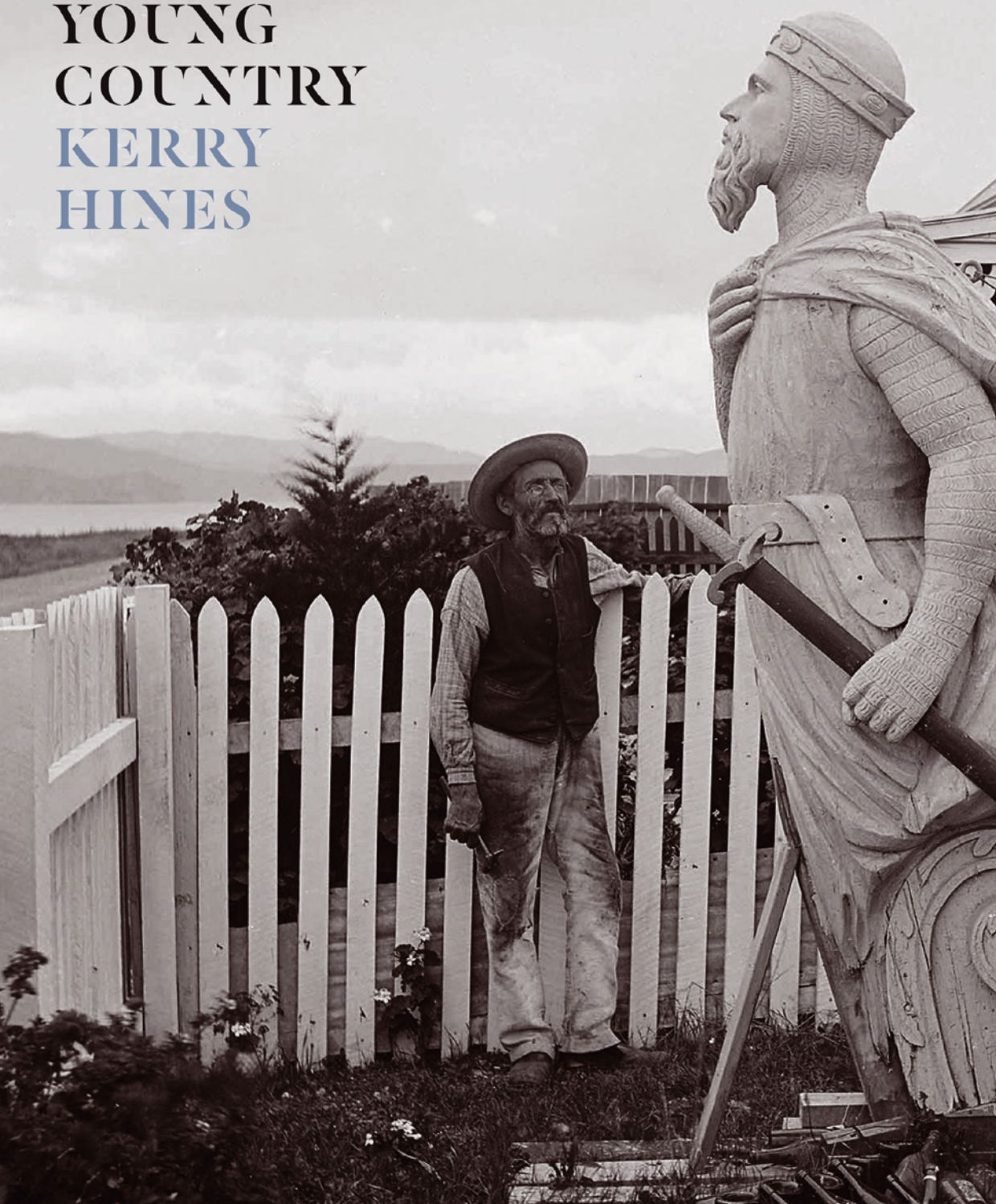


YOUNG  
COUNTRY  
KERRY  
HINES



**KERRY HINES** was awarded a PhD from Victoria University of Wellington in 2012 for her thesis ‘After the Fact: Poems, Photographs, and Regenerating Histories’, part of which forms the basis for *Young Country*. She has also presented papers on her research at conferences in New Zealand, Australia and the UK, and contributed an essay on William Williams to *Early New Zealand Photography: Images and Essays* (Otago University Press, 2011). Hines’s poetry has been published in literary journals and magazines and in the co-authored collection *Millionaire’s Shortbread* (Otago University Press, 2003).

