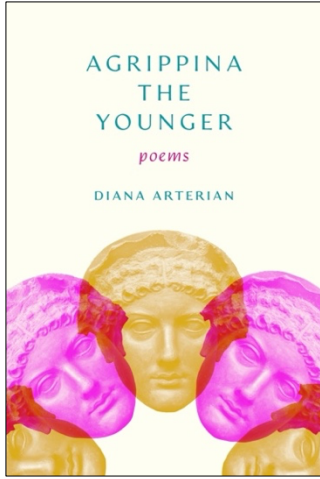




# *agrippina the younger: poems*

diana arterian



**A poetic journey through the past of the Roman Empress Agrippina looks toward the future**

*Agrippina the Younger* follows one woman's study of another, separated by thousands of miles and two millennia but bound by a shared sense of powerlessness. Agrippina was a daughter in a golden political family, destined for greatness—but she hungered for more power than women were allowed. Exhausted by the misogyny of the present, Diana Arterian reaches into the past to try to understand the patriarchal systems of today. In lyric verse and prose poems, she traces Agrippina's rise, interrogating a life studded with intrigue, sex, murder, and manipulation. Arterian eagerly pursues Agrippina through texts, ruins, and films, exhuming the hidden details of the ancient noblewoman's life. These poems consider the valences of patriarchy, power, and the archive to try to answer the question: How do we recover a woman erased by history?

**Winner of the Poetry Society of America's 2026 William Carlos Williams Award • Winner of the Medal Provocateur from the Eric Hoffer Awards • Finalist for the *Big Other* Reader's Choice Award • Named a Best Poetry Collection by *Electric Literature* & *Ms. Magazine* • Featured by *Lit Hub*, *NewPages*, & *Poetry Northwest***

“By stepping toward, instead of running from, the ancient histories of women-hatred, Arterian somehow excavates these legacies with a language and lyricism that holds our horror and beauty in sublime balance. ‘She does not look away...’” — **ROBIN COSTE LEWIS**

“In exquisitely braided prose and verse, Diana Arterian gives us an enthralling study of the often maligned and more often overlooked Agrippina the Younger. Necessarily suspicious and critical of official narratives, Arterian dares to ‘pluck the thread’ of time-worn accounts passed down to us from patriarchy. In this stunningly lyrical book—rigorously researched and rigorously imagined—we hear history as lies but also lyre: an instrument, in Arterian's hands, attentively tuned and pitch perfect with song.” — **BRANDON SOM**

“In Arterian's vision, women have ferocious agency. This is the reclamation of a woman overlooked alongside documentation of the author's own obsessively searching for Agrippina, which is itself a mirror portrait of a contemporary woman reaching across centuries. This feminist collection is both a timeline and a map.” — **DIANA KHOI NGUYEN, *BOMB***

“I felt infected with the loving obsession that drove the writing of this book...[H]istory and the dead demand our time, rage, ambition, and attention, and this is ultimately the voice that *Agrippina the Younger* amplifies with fury and grace.” — **EMILY VAN DUYNE, *LOS ANGELES REVIEW OF BOOKS***



**DIANA ARTERIAN** is the author of the poetry collection *Playing Monster :: Seiche*, which received a starred review in *Publishers Weekly*, and has received fellowships at Banff, Millay Arts, and Yaddo. A twice-finalist for the National Poetry Series, her writing has featured by The Academy of American Poets, *BOMB*, *Harvard Review*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *NPR*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Poetry*, and elsewhere. A poetry editor for Noemi Press, Arterian writes “The Annotated Nightstand” column at *Lit Hub*. She lives in Los Angeles.