



*The Museum of Unnatural  
Histories* / ANNIE WENSTRUP

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**Author bio:**

Annie Wenstrup held a Museum Sovereignty Fellowship with the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center (Alaska office) supported through a Journey to What Matters grant from The CIRI Foundation, and was an Indigenous Nations Poets Fellow in 2022 and 2023. Her poems have been published in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *New England Review*, *Poetry*, and elsewhere.

# The Museum of Unnatural Histories

Annie Wenstrup

**Whiting Award-winning debut poetry collection that reimagines personal and Indigenous history through inventive verse.**

- Winner of the Whiting Poetry Prize 2025
- Annie Wenstrup's debut collection blends personal history and Indigenous storytelling, exploring memory through imagined museum spaces.
- Published in *Poetry Magazine*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and *New England Review*, and recognized through fellowships including the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center and Indigenous Nations Poets.
- For Fans Of: Layli Long Soldier, Nisha Ramayya, Natalie Diaz

## About the book

This extraordinary debut poetry collection by Dena'ina poet Annie Wenstrup delicately parses personal history in the space of an imagined museum. Outside the museum, Ggugguyni (the Dena'ina Raven) and The Museum Curator collect discarded French fries, earrings, and secrets—or as the curator explains, together they curate moments of cataclysm. Inside the museum, their collection is displayed in installations that depict the imagined Indigenous body. Into this "distance between the learning and the telling," Wenstrup inserts The Curator and her sukdu'a, her own interpretive text. At the heart of the sukdu'a is the desire to find a form that allows the speaker's story to be heard.

Through love letters, received forms, and found text, the poems reclaim their right to interpret, reinvent, and even disregard artifacts of their own mythos. Meticulously refined and delicately crafted, they encourage the reader to "decide/who you must become."

## Reviews

Innovative and exacting, *The Museum of Unnatural Histories* threads women's voices, primarily through the lens of a museum curator and the relayed stories of Ggugguyni. Through dioramas, ekphrasis, theatrical forms, and curations, Annie Wenstrup offers a mode of self-actualization contrary to Western impositions of assimilation and self-erasure. Here, you'll find voice, vision, and breadth. Wenstrup is an architect of language at the height of her craft. —Sarah Ghazal Ali

Wenstrup's grace, humor, and vulnerability are profoundly touching in light of the cruel role museums have played in the lives of Indigenous peoples globally... Readers will find Wenstrup's breathtaking imagined museum worth visiting and revisiting. —Lori Hall-Araujo, *Chicago Review of Books*