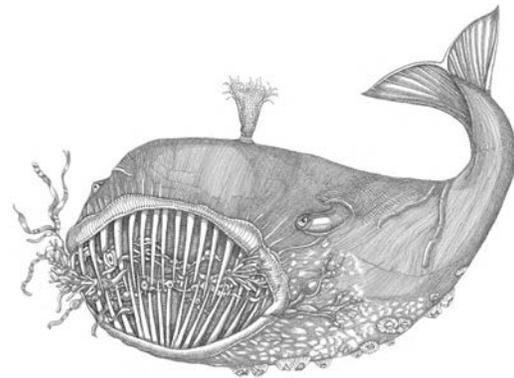
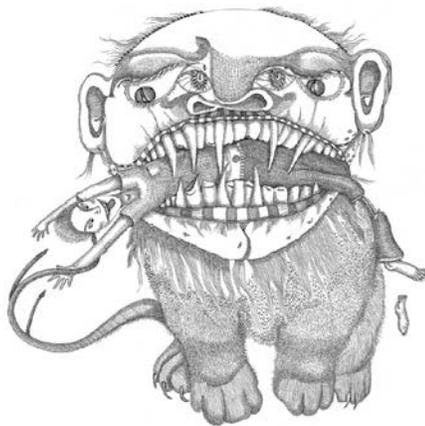
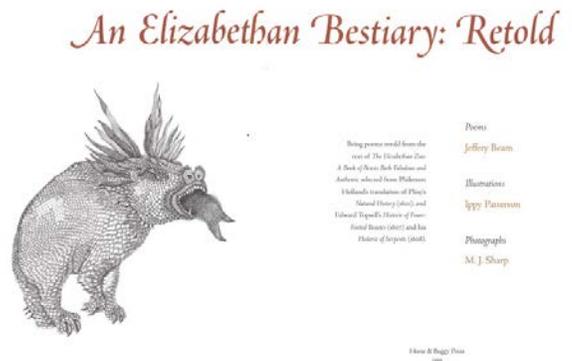
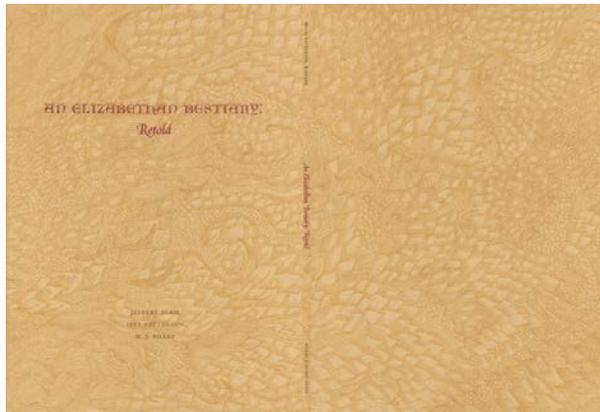


From reviews of AN ELIZABETHAN BESTIARY: RETOLD:



[Winner of an American Institute of Graphic Arts 50 Books / 50 Covers award for 1999](#)

[Winner of a 2000 IPPY Award for one of the 10 Outstanding Small Press / Independent Publisher Books of 1999 \(special notation for Best Book Arts Craftsmanship\) from Independent Publisher magazine](#)

See More Images: Will Schofield's [50 Watts blog](#)

Exhibit winner of the Duke University's 1998-1999 Best Campus Visual Arts Event chosen by the student newspaper the *Duke Chronicle*: "This excellent collaboration ... presented wonderfully sharp images of real (sic) and imaginary beasts with evocative poetry. The combination of factors - visual images with text - made the show extraordinary. It wasn't the most elaborate exhibit to prowl onto campus, but it was certainly the most captivating."

—Duke University student arts weekly **Recess of the Duke Chronicle**, Norbert Schürer (April 1999)

Thou beast
Thou bestial beauty
What a frabjous menagerie
in thy corral
It is perfectly beastly
this chorale of beastliness
this best of bestiality
Bravo and blessing from James
the old old unicorn boy
—The late poet and filmmaker James Broughton (letter to author)

This new **Bestiary** reveals the demonic ark of beasts that are caged or run wild in the human psyche ... The drawings are primeval, they arise out of mythic times and reveal how modern art can delve a root into a pre-cultural world of fear and visions. [The poet] writes with extraordinary insight and subtle suggestiveness. He clearly believes each creature is alive somewhere in the modern world, inward, outward, or both. His poems extend the firsthand presences of the beasts and bring them into human focus, even for those of us who deny such creatures inhabit our darker places. All in all, **An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold** offers a gripping experience and an awareness of our shadow side that needs to be revealed again and again in a world of denial.

