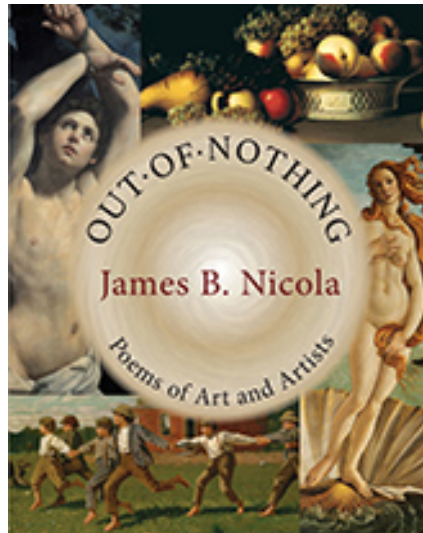




## New York Poet Travels the World and through Time to Write About Art and Artists



*Stunning book pairs art and poetry and gives readers the best of both worlds*

**BRUNSWICK, Maine - April 2, 2018 - [PRLog](#)** -- James B. Nicola, a New York poet and stage director, has written his fourth full-length poetry collection, *Out of Nothing: Poems of Art and Artists*. In it he takes his readers to the museum, the gallery, the studio, the cathedral, the dance hall, the cinema, and the city square, traveling all over the world and all through time.

Nicola found inspiration from MoMA and the Metropolitan Museum in New York as well as from the Uffizi in Florence; from the interior of the Boston Public Library and from the exterior of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris; from the Celtic cemeteries of Ireland and from the ruins of York, England—and from an assortment of places and spaces beyond.

With over eighty poems and sixty full-color images of the world's finest painting, sculpture, and architecture, this carefully curated volume is an album of highlights from the history of art as well as a celebration of the artist's never-ending quest for both inspiration and immortality. Some poems pose questions as enigmatic and evocative as "Where does art/start?" while others spin the saga of the arts and artists through the ages. There is something for everyone: Botticelli and Bernini, Michelangelo and Monet, Pollock and Pygmalion, Renoir and Rodin, Astaire and Arbus, plus everything in between.

This festive fusion of the verbal and the visual is part of an indomitable effort to temper the swelling tide of sectarianism and alienation of the age. *Out of Nothing: Poems of Art and Artists* is blatantly unapologetic in its reaffirmation of the best of human aspiration and achievement.

James B. Nicola is a stage director, composer, lyricist, playwright, acting coach, and poet. His poems have appeared stateside in the *Antioch*, *Southwest*, and *Atlanta Reviews*; *Rattle*; *Tar River*; and *Poetry East*; and in many journals in Europe and Canada. His theater career has taken him from his native New England to such New York theatrical institutions as the Mint and the Actor's Studio, where he directed *Hamlet*, and to

the far corners of the country. His children's musical, *Chimes: A Christmas Vaudeville*, premiered in Fairbanks, Alaska, where Santa Claus was rumored to be in the audience on opening night.

A Yale graduate, Nicola won a Dana Literary Award, a Willow Review award, and a People's Choice award (from *Storyteller*), and was a featured poet in *New Formalist* and in *Westward Quarterly*. His nonfiction book, *Playing the Audience*, won a Choice award. Following the tradition of poets Stanley Kuntz, Elizabeth Bishop, and Frank O'Hara, Nicola moved from his native Worcester, Massachusetts, to New York City, where he makes his home.

Released in early April, *Out of Nothing: Poems of Art and Artists* is published by Shanti Arts Publishing, Brunswick, Maine.

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"James B. Nicola's newest collection of poems paired with works of art gives us the best of both worlds. Sometimes graphic, sometimes surreal, the interweaving of word and image stretches our imagination and expands our vision of the world. We understand our own humanity and creativity in new and unexpected ways. Nicola takes us on a delightful journey through the past and the present with the panache of a very original poet. A delight for the soul!"

—?B. Amore, artist, author, *VIA (Voices in Italian Americana)*

"Here we have one remarkable feat of imagination after another. James B. Nicola's poems pulse with playful rhythms, then pause for contemplative study. If ever we needed proof for how looking at art can spark unexpected words, challenge our perspectives, and inspire us to new creation, here it is."

—?Lorette C. Luzajic, founding editor, *The Ekphrastic Review*

"In this collection of smart, witty, joyfully crafted and imaginatively illustrated poems, James B. Nicola not only celebrates the arts—all of them—but also reveals the core impulse they share, the psychic "large easel" on which they create the necessary shape that we all somehow sense 'life is meant to have.'

"Whether it's a naked odalisque, dancers caught mid-step, a Greek torso, an oddly and erotically pensive Christian martyr, a dilapidated boot, an iconic bridge, a gargoyle, a war memorial, a dramatic performance, an architectural ruin, or a cellist absorbed in his instrument, everything these poems touch upon is made to speak, persuasively and with an individual voice, to reveal itself and, maybe, invite revelations from the reader/viewer.

"What a pleasure it is to read work that is so thoroughly in love with what it's looking at, so appreciative of the human capacity to create artifacts at once useless and essential, thanks to some mysterious, invisible 'organ' apparently unique to our species! : a 'part/Impossible to chart//Except as art.' Or maybe not entirely 'useless,' since these artifacts seem determined to teach us, like the intricate stonework of a Gaelic cross, 'how to die as well as how to live.'

"The overall message of this rich collection is the maker's joy itself: Long live the arts, separately, combined, or in conversation with each other; ephemeral and enduring; both intimate and as universal as communication gets!"

—?Rhina P. Espaillat, poet

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<http://www.shantiarts.co>

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