



# Orange Alert: essays on poetry, art, and the architecture of silence (Poets on Poetry)

*Mohammed Kazim Ali*

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"*Orange Alert* is a poetic and yogic salvo across the bows of our defensive imperial posturing. Kazim Ali's essays leap deftly from homages to avant-garde artists (Yoko Ono, Agnes Martin, John Cage) to awestruck meditations on ancient architecture, from analyses of poets (Jane Cooper, Agha Shahid Ali, Mahmoud Darwish, Lucille Clifton) to twitter aphorisms. *Orange Alert* is a revelation, a salve, an invitation to breathe again."

---Philip Metres, Associate Professor, Department of English, John Carroll University

"With their delicacy of attention and bold range of subjects, Kazim Ali's essays hold many quiet surprises. In each art he searches for insight and craft---the virtues of his own patient writing."

---Susan Stewart, Chancellor, Academy of American Poets; and Professor, Princeton University

"Kazim Ali's essays, like his poems, are alive with curiosity and humanity. . . . *Orange Alert* makes a compelling case for the necessity of poetry on a planet wracked by war and devastation."

---Timothy Yu, Associate Professor, English and Asian American Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

A volume in the Poets on Poetry series, which collects critical works by contemporary poets, gathering together the articles, interviews, and book reviews by which they have articulated the poetics of a new generation.

Whether he is discussing the way cell phones have altered physical intimacy and introduced new verb forms, or the way Emily Dickinson's mysteries are more clearly revealed in French translation, Kazim Ali is at once clear and complex, rigorous and charming, accessible and demanding.

In *Orange Alert*, Ali discusses poets including Agha Shahid Ali, Jane Cooper, Bhanu Kapil, Semezdin Mehmedinovic, and Samuel Beckett. He considers painters Agnes Martin and Piet Mondrian, musicians Alice Coltrane and Yoko Ono, and philosophers Slavoj Žižek and Jean Baudrillard. Ali links the poetic endeavor to such diverse texts as *Moby-Dick*, *Battlestar Galactica*, and Marilyn Buck's prison journals.

Ali discusses contemporary poetry in relation to other art forms and to contemporary television; film; and electronic media, including the Internet, YouTube, and Facebook.

He shines a light on the intersections between cultures in these essays on the craft of poetry, offering a hand to poets either geographically or metaphorically outside the mainstream of Western culture.

Kazim Ali is the author of two books of poetry, *The Far Mosque* and *The Fortieth Day*; two novels, *Quinn's Passage* and *The Disappearance of Seth*; and a memoir, *Bright Felon: Autobiography and Cities*. He is Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Oberlin College. He has been a regular columnist for *American Poetry Review*.

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