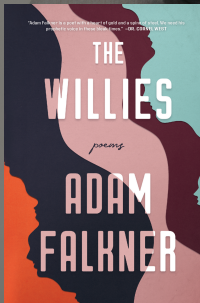


"ADAM FALKNER IS A POET WITH A SPINE OF STEEL. WE NEED HIS PROPHETIC VOICE IN THESE BLEAK TIMES."

— DR. CORNEL WEST

ADAM FALKNER



AUTHOR
EDUCATOR
ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGIST

WWW.ADAMFALKNERARTS.COM



DR. ADAM FALKNER is a poet, educator and arts & culture strategist. He is the author of *Adoption* (winner of the 2017 Diode Editions Chapbook Award) and *The Willies* (Button Poetry, 2020), and his work has appeared in a range of print and media spaces including on programming for HBO, NBC, NPR, BET, in the New York Times, and elsewhere. A former high school English teacher in New York City's public schools, Adam is the Founder and Executive Director of the pioneering diversity consulting initiative, the Dialogue Arts Project, in which capacity he develops and facilitates trainings for schools, companies and cultural institutions across the nation. Adam has toured the United States as a guest artist, lecturer and consultant for thousands of students, educators and corporate employees, and was the featured performer at President Obama's Grassroots Ball at the 2009 Presidential Inauguration. He holds a Ph.D. in English and Education from Columbia University.

"THIS IS TRUTH THAT CHANGES THE AIR IT REACHES. THIS IS POETRY THAT, DAMN IT, YOU JUST CAN'T SHAKE."

— **PATRICIA SMITH**

Author of *Incendary Art*
Guggenheim Fellow

Four-Time National Poetry Slam Champion



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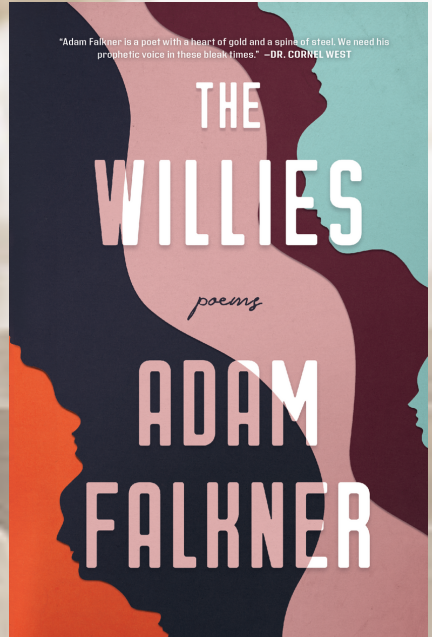
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"ADAM FALKNER HAS HEARD WHAT HUMS IN THE MARROW OF MEN WHO DECEIVE THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO SURVIVE IN AMERICA. CLEAR-VOICED AND DETERMINED, THIS BOOK IS FOR THOSE OF US READY TO SAVE OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER."

— **SAEED JONES**

Author of *How We Fight For Our Lives*



In this tender and fierce debut, Adam Falkner offers a sharp new portrait of the journey into queerhood and masculinity in America. Masquerading white boy. Child of an addict. Closeted varsity athlete. Through snapshots of "Willies," both tragic and humorous, merciless and humane, these poems ask us to give name to what scares us most. And to consider who we become if we do not.

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BOOKING NOW!

Men's Ten-Meter, London Olympics

*Not all of them are gay, I say quietly.
Just to be real, that's not very likely.*
This is the first of many summers in my
twenties where I defend the male body

to my family as a trial run. Sniff the air,
retreat. My father opens bottles
before the last is dry. *Of
course they are. Just look at them.*

My brother mumbles: I am *acting
like a bitch*. Teeth bare until someone barks.
Crystal is crunched into the carpet.
The meat is burned. My mother vanishes

for a walk. The television buzzes
a soft, glowing wash.
And no one watches the boy my age
make his lonely climb up the ladder. No one

sees him shake loose the nerves
from the ropy twine in his arms, ripple of muscle
waves up his back as he inches
onto the balls of his feet. Waits

for the right moment. Flashbulbs cocked.

Originally published in Diode Poetry Journal, 2018

"FALKNER
TRACES
QUESTIONS OF
IDENTITY,
FAMILY,
LOVE & THE
SELF. HIS
LANGUAGE IS
ANGULAR AND
SUPRISING, HIS
CONTENT
INTIMATE AND
PROFOUND.

— **ANDREW
SOLOMON**

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

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