daniel’s manuscript, *Mass for Shut-Ins*. This is Armantrout’s second selection since being named judge of America’s longest-running poetry prize, succeeding Carl Phillips.

Armantrout says: “This book should come with a warning—and it does, with three in fact. The first section opens with the generic symbol for caution; the second with the warning sign for radioactivity; the third with the biohazard symbol. Is *Mass for Shut-Ins* this scary? Almost—and only partly because it explores such topics as serial killers, plague, slavery, and the nature of hell. Against humans creating hell on earth, Daniel draws on animistic, Islamic, and syncretic Christian traditions from her native Nigeria to unleash potent incantations, rituals and spells, electric as St. Elmo’s fire. This is *Flowers of Evil* for the 21st century. Buckle up.”

Of her recent win, Mary-Alice Daniel says: “Half a lifetime ago, when I was 17, I sat in an auditorium and heard poems that made me need to write poems. Ever since that first Yale Younger Poets reading, I’ve looked to this Series to astonish me, to keep showing me what a

first book can be. I finished my manuscript in its roughest form about ten years ago, and for ten years, it met with rejection. As I honed my words obsessively, I asked myself if they mattered if they weren't reaching anyone. Most young writers know this story; many have lived their own decade of discouragement. With deep gratitude—and in deep debt—to my mentors and peers, I hope my work will be a contribution to a community and its craft.”

Yale University Press will publish Daniel's book in April 2023. The manuscript is the 117th volume in the series. Its last volume, Robert Wood Lynn's *Mothman Apologia*, will be published by Yale University Press on March 22, 2022.

Born near the border between Niger and Nigeria, Mary-Alice Daniel was raised in England and Tennessee. After attending Yale University, she received an MFA from the Helen Zell Writers' Program at the University of Michigan. She holds a PhD in English Literature and Creative Writing from the University of Southern California. Her poems appear in *The American Poetry Review*, *New England Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Indiana Review*, *The Iowa Review*, and several anthologies, including *Best New Poets*. Her first book of prose, *A Coastline Is an Immeasurable Thing: A Memoir*, is forthcoming from Ecco/HarperCollins in November 2022. An American-African, her tribe is Hausa-Fulani, and her adopted home is Los Angeles.

Awarded since 1919 by Yale University Press, the Yale Series of Younger Poets celebrates the most prominent new American poets by bringing the work of these artists to the attention of the larger public. Earlier winners of the prize include such giants as Adrienne Rich, John Ashbery, and Robert Hass. It is the longest-running poetry prize in the United States.

Yale University Press will also continue its partnership with The James Merrill House. Winners of the Series will receive one of the five writing fellowships offered at The James Merrill House in Stonington, CT. The fellowship provides a furnished living space and daily access to James Merrill's apartment for a writer in search of a quiet setting to complete a project of literary or academic merit.

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