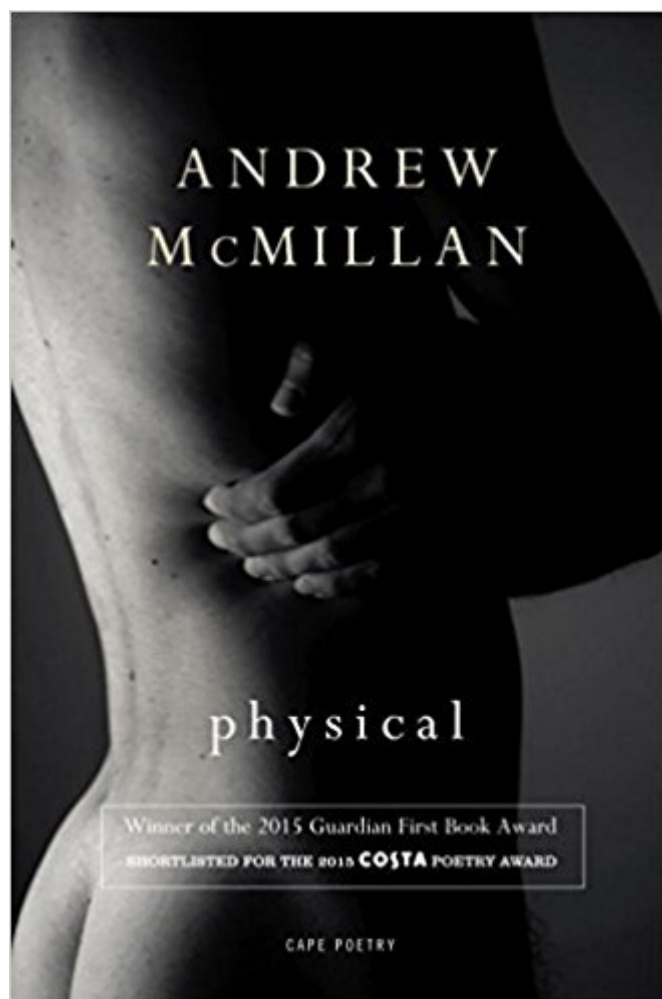


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Synopsis

An extraordinary debut from a 26-year-old poet.Â Â Â Â Â Raw and urgent, these poems are hymns to the male body -- to male friendship and male love -- muscular, sometimes shocking, but always deeply moving. We are witness here to an almost religious celebration of the flesh: a flesh vital with the vulnerability of love and loss, to desire and its departure. In an extraordinary blend of McMillan's own colloquial Yorkshire rhythms with a sinewy, Metaphysical music and Thom Gunn's torque and speed -- 'your kiss was deep enough to stand in' -- the poems in this first collection confront what it is to be a man and interrogate the very idea of masculinity. This is poetry where every instance of human connection, from the casual encounter to the intimate relationship, becomes redeemable and revelatory. There is, at the end of everything, a sense of hope.Â Â Â Â Â Dispensing with conventional punctuation, the poet is attentive and alert to the quality of breathing, giving the work an extraordinary sense of being vividly poised and present -- drawing lines that are deft, lyrical and perfectly pitched from a world of urban dereliction. An elegant stylist and unfashionably honest poet, McMillan believes that 'writing something down/keeps it alive', and his eye and ear are tuned, exactly, to both the mechanics of the body and the miracles of the heart.

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