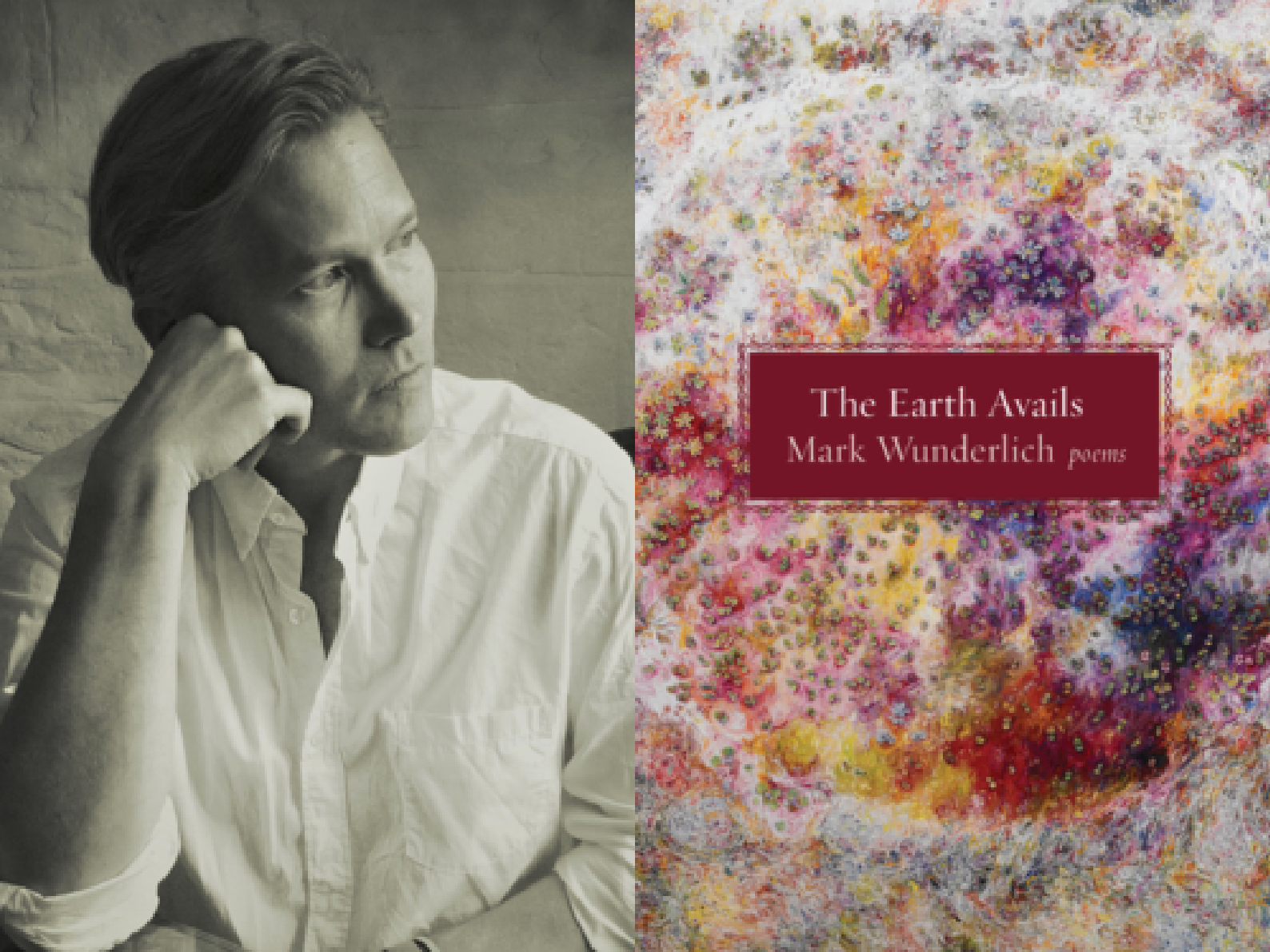




2015 UNT Rilke Prize

Mark Wunderlich – *The Earth Avails*

Mark Wunderlich's *The Earth Avails* (Graywolf Press) has won the 2015 UNT Rilke Prize. The \$10,000 prize recognizes a book written by a mid-career poet and published in the preceding year that demonstrates exceptional artistry and vision.

In his powerful book, *The Earth Avails*, Mark Wunderlich explores the plentitudes and threats of the natural order in language that both appropriates and resists the consolations of prayer and spiritual meditation. Here the agrarian world, eroded, assailed, embedded in myth, impoverished as a source of mythic communion, reasserts its primary terror and significance, its god-like proportions, storm-like

indifference, its small farms and families repossessed by earth. The earth survives, avails against our language, our memorials, our amnesia even, our world exalted and mourned in human terms. "I have loved myself and the world more than I have loved you," he prays. "I stand at the estuary," he says, and the confluence implied by speech remains haunted with humility and contraction, a sensation of wind tightening its reins, of language, mercifully, breaking down. "And you," he continues, "push the snaffle past my teeth."

Click [here](#) for a KERA radio feature by Jerome Weeks.

Click [here](#) for an American Literary Review interview with Mark Wunderlich.

Website: <https://www.markwunderlich.com/>