—Poet **Will Inman** (unpublished review)

What a sumptuous and elegant book, text, design, illustrations, print, cover. It is a pleasure just to hold it and savor the pages. It's rare to see such a combination of talents brought together here.

—Poet **Robert Morgan** (letter to author)

The **Bestiary** book is absolutely beautiful thanks to so many hands and minds and imaginings. I loved especially "Phoenix" and "Dragon," but as I name those, one after another comes crowding in. The whole thing sets up echoes and memories, some of them Biblical. ... I don't know why, but your multiple collection of creatures made me think of Edward Lear who shifted Psalm 102 and the pelican in the wilderness to the "pelican in the pilderpips." The drawings are extraordinary, not least because even those that might have been frightening are mysteriously consoling.

—The late philosopher and poet **Elizabeth Sewell** (letter to author)

What a way to do a book! I love that you got "rue" in a poem. And Ippy Patterson's illustrations come right out of divine and mythic gifts ... supreme things, pencil as magic.

—Poet and editor **Shelby Stephenson** (letter to author)

Recapturing those hidden, subterranean demons, and those joyful, leaping beasts that are the stuff of our dreams, the book combines, on either page facing, the animal on the left, and the verse upon the right. It is between these two pages that the soul of each animal is pressed. The creatures have been ... masterfully illustrated by Patterson in detail rarely seen in modern times. A book that is as delightful to see and hold as to read.

—Reporter Alan Hall in **The Chapel Hill News** (1999)

An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold is a delightful collaboration anchored by poet Jeffery Beam's contemporary re-working of Elizabethan sources; Ippy Patterson's fantastical, Sendak-esque illustrations, and photographer M. J. Sharp's photographs of Beam as he performs these poems.

—**The Spectator**, Michele Natale (1999)

[The poems] are painstakingly honed to be as descriptive, as mystical, and as metaphysical as any from Elizabethan times. [A] most magnificent **Bestiary Retold**. It's so extraordinary! You're due for a MacArthur, and if I were on the committee I'd bring you to their attention! I'm honored to have been a help to you in the beginning and continue as a supporter and admirer of your work.

—**Michael Sykes**, publisher, Floating Island Publications (publisher of Beam's first book **The Golden Legend**—letter to author)

Part of the point of **An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold**: It challenges our perception of reality and encourages us to think with our imagination rather than our reason. ... The pictures, which require a minute or two of observation before one catches all minutiae, perfectly represent the points made by the text. For instance, when the hippopotamus is "Bloodletting itself by / sharp reeds," or when the dolphin is "Enamored especially of / little boys," we see this in the drawing. They give no indication of the reality status of their subjects, but they do let us know, as Beam puts it, that the world is "serious, divine, mysterious and playful [and] promises us that the Imagination is primary to human life." That is a pretty strong point to make, and Beam does an admirable job in making it.

—[Duke University Chronicle](#), Norbert Schürer (February 1999)

This book is an amazing collaboration ... The individual hand-loved feel of the book is as impressive as its artistry. Pen and ink drawings by Patterson must have sent the artist close to blindness. Beam ... generates odes that bring the book into our

world with a mix of classic and contemporary expression. The careful presentation extends into the Afterward, which includes notes that explain the book's history, meaning, and the artists' process of creation.

—Children's author [Susie Wilde](#) in **The Chapel Hill News** (May 9, 1999 and on her website)

An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold is a visionary literary effort. Thanks to Patterson's gorgeous (and outrageous) depictions ... and Beam's worrisome accompaniments, one can cower afresh in the wake of the many-headed Hydra.

—**Mountain Xpress: Weekly Independent News, Arts and Events for Western North Carolina** (June 1999)

To say that **An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold** is a beautiful book is an understatement. It feels like a fine piece of goods. Its making is a work of art. Jeffery Beam's poems create the animals and evoke fables and gods and goddesses that live in our consciousness as surely as body and soul are one. Ippy Patterson's fine line drawings and M. J. Sharp's photographs of the poet complement perfectly a balance rarely achieved in words, illustrations, and photography. The elementary possibilities of the deep about to rise into permanence shapes the creatures here. The book is a collaborative wonder.

—Poet and editor Shelby Stephenson in **The Pilot** and **Small Press Review** (May 24, 1999 and September - October 1999)

This book of original poems by gay poet Jeffery Beam follows the form of the traditional bestiary.

