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The Modern Element: Essays on Contemporary Poetry

Adam Kirsch

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A collection of bold, insightful, and controversial essays by “a poetry critic of the very first order” (*New York Times*).

Over the last ten years, through essays in *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, and other magazines, Adam Kirsch—“one of the most promising young poet-critics in America” (*Los Angeles Times*)—has established himself among the most controversial and fearless critics writing today. Sure to cause heated debate, this collection of essays surveys the world of contemporary poetry with boldness and insight, whether Kirsch is scrutinizing the reputation of popular poets such as Billy Collins and Sharon Olds or admiring the achievement of writers as different as Derek Walcott, Czeslaw Milosz, and Frederick Seidel. For readers who want an introduction to the complex world of contemporary American poetry, from major figures like Jorie Graham to the most promising poets of the younger generation, Kirsch offers close readings and bold judgments. For readers who already know that world, *The Modern Element* will offer a surprising and thought-provoking new perspective.

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