**Praise for *Slide to Unlock*:**

 "Julie E. Bloemeke's *Slide to Unlock* is a kind of philosophical love poetry, and in it, the poet locates in the body the satisfactions of the mind: 'There is no place but here, / submerged, the flower of me, / the flower of you, both coded to open, / but brought instead to salt, / converted to everlasting.' Lines like these spiral and unwind in Bloemeke's opus. This is a lovely book." - **Jericho Brown, author of *The Tradition,* winner of the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry**

"Is it possible for a lyric poet to bring the rawest complications of the adult heart, an orchestra-conductor's authority of syntax, a pristinely liberating imagination, and a virtual mixtape's range of voices, reference, and places together into a single, unified, seemingly narrative, utterly dazzling whole? Julie E. Bloemeke's *Slide to Unlock* confirms: it is." - **Jane Hirshfield, author of*Ledger***

“In a bit of serendipitous timing, Atlanta resident Julie E. Bloemeke’s *Slide to Unlock* is perfectly suited for the pandemic. Containing poems written over the course of 10 years, it explores what it means to connect with others in the age of digital communication. In sections titled “Dialing In,” “Call Waiting,” “On the Line” and “Cellular,” Bloemeke’s poems center on various permutations of intimacy from teenage desire to encounters with ex-lovers to the comforts of marriage to a partner who keeps his word. –**Suzanne Van Atten for the *Atlanta Journal Constitution***

“Julie E. Bloemeke’s *Slide to Unlock* Is a singing chorus of desire. These poems render a tender overview of what it is at play between the mind and the body, the past and the present, the said and the unsaid. For poems that are so insular and introspective about wanting and longing, they are loud with the vastness of all that the love of self, others, and life can do. This book is a journey worth returning to.” **Malcom Tariq, 2020 Georgia Author of the Year**

“*Slide to Unlock* celebrates exuberantly and questions tenaciously.  It circles again and again around the same subjects, sidling up to them, chewing on them…interrogating and prodding—this is a poetry that understands that the answers are too often…elliptical, the meanings as slippery as the messages—cellular and otherwise.” **Beth Gylys, author of *Body Braille, a 2021 Book All Georgians Should Read***

​“*Slide to Unlock* consumed me. By layering first person pronouns, complicating their relationship to memory, Julie E. Bloemeke foregrounds questions of agency, complicity, and loyalty. She does this at the level of the line as well as the book… carefully, recklessly, with immaculate control, palpating the conventions of fidelity in romantic relationships and their relation to the self across time… This desire to identify the “We” speaks directly to the feminine socialization which encourages us to define the “I” as part of a relationship, conditioned by the amatonormative gaze--to be seen as someone's girl. Which is to say that these poems interrogate femininity, making the noun, muse, a site of conflict and contention… I remain haunted by these poems…” **Alina Stefanescu, author of *Ribald*, for *Up the Staircase Quarterly***

*"Slide to Unlock* is Julie E. Bloemeke's first full-length collection of poems, an effort which she admits took ten years to complete, and it is bad news for the competition...*Slide to Unlock* is at its heart a book that, in words almost offered as a gift, endeavors to reach all of us where we are most alone, that moves through and beyond the physical to what can only be described as the spiritual. One finally understands, too, having finished the volume, the insistence of language, Bloemeke's will to know not the right but the *exactly* right word, such that we also know, at last, "that we/ were the ones/ unable to be/ left/ to our own/ devices." **Gordon Van Ness, editor and commentary author of** ***The One Voice of James Dickey: His Letters and Life, 1970-1997*, for *South Carolina Review***

"..In the collection’s title poem, Bloemeke writes, “We are undone / by the promise of resolution, // temptation.” In *Slide to Unlock*, Bloemeke carefully explores this state of being undone by too much and never enough — too much communication, but never enough resolution, never enough solace from words either on a screen or in a letter. The poems expertly move from moments in time, miles crossed — from teenage years in the 80s where communication is “the receiver // waiting / in its cradle // where an answer / could remain” (“Rotary Ode”) to the lovelorn streets of Venice and Paris looking for “So many combinations / of we, or us, sealed in the vow of click” (“Lock Bridge, 2008”)...These poems are intimate, honest, and at times, searing....*Slide to Unlock* is a testament to our time, especially now where so many of us are locked in, thinking, missing, reminiscing. As in the poem “Passing Hugo Boss,” we understand the ache of “the longing / the sudden negative space,” the wistful desire to fill this with memory, with myth-making.  To pick up a cell phone, begin an email is so easy — a seemingly impersonal act that in fact, is quite personal. We yearn as humans are wont to do, as Bloemeke writes in “Letter to My Husband”, “She has her story. The myth / continues to rise.” And here, the myth rises powerfully in its timely truth..."  [**Amanda Auchter**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amanda_Auchter)**for**[***The Indianapolis Review***](https://theindianapolisreview.com/review-of-julie-e-bloemekes-debut-collection-slide-to-unlock/)

"The sense of connection and disconnection in [the title poem] sets the tone for the rest of the collection—which, not insignificantly, is itself a technological creation, an attempt to communicate, a world that generates its own light...The collection ultimately suggests, however, that modern digital technologies are not alone in their creation of distance when we long for intimacy. Rather, our bodies themselves are a kind of technology for keeping what’s inside in and what’s outside out...we understand that the act of touching—whether it’s a phone screen or another person—is an act of creation that’s defined by simultaneous distance and connection. This conundrum of desiring an impossible intimacy is, perhaps, part of the human condition. We can only ever do our best to connect, despite all the various kinds of distance that lie between us..."  [**Vivian Wagner for*Pedestal Magazine***](https://www.thepedestalmagazine.com/julie-e-bloemekes-slide-to-unlock-reviewed-by-vivian-wagner/)