



**Angela Patten**

cardinal, a “feathered collection, for poetry lovers and bird lovers alike.

“Just keeping an eye on things,” Angela Patten tells us, but what an eye it is, one that observes a raven as a “faux-sorrowful funeral director,” a cardinal in his “ecclesiastical robe,” grackles with their “Prussian blue heads.” And her ears are wide open, too: “The sky is black with crows / crying in cracked voices of their plans /to steal what is left of the light” and the ovenbird with its “teacher-teacher-teacher— / as if imploring academics / to lay down their dusty books / their medieval regalia.” These are birds both of North America and Ireland, but the poems are universal. How I want to be like her arrow,” “unstoppable/as hunger, red as desire.” A wonderful

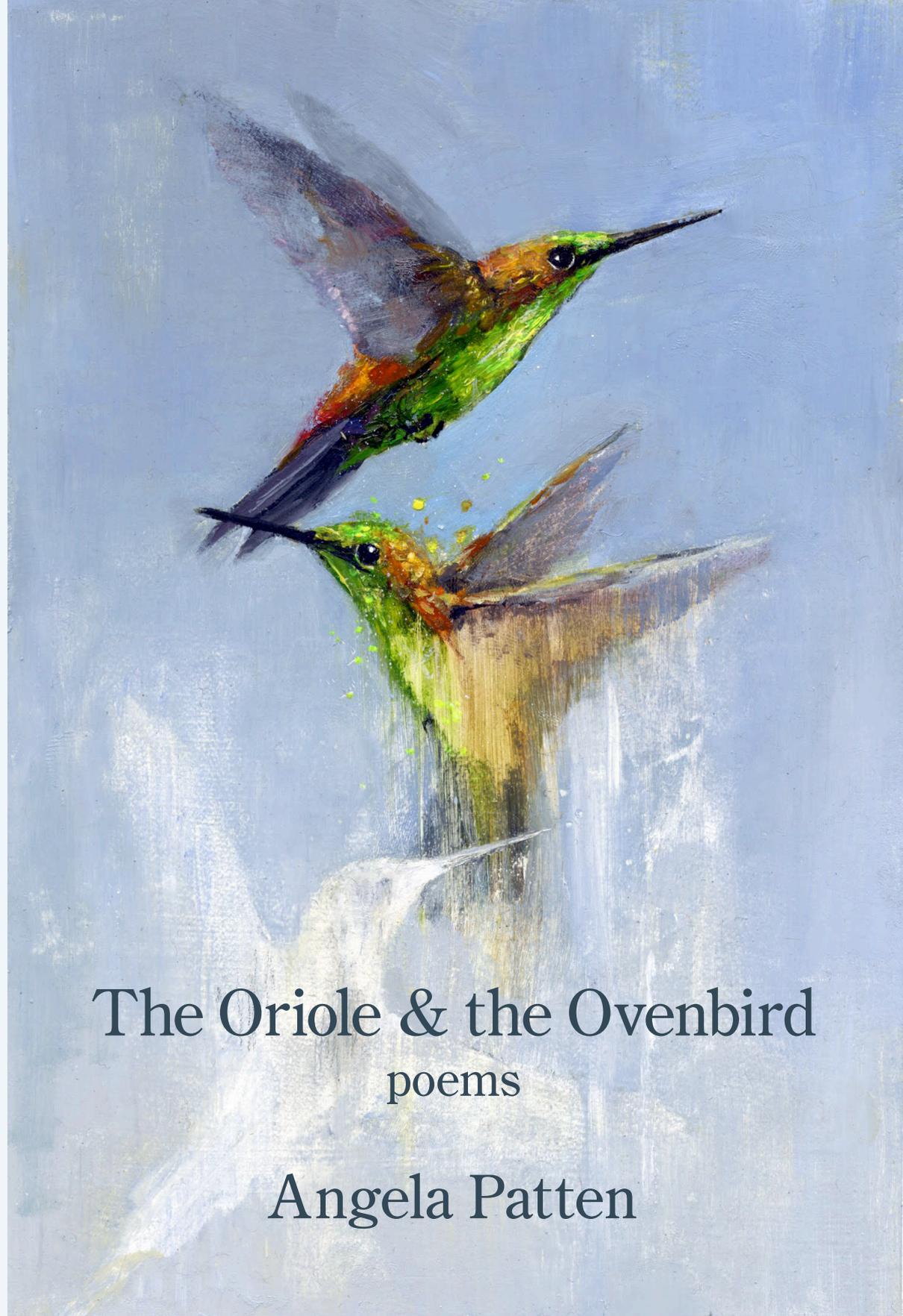
—**Barbara Crooker**, author of *The Book of Kells* (Cascade Books), winner of the Best Poetry Book 2018 Award from Poetry by the Sea and *Some Glad Morning* (Pitt Poetry Series).

Angela Patten’s *The Oriole & the Ovenbird* offers us bird-loving readers the pleasure of seeing the birds and savoring their habits and quirky ways. But the poems of the collection also deliver to us a profundity about our human lives as we absorb the insightful portraits of these creatures that are both common and extraordinary. These serious, crafty, and elegant compositions show us just how necessary birds are to our spiritual lives; a task that also warns us how bereft we will be if we no longer have the birds enriching our days

—**David Huddle**, author of *Blacksnake at the Family Reunion* and *My Surly Heart*.

So many images in Angela Patten’s poems are like tiny, crystal-clear windows into an individual and unique understanding of nature. Reading, I come to a complete halt, reread, and then say to myself, “Oh! Yes! That’s exactly it!” Her proper audience is all nature lovers, all word lovers, and every single one of us with Irish in our ancestry.

—**Maeve Kim**, birder, teacher, musician and writer



# The Oriole & the Ovenbird

poems

Angela Patten