

Keli Stewart Releases a Book of Poetry Entitled "Small Altars"

LOS ANGELES, CA, USA, December 2, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Keli Stewart's profound, visceral and heady debut poetry collection is simultaneously autobiographical memoir and social commentary in conversation. The narrator of Small Altars is at different times a girl learning from her elders and ancestors; a young woman coming of age; a single mother caring for her child; or a wise woman who conjures the spirits of her past. In the traditions of Gwendolyn Brooks' A Street in Bronzeville, Lucille Clifton's Good Woman, and Nikki Giovanni's Love Poems, Small Altars renders this self-portrait in spirals and snapshots—sometimes with humor, sometimes with sentiment and memory— about the body, desire, motherhood and place around her identity as a Black woman while awakening keen observations of her ancestors with a griot's voice. "Black folks are not linear, we dip and dive into our lives, and there is 'layering' here," says Stewart, a writer from Chicago's West Side, about the structure of Small Altars.

From the images of a struggling young mother in we accept LINK and Meditation for Poor Mothers to the humorous instances in Missionary



Small Altars Book Cover



Author, Keli Stewart

Haiku and Self-portrait: Me with Hair Like Frederick Douglass to the reflective portrayal in My Grandfather Would Cry to the raw recall of awakening sexuality in pink things, Stewart's collection illuminates conversations between the facets of one woman's experiences to define the shape of her years, and stands as an inspiring exploration of gender, race and class in contemporary American life.

KELI STEWART's work has appeared in Quiddity, Meridians, Warpland, Hip Mama, Calyx, and Rhino among other noted journals and publications. She has been honored with artist fellowships from Hedgebrook, and the Augusta Savage Gallery Arts International Residency. An alum of the Voices of Our Nations Arts Foundation and Callaloo Summer Writing Workshops, Keli's work was selected for first place in the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award from the Illinois Center of the Book, Emerging Writers Competition. She earned her BA in Fiction Writing from Columbia College and her MFA in Poetry from Chicago State University. Her manuscript After Birth was recently named semi-finalist for the Claudia Emerson Chapbook Award.

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