

Rico Craig

Nekhau

General Information

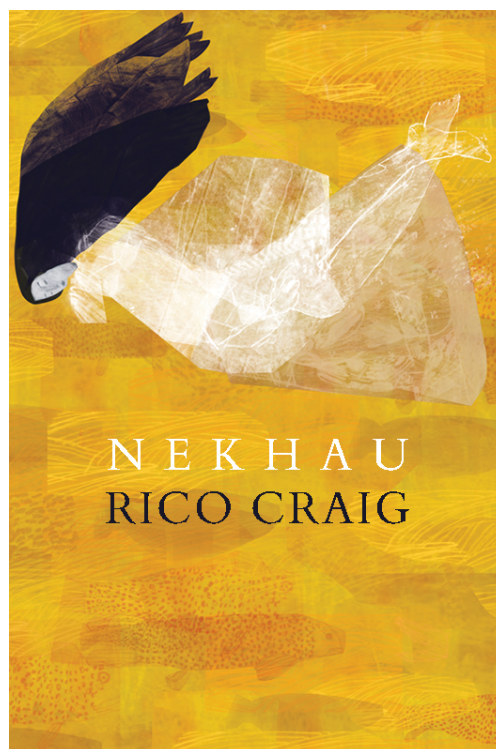
Rico Craig's third poetry collection - *Nekhau*

Release date: August 2022

Publisher: Recent Work Press

Previous Collections: *Our Tongues Are Songs* (RWP); *Bone Ink* (UWAP)

The poems in this collection trace love and loss; they imagine a world where hawks fly from the arms of lovers and disappear into a dying world, where golden fish rise from rivers and tangle themselves in hair, where molecules and mist carry messages of love through cities. In this collection, beginnings and endings slice across each other, modern and mythic intertwine, the everyday is stirred into a world of metaphor and incantation. Individual poems chime off each other, creating strands of narrative which circle the collection's central symbol, the nekhaus — small fish-shaped amulets crafted by ancient Egyptians and plaited through the hair of loved ones to ward off drowning. In a contemporary and at times imaginary world, the poems become nekhaus, articulating the fears and dangers underlying love in order to subdue them. In doing so the poems transform many tropes of love poetry, repositioning them in contexts both everyday and otherworldly. The bodies in these poems fight against the mortality of love, they borrow lore and build new myths as a way to protect love's fragility. Glistening with musicality and precision, these poems twist and shimmer like fish leaping toward the fears that have shaped them.



Endorsements

'Rico Craig's poems flit between what is washed up on the shoreline of human experience, and what is swept away. They are talismans wrought of memory, tender words told under breath, and new ways of being with, and while, beloved. In spite of their charm or warning, these are poems to drown in.'

Shastra Deo, author of *The Agonist*

'Nekhau explores the deeper resonance of imagination and reality. Craig is a natural poet who isn't afraid to bend, blend, repair, and hem a tapestry of language distinctive to him. It isn't often that you come across a writer who knows how to bind lightning with the ground, tenderness with one gesture, and fear with immeasurable possibilities. These are poems made for the sea and its stars.'

Sam Roxas-Chua, author of *Fawn Language*, *Saying Your Name Three Times Underwater*, and *Echolalia in Script*.

Author Information

Rico Craig is a writer, award-winning poet and workshop facilitator whose work melds the narrative, lyrical and cinematic. His poetry has been awarded prizes or shortlisted for the Montreal Poetry Prize, Val Vallis Prize, Newcastle Poetry Prize, Dorothy Porter Poetry Prize and University of Canberra Poetry Prize. *Bone Ink* (UWAP), his first poetry collection, was winner of the 2017 Anne Elder Award and shortlisted for the Kenneth Slessor Poetry Prize 2018. Since 2012 he has worked as Storyteller-in-Chief at the Story Factory, designing and facilitating creative writing programs for young people, and teacher development programs for adults. *Our Tongues Are Songs*, his second collection of poetry, was published in 2021 by Recent Work Press.

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