

Contents

Acknowledgments ix

Abbreviations xiii

Introduction: The History of the Poetic Career 1

- 1 Apprentices to Chance Event:
First Books of the 1920s 21
- 2 "Poets of the First Book, Writers of Promise":
Beginning in the Era of the First-Book Prize 68
- 3 "Everything Has a Schedule":
John Ashbery's *Some Trees* 104
- 4 From *Firstborn* to *Vita Nova*:
Louise Glück's Born-Again Professionalism 128

Conclusion: Making Introductions 154

Notes 169

Bibliography 191

Index 203