California Psalms

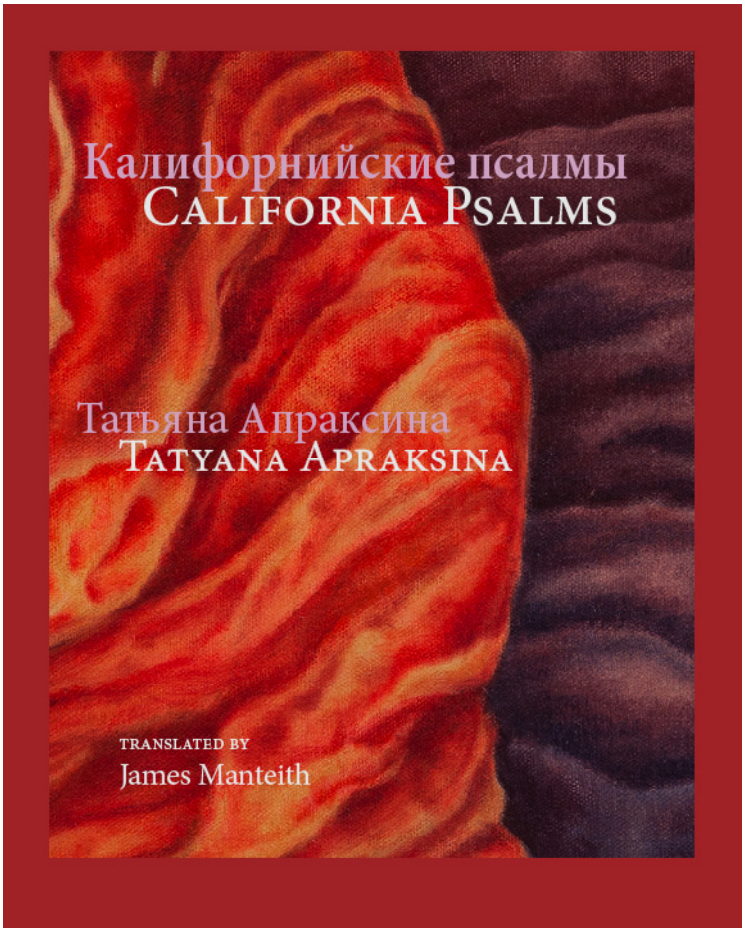
by Tatyana Apraksina

translated by James Manteith

And if it's called for — here, upon this coast
knowing no sunup, made only for settings, where a daily fading ray,
like light shed through a palm, like a flash from physicality,
from the inverse, floods radiance through flesh of earth with dominance ablaze,
here I will stay to live, fitting anticipation's designated answer,
steeped, like a rice paper sheet printing holy inscriptions
from a wetted stone. —Psalm 13, *Implantation*

Калифорнийские псалмы

A year before the turn of the millennium, circumstances brought Tatyana Apraksina, a Petersburg artist and writer focused on music and philosophy, to the far reaches of the American West. On the Pacific's edge, in the natural isolation of the legendary Big Sur coast, Tatyana Apraksina's cultural perspective required new forms. She replied with psalms. The resulting cycle combines richly imagistic language with contemplative and emotional depth. The internal events of a personal shift connect with the scale of the expansive universe and humanity within it. The English translation conveys both the meaning and strikingly volatile sound of the Russian original.This fully bilingual edition includes illustrations by the author, original calligraphy by Christi Payne, and an extensive introduction and commentary by the translator.



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