**WILLIAM WILLIAMS** was a nineteenth-century New Zealand photographer. Born in Cardiff in 1858, he immigrated to New Zealand in 1881 and worked as a clerk for the railways department. A member of the Wellington Amateur Photographic Society, by the mid-1880s Williams had built an extensive and diverse body of work and was beginning to reach an audience beyond his immediate circle. While spending further time in Napier, Dunedin, Christchurch and Wellington, he developed a considerable public profile as a photographer, winning prizes, exhibiting and publishing overseas. He died in Christchurch in 1949 and his negatives – along with hundreds of lantern slides and stereographs – were later bequeathed to the Alexander Turnbull Library.

*You are never far from water.  
You are never far from land  
that you might make your own.*

In the landscapes, streetscapes and skyscapes of a new country, a twenty-first-century poet meets a nineteenth-century photographer. *Young Country* is a playful interaction between Kerry Hines's disarmingly understated poetry and the evocative photographs of early bohemian William Williams. The poems feature 'hallelujah lassies', visiting professors, bereft night-soil men and everyone in between; the photographs brilliantly capture the men and women, burnt bush and rising buildings of early settlement.

Together, the stunning photographs and poems of *Young Country* offer a meditation on how we capture the present and re-present the past, on the parallels between building a community and authoring a text, and on the possibilities that expansive fiction and documented truth offer to each other. The resulting book is thoughtful, haunting, remarkable.



## CUBA ST, HOMEWARD

Tom decides on jaunty, sets his hat.  
Is it? he demands. Alex is busy with  
the problem of the path. Will frowns,

caught up in his watch. Brandy,  
goes the chorus. Like when Alex  
hauled an eel in by mistake and

we all stood round not knowing  
what to do, so we dragged it back to camp . . .  
but it got off on the way, and Alex didn't notice

in the dark . . . Alex looks up. He is feeling  
for his pipe. Tom throws his  
arm around him; no one's hat falls off.





**ALEX**

The pipe went everywhere.  
The pipe had been lost

in rucksacks, under tents,  
on rocks, and inside kettles.

The pipe was damned  
to everyone but Alex, who

searched with equanimity,  
much as he smoked.

For the others' sake,  
he tried to keep it safe

between his teeth.





## AFTER THE FLOOD

Over our heads, debris in the trees.  
The Hutt, people said.  
Run for your lives.

That was how Wellington got started.

Geometry gave way to geography.  
The settlement found its own course.

I didn't want to work in town, but  
that was where work was.

The streets of Wellington are paved with  
Hutt shingle; I walked home  
every day.

\*

When Father was charged with arson,  
he was described as respectable, a gentleman,  
and forty-five. He was never so proud.

A day of witnesses against him  
and no evidence. Our old house,  
empty, over-insured – that was all they had.

A day of people we didn't know, kerosene  
and assessors, a man who looked like him  
in the street, that kind of hat.

The case was thrown out; he aged ten years.  
Fourteen witnesses. No hard feelings.  
The banks of his life undercut.

\*

He was scrupulously fair. We thought this  
merely natural. After he died, I suffered  
martinets and mercenaries, unequal stewards  
weaker than limestone tea – men who knew  
best for me, men who knew better.  
I suffered them for him.  
We got on with everyone.





## CRUSH

on his doorstep every morning  
ribboned flowers from her garden  
wildflowers, fresh vegetables  
in a paper boat

like a sister, she said  
she had no brothers  
came from a family of women

sometimes a quote, a line  
pencilled gestures, herself  
at one remove

he visited thanks on Sundays  
obliged  
she liked a man to wind the clocks



## DINNER

Glass in one hand,  
fork in another.

Laughter that damaged  
its surroundings. His friends

are connoisseurs  
of his enjoyment,

know when to duck.

\*

He wasn't ready for her hand on his forearm, trying  
as he was to hear the conversation opposite.

He catapults back into his seat, jangling cutlery,  
tangling knives. Oh dear, she says, a quarrel.

\*

Plates cleared, the ladies withdraw  
to talk suffrage

while the men smoke over  
recipes for sheep dip.



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