

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Phoenicia Publishing is pleased to announce the publication of Dave Bonta's *Odes to Tools*. Whether he's writing about hammers, house jacks, scissors, scythes, or even composing an ode to forks, Dave's wide-ranging mind, creative imagination, wry humor and finely-honed poetic skills combine to take us far beyond our sheds, back porches, and kitchen drawers.

Dave Bonta's popular blog, "Via Negativa," contains six years of his almost-daily essays, poems, photographs and videos, but this is—surprisingly, considering the blog's breadth and consistently high quality—the first book that's come out of it.



Dave Bonta is official poet-in-residence at the Plummer's Hollow Nature Reserve in central Pennsylvania. He's a managing editor of the online literary journal *qarrtsiluni*, and has had poems published in such diverse places as *Art Times*, *Birdwatchers' Digest*, *Frogpond*, *Bamboo*, *Pivot*, *Studies in Contemporary Satire*, *The Sun*, *Poetry for the Masses*, and *Wind*.

photo © 2009 Jonathan Sa'adah

Dave Bonta's **ODES TO TOOLS**

A collection of 25 uncommon poems
inspired by common hand tools

32 pages; \$6.95. January 2010.

Available at Amazon and at the publisher's website



Though he lives on a fairly remote mountainside in rural Pennsylvania, Dave is quick to point out that he's "not nearly as handy as these odes might suggest" and that his favorite tool is the computer mouse. A writer of poems since the age of seven whose work has appeared in numerous publications, he's now the co-editor of *qarrtsiluni* online literary magazine and an author who has fully embraced the Internet but says he's "way more excited to read these poems in print than he thought he would be."

When asked how his *Odes to Tools* came into being, Dave said:

"I think they were an attempt to come up with a lyrical critique of the belief that nature or history can be explained by some sort of ultimate purpose or design. Sometime in my late teens, when, like a lot of earnest young people, I was wrestling with questions about the meaning or purpose of life, it occurred to me that that line of questioning itself might be flawed, because it assumes that we are somehow tools, products of a toolmaker—someone with an ultimate plan for us. This notion, comforting as it may be to some people, fills me with dread: to think that your role in life is intrinsic, unalterable, utilitarian! But with these poems, I was asking, what if one actually IS a tool? Doesn't a favorite tool often become more than just an instrument of the worker's will? Doesn't every successful tool in fact acquire a bit of an aura, sometimes even a personality? The more I worked on these poems, the shallower my original insight seemed. How well do any of us really know the tools we take for granted? All that said, these are pretty straight-forward poems, I think."

"Here is the uncompromising voice of a man who has not allowed the broader culture to dictate what is important to him, or what is vital about the natural world that sustains us and the relationships that might actually transform us... Bonta's voice is one that offers keen insight into how we might move into [the] future, all of our senses intact, especially our common sense."

Todd Davis, winner of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Prize and author of *Some Heaven* and *The Least of These*.

An audio file of the author reading all the poems in the chapbook is also available at <http://tinyurl.com/yjmkvxx>

