

Edited by Joshua Hoeynck

Staying Open:

Charles Olson's Sources and Influences

SERIES IN LITERARY STUDIES

“Joshua Hoeynck’s Staying Open: Charles Olson’s Sources and Influences sheds further light on Olson’s inspirations and offers renewed perspectives that should find a prominent place in the canon of Olson studies. Framed by John Livingston Lowes’ ideas on the imaginative process, the intellectually stimulating essays in this volume weigh the origins of Charles Olson’s theories and verse as they relate to diverse areas of study—from the physiological and psychological to the ecological and epistemological. By hearkening to Lowes’ process of creative association, this study reminds us of the seemingly endless connections between, and permutations of, Olson’s ideas, his words, and our world.”

John Woznicki,

editor of *The New American Poetry: Fifty Years Later*

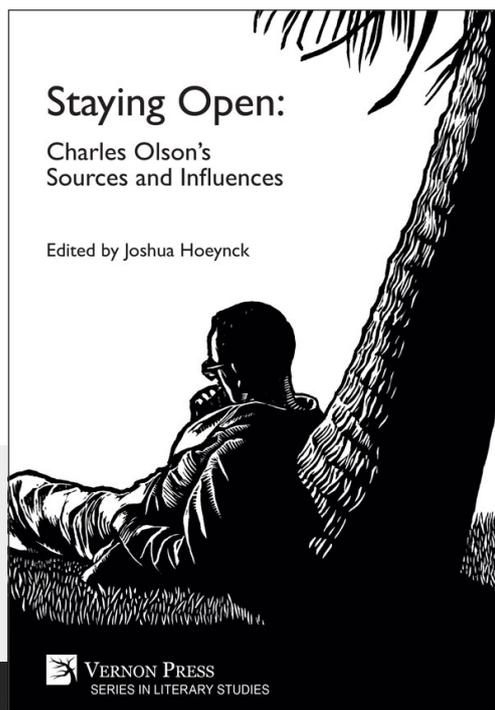
Summary

“Staying Open, Charles Olson’s Sources and Influences” investigates the inter-disciplinary influences on the work of the mid-Century American poet, Charles Olson. This edited collection of essays covers Olson’s diverse non-literary interests, including his engagement with the music of John Cage and Pierre Boulez, his interests in abstract expressionism, and his readings of philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. The essays also examine Olson’s pedagogy, which he developed in the experimental environment at Black Mountain College, as well as his six-month archeological journey through the Yucatan Peninsula in 1950 to explore the culture of the Maya. This book will, therefore, be a strong research aid to scholars working in diverse fields – music, archeology, pedagogy, philosophy, art, and psychology – as it outlines methods for close inter-disciplinary work that can uncover the mechanics of Olson’s creative, literary processes. Building on the straightforward scholarship of George Butterick, whose *Guide to the Maximus Poems* remains indispensable for readers of Olson’s work, the essays in this volume will also guide readers through the thick allusions within *The Maximus Poems* itself. New interest in the wide-ranging and non-literary nature of Olson’s thought in several recent academic works makes this book both timely and necessary.

Physics Envy: American Poetry and Science in the Cold War and After by Peter Middleton as well as Contemporary Olson edited by David Herd have started the process of uncovering the extent to which Olson’s inter-disciplinary interests inflected his poetic compositions. “Staying Open” extends the preliminary investigations of Olson’s non-literary sources in those volumes by bringing together a community of scholars working across disciplines and within a wide variety of humanistic concerns.

About the editor

Joshua Hoeynck received his Ph.D. from Washington University in St. Louis, and his research focuses primarily on the confluences between process philosophy, Black Mountain poetry, and environmental criticism. His work has appeared in *The New American Poetry: Fifty Years Later*, *Contemporary Literature*, and *Process Studies*. He is currently completing a book manuscript on the correspondences between Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, and Denise Levertov. Additionally, in conjunction with the Charles Olson Society, he is publishing a collection of expanded talks from the Society’s American Literature Association panels. He teaches writing and literature in the SAGES program at Case Western Reserve University, with courses on the American West, environmental dystopia, the history of ecology in American literature, and Magical Realism.



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