



# Polite Forms

*Harry White*

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## **Polite Forms** Harry White

Polite Forms is a sequence of poems that meditates on family life.

These poems remember and reimagine scenes from childhood and adolescence

through the formal composure of the sonnet, so that the uniformity of this

framing device promotes a tension as between a neatly arranged album of

photographs and the chaos and flow of experience itself. Throughout the collection

there is a constant preoccupation with the difference between actual remembrance and

the illumination or meaning which poetry can afford.

Some of the poems ‘rewind the tapes of childhood’ across two or three generations,

and all of them are akin to pictures at an exhibition which survey individual impressions of childhood

and parenthood in a thematically continuous series of portraits drawn from life.

Harry White was born in Dublin in 1958. He is Professor of Music at University College Dublin

and widely known for his work in musicology and cultural history.

His publications include “Music and the Irish Literary Imagination” (Oxford, 2008),

which was awarded the Michael J. Durkan prize of the American Conference for Irish Studies in 2009.

“Polite Forms” is his first collection of poems

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