



OVUNQUE SIAMO

NEW ITALIAN-AMERICAN WRITING

VERTICAL BRIDGES: Poems and Photographs of City Steps, Paola Corso, Six Gallery Press
138 pages, \$15.00



Reviewed by Mark Spano

Only describe, don't explain. — **Ludwig Wittgenstein**

Metaphoric images are an unspoken language learned before we learn to speak. Images provide us interior scaffolding prior to words spoken or written. It is this poetic basis of mind that makes it possible to communicate employing metaphor. In Paola Corso's new book, ***VERTICAL BRIDGES: Poems and Photographs of City Steps***, the metaphor for the interior scaffolding is brought to life by the imagery of exterior scaffolding, those human-made structures that we ascend and descend. These external structures take on a life in the minds of those us who have lived with them daily throughout a lifetime.

This book is a collection of poetry in the broadest sense. The book is made from epigrams, poems, photographs, and prose-poems, including materials written in both English and Italian versions and English and Spanish versions.

Corso's work explores place as metaphor. As the French phenomenologist Gaston Bachelard tells us, "All great, simple images reveal a psychic state." And by that definition, Corso has used real places to create meaning well beyond their function. In so doing, the author has evoked a beauty that is both authentic and resonant from the commonplace. The author takes the familiar edifices of gradient movement and transforms them into conveyances of emotion and memory.

I loved this book because of the originality of its uses of staircases, ladders, etc. as repositories of meaning beyond the usual up and downs of poetic imagery.

<https://ovunquesiamoweb.com/spring-issue-2021/reviews/>