

# *Chasing Weather*

**Tornadoes, Tempests, and Thunderous Skies in Word & Image  
by Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg & Stephen Locke.**

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## **BOOK SUMMARY**

“The sky is made of rivers before and after they became rivers,” Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg writes in *Chasing Weather*, a collaborative book featuring weather chaser/photographer Stephen Locke's images and Kansas Poet Laureate Emeritus Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg's poetry (Ice Cube Press). Come see a multi-media presentation that includes images and videos of wild weather matched with stirring poems. Weather subtly shapes our days, infuses our moods and interactions, and at times, completely re-orientes our lives. Catching moments of stunning beauty and surprising shifts in the sky helps make the vibrant and variable world more visible to us, and shows us how to truly see where and who we are. Books available for sale on site. <http://www.icecubepress.com/2014-books/chasing-weather>

## **REVIEWS**

“The photographs are tempest wars, but a war of flowers and silence and color and God’s calling his/her poems out over the land. And the poems are silver threads that weave through the darkening sky and gates and light unspooling from the heart’s loom a dream of joy and ancestral echoes.”  
—Jimmy Santiago Baca, author, *A Glass Of Water* and *Singing At The Gates*. Founder, Cedar Tree, Inc.

“This ravishing call and response between a fearlessly roving artist- with-a-camera (Locke) and a lyric laureate of the heart’s workings under Kansas heavens (Mirriam-Goldberg) is both glorious and intimate. Wonderfully illustrating the dynamism and vastness of prairie skies and prairie soul, *Chasing Weather* is a volume to treasure in these stormy times.”  
—Stephanie Mills, author, *Tough Little Beauties* and *Epicurean Simplicity*

“Mother Nature’s ever-changing mood often leads to a paradoxical juxtaposition of fury and tranquility on the Great Plains. For the photographer, that moment of perfection can last but a fraction of a second. Stephen Locke possess that unique blend of passionate dedication, preparedness, extreme patience, and a keen eye, capturing nature’s balancing act in a way that many try, but few succeed. Well done!”  
—Evan Bookbinder, Meteorologist, Information Technology Officer at US National Weather Service

“What a beautiful book, a gorgeous pairing of photos and poetry! These images are at once alluring and

startling, awe-inspiring and terrifying—the joining of heaven and earth. *Chasing Weather* unlocks the power of nature on the Great Plains—the ever changing, fascinating drama of the sky.”

—Mary Swander, Poet Laureate of Iowa, author, *Farmscape: The Changing Rural Environment*

“When the poems in this book, billowing among images that take my breath, say ‘the sky is made of rivers before and after they become rivers,’ and ‘the sycamore buds into tomorrow,’ savoring ‘the threat to come and the yearning to plant,’ I am swept away like a leaf before the storm. I pity people who don’t know a sky like this, who don’t have these words of electric insight, spoken true, blessing the open country at the mercy of the storm.”

—Kim Stafford, editor, *Ask Me: 100 Essential Poems by William Stafford*

“Being a native Kansan, I thought I had a clear image of what stormy, tornado-ridden skies looked and felt like, but after seeing Stephen Locke’s astonishing, almost surreal photographs, I realize how much I had missed. Coupled with Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg’s lyrical, other-worldly poetry, the photographs come to life and suddenly I can see my beloved Heartland in a whole new way.”

—Kelley Hunt, singer/songwriter, *The Beautiful Bones*

“There are storm photographs, and then there are Stephen’s storm photographs. He sets the bar for artistic captures of epic weather events. I’m stunned by each page, reminded of that eerie calm, yet energized silence just before the crack of lightning. The poetry introduces poignant elegance into the calm before the storm. A fantastic combination!”

—Kevin Sink, Fine Art Landscape Photographer

“If you’re looking for some of the most artistic and breathtaking atmospheric moments captured on camera from across the Heartland of America, look no further—this book is chocked full of some of Stephen Locke’s most fabulous work. You will not be disappointed.”

—Jesse Risley, Educator and Storm Chaser

“Stephen’s images are themselves poetry, powerfully revealed through his gentle perspective of the natural world.”