—**Lambda Book Report** devoted a two-third-page spread to reprinting a poem and drawing from the book (March 1999)

Horse and Buggy Press tackles it's most ambitious project [with] **An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold**.

—**American Booksellers Association Book Web** "Bookselling This Week: Riding a Horse and Buggy into the 21st Century", Susan Houston (August 24, 1998)

Like most of Beam's work, these poems spill down and across the page in a manner recalling Charles Olson, Paul Blackburn, and others of the Black Mountain school (and William Carlos Williams before them); they are scored like pieces of music, with breaks and spaces suggesting breaths, accents, and changes in tempo. To my mind Beam is the best poet now working in this form. For every animal there is an illustration: the drawings are quite essential to the book as the poems. Ippy Patterson's art is remarkably detailed and — with the exception of the appropriately tame illustration for "The Cat" — phantasmagoric. The most memorable drawings are those conveying ferocity, such as her renderings of the whale, the elephant, and the mythical Manticore. There are also three fine photographic portraits of Beam by M. J. Sharp; in keeping with the book's underlying primitivism, she casts him as a kind of shaman, caught mid-story or mid-spell. Mention should also be made of Dave Wofford's beautiful book design: at a time when releases from many New York publishers are showing a stunning disregard for the book as an aesthetic object, **An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold** reminds us that bookmaking is itself an art.

—Robert West, Editor, in **The Carolina Quarterly** (1999)

Beam's latest book carries his readers to a new level of the magical and the mystical. The Beasts are brought to life not only by the vocabulary Beam chooses to describe them, but also through another manifestation of Beam's poetical genius: his ability to craft the tone and rhythm of a poem to suggest its subject. [Ippy Patterson's] talent for producing exquisitely detailed line drawings made her art the perfect companion. But the best way to really experience how alive these creatures are ... is to hear him perform the lines himself. His vocal gymnastics lend each creature a personality, distinct and unique.

—**East Cooper Monthly**, Sullivan's Island, Charleston, Reporter Delacey Skinner (September 1999)

Beam's poems ... are short and spare, almost haiku-like, fraught with mysticism and hints of strange tales from far-off lands. Like calligraphic painting, they capture each creature ... in a few precisely placed strokes. Patterson's facing illustrations depict each fantastic creature in sumptuous detail, in a glory of precise line and delicate cross-hatching.

—Reporter Dave Hart in **The Chapel Hill News** (July 2000)

When, in his poem "Vixen," W. S. Merwin writes of "the silence after the animals," he means something permanent — an apocalypse — something he names elsewhere "the total city." For over thirty years Merwin has been prophesying a world in which humankind has utterly plundered the globe, having squeezed out one species after another in its relentless Malthusian expansion. It is a bleak prospect, one we prefer not to think about: it is, after all, the unthinkable. ... To act the prophet, to call attention to the likelihood of disaster — that is one legitimate response. To re-enchant us with the natural world we have been warring against — that is another. And that is the response we find in the work of Jeffery Beam. **An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold** recalls the wonder with which our ancestors regarded the animals. ... It reminds us that if divinity inhabits the world, it inhabits the *whole* world, and not only our particular species. If we accept the gift of this reminder, if we wake again to the strange beauty of the creatures around us, we may yet avert the total city.

—**Robert West**, Editor, introduction at UNC-Chapel Hill reading (November 1999)

Your work is a living miracle: so much music —like honey — pooled therein.

—Poet **George Elliott Clarke** (letter to author)

(Beam's) *chef d'oeuvre* is **An Elizabethan Bestiary: Retold**, an antic, beautifully illustrated, award-winning collection of his poems on mythical beasts.

—**Janet Lembke**, natural history writer and classicist (reference letter to Orange Arts Council)

It celebrates the variety of human dreaming, and the multiplicity of earth's creatures, and will enchant children and adults.

—**North Carolina Library Association E-News** (October 1999)

Beam's **Bestiary** effectively worked within this multi-disciplinary program to educate children about the importance of biodiversity and the need to protect our natural resources.

—**North Carolina Library Association Roundtable on the Status of Women in Librarianship Newsletter** (July 2000)

Beam's **Bestiary** poems are often haiku-like, elliptical in form, mystical in content, and redolent at times with darkest fantasy. They are perfect expressions of his stated desire "to access that mystical supernatural part of the inner world" that is available to children but lost as we grow.

—Betty Hodges in **The Durham Herald-Sun** feature article "Jeffery Beam: Poetry Factory" (February 28, 1999)

Delightful, insightful, heart-ful —the idea of condensed visionary plant and animal lore appeals to me.

—Poet **Antler** (letter to the author, 2001)