



**Barry Lopez, James Perrin Warren (introduction), Barry Moser (illustrations), *Outside*. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2014. 120 pp. Hardcover \$18.95. Epub \$18.95.**

*Outside: Stories by Barry Lopez* comprises six short stories written over the nearly twenty years from 1976-1994. The stories were drawn from a trilogy of Lopez's work: *Desert Notes* (1976), *River Notes* (1979), and *Field Notes: Grace Notes of the Canyon Wren* (1994). Two stories were selected from each book. In the afterword Lopez notes that while "the stories in the first two books had been unified by their particular geographical setting; the stories in *Field Notes* were related, instead by the numinous nature of the landscapes in which they were set." Or to see the stories from

a slightly different focus, Lopez tells us, "In the early 1950s when people living in the Los Angeles Basin spoke of going away for the weekend often east over the mountains to the Mojave Desert, they would say that they were going 'to go outside.'"

Lopez's narrators tell their stories surrounded in mystery. They call our attention to natural images, plucking meaning from the surrounding landscape. They highlight the overlooked and the misunderstood, illuminate the common place with spare prose and create an almost magical power to see. Under Lopez's guidance, we come away with an enhanced understanding of the beauty that surrounds us.

These stories take on greater meaning when they are combined with the engravings of the Barry Moser, a leading American printmaker and illustrator. Nearly a dozen images interspersed throughout the text provide yet another means of seeing and enhancing our understanding. Moser has said about his prints for *Outside*: "The more familiar I became with these stories, the more I understood what is needed are meditations throughout, not carefully focused images of specific things but bits and pieces that want to float together." Moser effectively roots his nearly one dozen engravings in what has been called the black line graphic tradition, effectively creating another avenue to ponder the multiple messages of the stories.

In addition, *Outside* includes the superb introduction by James Perrin Warren, author of *Other Country: Barry Lopez and the Community of Artists* (2015). Warren effectively demonstrates that working with artists is an important key to all of Lopez's work, and notes how little analysis has been done of Lopez's work with fine press editions like *Outside*. Before the trade edition by Trinity Press was published, *Outside* was produced in a limited edition of fifty copies by David Pascoe at Nawakum Press in Santa Rosa, California. The trade edition under review here, "reproduces as closely as possible the fine press edition."

Finally, in addition to Moser's engravings and Warren's introduction, we have an afterword by Lopez. The afterword highlights what Lopez thinks to be the central concerns of his work: "What I have actually been pursuing all these years, put simply, isn't the nature of some buried set of profound ethical relationships between a person and various components of the physical landscape in which that person finds himself or herself."

Other understandings abound, but *Outside* with the work of Moser, Warren and Lopez is the best short instruction to Lopez's work and the artistic collaboration that makes it unique. It is an essential beginning point for all those interested in Lopez and American literature.

William E. Tydeman  
*Texas Tech University*