

ing an unfeeling father. Familiarly strange, rising up like thoughts, the episodes range from home to abroad, from interior landscapes to the Sistine Chapel. Only occasionally overly sentimental, they are always sincere and appropriately earnest.

Rosenberg's skill rests in a courage to face her darkest thoughts and resist easy answers:

Rain is falling, and running down the windows like tears. I resent such easy pathetic fallacies, but I find they are practically instinctive. And those wavy wet lines, uncertain as unraveled yarn or bleeding ink, look to me like mirror images of the ones on my own face.

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Amor Eterno: Eleven Lessons in Love.
Patricia Preciado Martin.
University of Arizona Press, 2000.
110 pages. \$24.95 (hardback).

Reviewed by Lindsay Martell

Patricia Preciado Martin's collection of short stories is a light, earnest invitation. With a relaxed hand, Martin leads the reader through a careful exploration of desperate love, suffering, and penetrating disillusionment. Created as lyrical vignettes, *Amor Eterno* is a compact balance of voices that sing the praises of both contemporary and traditional notions of love, *familia* and the cascades of an evolving Mexican American heritage.

We are served 11 stories of love. Some are written as letters, which are then cautiously flushed out to reveal a more streamlined story. Martin's grasp of infusing poetry and prose is particularly engaging; neither seems halting or forced. The stories that work best as those filled with rich, easy humor. Martin's sheer grasp of storytelling in the traditional sense is decidedly strong, if not somewhat moody:

What was the sorrow of his aged uncle and antepasados was the delight of the young boys and a source of high adventure and discovery: the surrounding high walls and enclosures, bullet-pocketed and eroding. The crumbling chapel with the fallen hand-hewn beams that still smelled of smoke when it rained. The empty alter niches now harboring lists of colored birds. The creaky, termite-ridden stairs to the empty bell-tower, which had been plucked of its cast-iron bell and gaped like a toothless mouth. The weed-strewn family cemetery where the tumbled tombstones with exotic names scattered like so many spilled dominoes and where ancestors silently claimed their final meager heritage.

The constant revolution of sound and character works deftly in some places, especially in Martin's pictorial descriptions of Doña Eloisa; a devoted mother whose

pilgrimages to la Mision de San Xavier in the hopes that her son returns from the Korean War unscathed, remain fluid and earnest. The depiction of such characters as Lola in "Forbidden Love," while colorful, may leave readers somewhat restless:

Our prima Lola! A California Home-Girl! A teenager! Knowledgeable. Daring. Streetwise. The keeper of the keys to the kingdom of romance: boys and cars, flirting and dating, drive-in movies, lovers' lanes, making-out and French kissing, and the sensual sandy beaches of the California beaches we could only fantasize about.

Martin has successfully molded color and language in *Amor Eterno*. Readers can embrace the steadfast structure of her writing style and all its subtle intricacies. The stories are palatable diversions; each one acting a steady bridge to the next, allowing us to breathe in 11 nurturing lessons of love.

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The Body Artist.
Don DeLillo.
Simon & Schuster, 2001.
124 pages. \$22.00 (hardback).

Reviewed by Kevin McGowin

The ironic thing about people's negative or lukewarm criticism of DeLillo's *The Body Artist* is that for almost 30 years the author has satirized the very culture that now takes umbrage at being more or less left out of it. The blatant ironies are more subtle here; yet work on a small canvas is no less riveting. DeLillo is simply not writing what people are used to from him: the lists in *White Noise* or the allusions to and indictments of popular American culture in his other works.

Now over 60, DeLillo has the insight to see that the Culture has caught up now, in Real Time, with his parodic treatment of middle-class suburban America. This feeling is present also in *Underworld*, set at mid-20th century, but it's far too easy to see a short novel as a reaction against the tendency toward the *Bleak House*-length tomes of five years ago. It is another voice entirely, a Voice that DeLillo has flirted with in all his novels, but never allowed to become dominant.

The Body Artist is every bit as surreal as "vintage" DeLillo and, if you wish, as apocalyptic. Yet it is rather pointless to compare the work with *White Noise* or *Mao II* or even *Underworld*. It is the story of the most profound apocalypse: the internal, personal one. DeLillo shares a certain vector of vision with Carver, Cheever, and even Kafka in this sense, yet the work is still distinctly his own.

The Body Artist has been criticized for DeLillo's "sen-