

A mayor's greatest privilege and greatest resource is listening to people all across our city, as they share their truths, their hurts, their hopes, and their dreams. *City of Notions* reflects and enriches that conversation as only art can.

—Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston

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Elizabeth Alexander  
Julia Alvarez  
Margaret Atwood  
Jennifer Barber  
Shauna Barbosa  
Ed Barrett  
John Bennett  
Kevin Bowen  
Stephen Burt  
Linda Carney-Goodrich  
Chen Chen  
Charles Coe  
Martha Collins  
Sam Cornish  
Steven Cramer  
Liam Day  
Maggie Dietz  
Gary Duehr  
Martín Espada  
Haywood Fennell, Sr.

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Nick Flynn  
Kevin Gallagher  
Danielle Legros Georges  
Regie O'Hare Gibson  
Lorna Goodison  
Holly Guran  
Lyn Hejinian  
Krysten Hill  
Fanny Howe  
Marie Howe  
Heather Hughes  
Dorothea Lasky  
Ruth Lepson  
Timothy Liu  
Fred Marchant  
Gail Mazur  
Jill McDonough  
Elizabeth McKim  
Jennifer Militello

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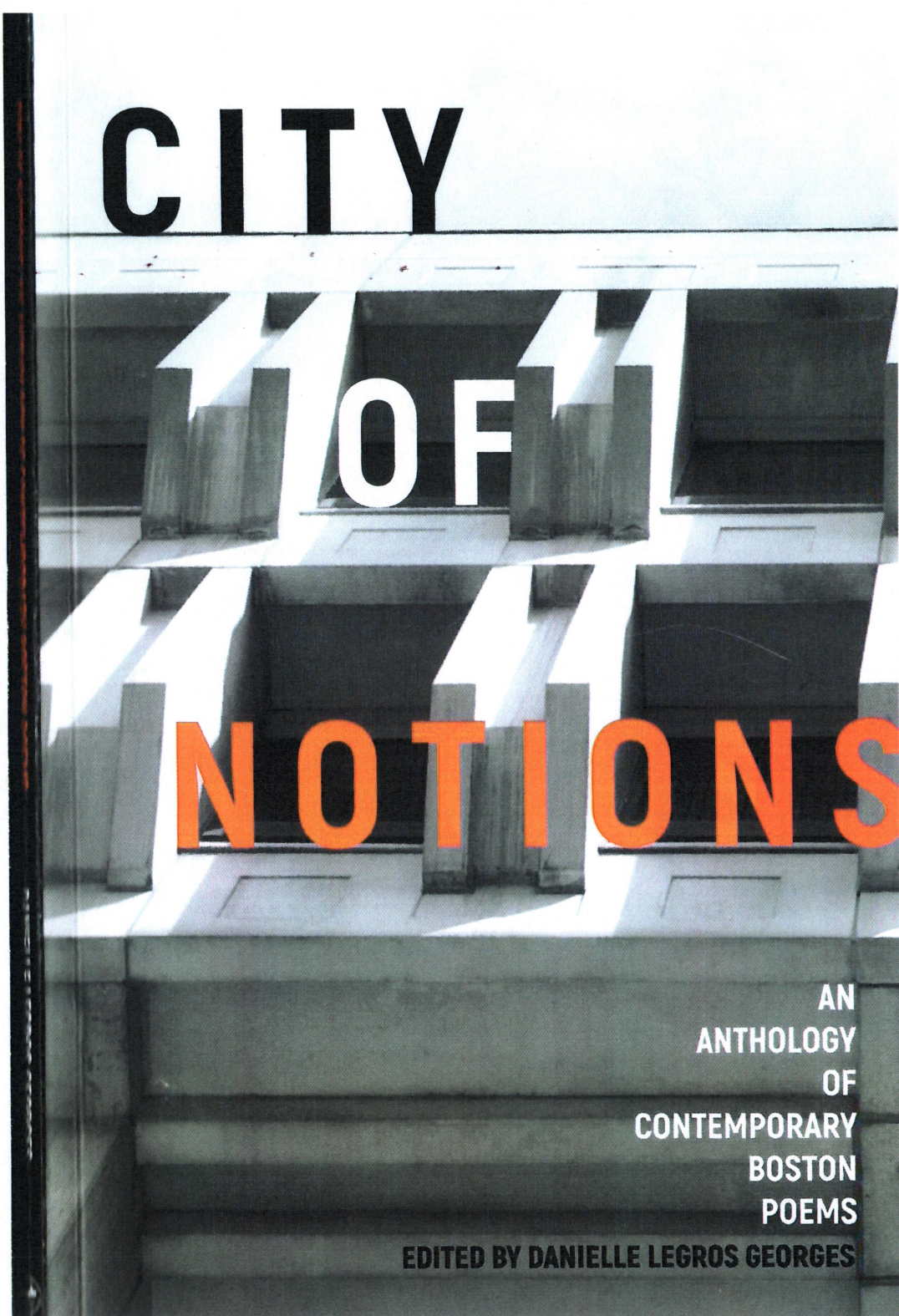
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Mary Oliver  
January O'Neil  
Elise Partridge  
Robert Pinsky  
Anna Ross  
Carla Schwartz  
Aaron Smith  
Patricia Smith  
George Starbuck  
Sandra Storey  
Patrick Sylvain  
Elke Thoms  
Erick Verran  
Derek Walcott  
Rosanna Warren  
Afaa Michael Weaver  
Anne Winters

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AN  
ANTHOLOGY  
OF  
CONTEMPORARY  
BOSTON  
POEMS

EDITED BY DANIELLE LEGROS GEORGES

BOSTON'S  
DEAD  
SIMPLY  
WILL NOT  
STAY  
BURIED

**BOSTON MOLASSES DISASTER,  
JANUARY 15, 1919**

Since your rapport with tragedy lacks legs for present-day, let it be sweetened by your love for the past.

How could you know catastrophe malted nearby or how fast you'd have to travel from its aftermath?

If you were the train conductor lurching beneath the tank, rivets and wood chips flying by as you bite, where would you take your understanding of safety or sadness in those savored minutes between shifts?

Or the delivery man whose truck was hurled to harbor without consideration of route.

Where your craving for the routine?

Or an early tourist sighting what few statues the city had—moments from Winthrop or Concord—wouldn't you pause to invite the irony heading your way from Purity, or would you run like the caramelized few who believed independence hugged like quicksand and lingered?

Some sat safe on a hill inside the Common, painted the picture from a healthy distance or went about urban work.

Since you're a child hearing the story generations later at bedtime, your sister peppers the telling with absurdity.

That's why your loyalty rallies heroic figures riding pancakes toward the Mystic, raising a flag with forty-eight stars and a musket, plucking out victims from a sugar-river: confection and courage converging at long last.

**John Bennett**