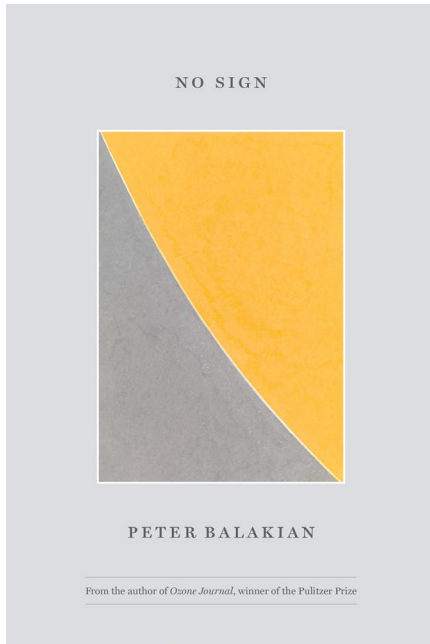


# CHICAGO

The University of Chicago Press

PHOENIX  POETS



FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE

Publication Date:  
March 22, 2022  
Cloth \$20.00 /£16.00  
80 pages | 6x9  
ISBN-13: 978-0-226-78407-6

Publicity contacts:  
David Bukszpan  
BuxusPR  
(646) 770.0328  
david@buxuspr.com

Adrienne Meyers  
Promotions Manager  
University of Chicago Press  
(773) 702.7678  
adriennem@uchicago.edu

# No Sign

## By Peter Balakian

---

New poetry collection from the author of *Ozone Journal*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize.

Peter Balakian wrestles with national and global cultural and political realities, including challenges for the human species amid planetary transmutation and the impact of mass violence on the self and culture. At the collection's heart is "No Sign," another in Balakian's series of long-form poems, following "A-Train/Ziggurat/Elegy" and "Ozone Journal," which appeared in his previous two collections. In this dialogical multi-sectioned poem, an estranged couple encounters each other, after years, on the cliffs of the New Jersey Palisades. Their dialogue reveals the evolution of a kaleidoscopic memory spanning decades, reflecting on the geological history of Earth and the climate crisis, the film *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, the Vietnam War, a visionary encounter with the George Washington Bridge, and the enduring power of love.

Whether meditating on the sensuality of fruits and vegetables, the COVID-19 pandemic, the trauma and memory of the Armenian genocide, James Baldwin in France, or Arshile Gorky in New York City, Balakian's layered, elliptical language, wired phrases, and shifting tempos engage both life's harshness and beauty and define his inventive and distinctive style.

**Peter Balakian** is the author of eight books of poems including *Ozone Journal*, which won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for poetry, and *Ziggurat*, both published by the University of Chicago Press. His memoir *Black Dog of Fate* won the PEN/Albrand Award and was a *New York Times* notable book, and *The Burning Tigris* won the Raphael Lemkin Prize and was a *New York Times* bestseller and *New York Times* notable book. He is Donald M. and Constance H. Rebar Professor of the Humanities in the Department of English at Colgate University.

## Praise for *No Sign*

“Balakian understands the bewildered music of our times, and *No Sign*, more than any other contemporary book of poetry, teaches us about the properties of time; we are inside the speech that is addressing time and opposing it, witnessing it, and walking two steps ahead. This “time-sense” is explored with depth in the brilliant title poem. Balakian is able to praise the world though he knows its ‘bitter history.’ And praise he does! The lyricism here is of utter beauty. *No Sign* is a splendid, necessary book.”—**Ilya Kaminsky, author of *Deaf Republic***

“Balakian has been writing intellectually challenging poems of ‘bright unbearable reality’ that are part of an ongoing conversation in American poetry for some time. They have the horizontal continuum of history, like Walcott and Heaney, but they also have verticality which arrests time and connects with the demonic and divine. He masterfully does the thing nobody else does which is to derange history into poetry, to make poetry painting, to make painting culture, to make culture living, and with a historical depth that finds the right experience in language.”—**Bruce Smith, author of *Spill***

“In *No Sign*, Balakian embraces the claims of immediacy as well as the encompassing historical perspective. His images and sharp syncopations locate the pulse of our times and give it a prophetic reverberation. Here is a voice of witness which also makes room for an irrepressible sensory imagination.”—**Sven Birkerts, author of *Changing the Subject: Art and Attention in the Internet Age***

## Selected praise for *Ozone Journal*

“Balakian is blessed with an eerie ability to connect seemingly unrelated events separated by vast amounts of time and space.”—**Literary Review**

“Balakian is a master of—the drifting, split-second mirage, the cinematic dissolve and cross-cut as well as the sculptural, statuesque moment chiseled out of consonant blends and an imagistic, jazzman’s ear for vowels. . . . Beautiful, haunting, plaintive, urgent.”—**Consequence**

“Balakian’s poems offer a mournful silence in the face of social upheavals, and their aftermath, that is only possible within the realm of art. . . . necessary and equally moving.”—**Colorado Review**

“*Ozone Journal* is a mix of intense sensory, even sensual, experience and cerebral force, the verse both meditative and urgent.”—**PN Review**

“Crossing time, space, and cultures, Balakian has created a multidimensional reality and space that belongs to all and none, where the past offers a respite from the present, but only for a fleeting moment.”—**Armenian Weekly**