—Heidi Farrar, storm chaser/photographer, Tornado Chasers Documentary Series

## BIOS

**Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg** is the 2009-2013 Poet Laureate of Kansas, and the author or editor of 19 books, including the recently published *Poem on the Range: A Poet Laureate’s Love Song to Kansas*; *The Divorce Girl* (novel, Ice Cube Press); a non-fiction book, *Needle in the Bone: How a Holocaust Survivor and Polish Resistance Fighter Beat the Odds and Found Each Other* (Potomac Books); *The Sky Begins At Your Feet: A Memoir on Cancer, Community & Coming Home to the Body* (Ice Cube Press); and four poetry collections. She is the founder of Transformative Language Arts—a master’s program in social and personal transformation through the written, spoken, and sung word—at Goddard College where she teaches. Caryn also leads community writing workshops. She lives with her family just south of Lawrence, Kansas, where the deer and the turkey roam.  
[www.CarynMirriamGoldberg.com](http://www.CarynMirriamGoldberg.com)

**Stephen Locke** is a stills and motion photographer and professional storm chaser. He produces still photography for collectors and supercell cinematography for film production companies. Stephen is well known for his time-lapse cinematography. Based in Kansas City, his Tempest Gallery is a showcase of storm imagery shot throughout the Great Plains. Clients include Andrews McMeel

Publishing, Accord Publishing, Ice Cube Press, CBS, CNN, Mayo Clinic, The Weather Channel, Discovery, Duo Creative, and other film production companies worldwide. His Vimeo channel: <https://vimeo.com/channels/148384> draws thousands of views as do his websites: [www.TempestGallery.com](http://www.TempestGallery.com) and [www.StephenLocke.com](http://www.StephenLocke.com).

## **SAMPLE OF POEMS & PHOTOGRAPHS**

Each one of these poems matches up with a photo being sent to you separately (each photo is named the same title of the poem it accompanies):

### **Respect the Storm of the Storm**

Watch like your life depends on it.  
The first wave pushes the blackbirds  
over the seam of the darkening west.  
Uplifting wind multiplies and divides the world.  
Flags tatter themselves in its speed. Then sirens.

From the overhang of your porch, wait  
for the imprint of lightning to open your eyes.  
Surrender to the wide yawning of thunder, the tendrils  
trailing the supercell, and the one sweet songbird  
at once unaware and aware. Follow  
the storm of the storm, not the storm you expect.

When the rotation makes landfall, go inside swiftly.  
Rush the stairs to the basement, grabbing the small cat  
and photo albums on the way. Call the neighbors  
from the crawl space. Press the anxious dog to your chest.  
Turn up the weather radio and let the tone of danger  
vibrate through your beating heart.

Obey the hunter you once were thousands of years ago.

### **Finding the Question**

Is it the wind from the cedars  
brushing the wet ground,  
the nests of the wrens  
tucked into the rock's eave?  
Is it the storm over the horizon  
willing the dark night  
to lighten with change?  
Is it the land across the lake  
or the rocking of the canoe?  
Is it the slim river I dream of, east

of the house where I grew up?  
Is it my father's voice just before  
he died, saying, *What can you do*,  
or the weight of yearning I carried  
before I knew I could put it down?  
Is it the way I lift my arms over  
my head to give up or ask for help?  
Is it god or the ceiling fan, nightfall  
or the wheeling of stars behind stars  
shivering me here tonight?  
Is it the love for the earth  
I didn't know I was?

### **Mercy. Daring. Courage.**

I carry my treasures close to my skin.  
I walk carefully and fast, pause to catch  
the lightning. So much fire compressed  
makes the visible even more visible.  
To see this is to know mercy, and how  
it tumbles shards of glass and stone  
to reconfigure this day. To know mercy  
is to know daring: every molecule of love  
so delicate and damaged, willing as grass  
to fly backwards at high speed while lightning  
flashes the veins of the heavens. To know  
daring is to know courage, how it's equal parts  
fear and will, rooted in the dense stillness  
of the cottonwood banking the creek,  
and the creek itself rounding the horizon  
toward whatever comes, trials or treasures,  
raining down to wake us up.