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Word Of Mouth: Poems Featured On NPR's All Things Considered



Synopsis

Starting in 1995, NPR's All Things Considered began presenting poets reading their own works. Introduced by poetry DJ Catherine Bowman, these popular short segments allowed listeners to experience poetry as a kind of verbal music, recalling its roots as a spoken art form. Word of Mouth, edited by Bowman, brings together the poems that have been featured on NPR, providing a window onto the dynamic contemporary poetry scene. A child playing with flashes of sunlight in the aisle of an airplane; a woman describing tropical fruit to someone in a faraway country; a man building a deck with his dead father's hammer; the musings of a Barbie doll participating in a 12-step program: these poems powerfully and lyrically transform the stuff of every day life. A celebration of the poetic voice that includes 33 acclaimed writers, this vibrant anthology proves beyond any doubt that poetry is far more than just words on paper. Quincy Troupe, Czeslaw Milosz, Campbell McGrath, C.D. Wright, Jack Gilbert, Heather McHugh, David Lehman, Wang Ping, Joseph Brodsky, Paul Beatty, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Paul Muldoon, Lucille Clifton, Naomi Shihab Nye, Richard Blanco, Albert Goldbarth, Carrie Allen McCray, Belle Waring, Russell Edson, Kevin Young, Nuala Di Dhomhnaill, Charles Harper Webb, Denise Duhamel, Yusef Komunyakaa, Hal Sirowitz, Lucia Perillo, Amy Gerstler, Maura Stanton, Marilyn Chin, Philip Booth, Jane Cooper, Diane DiPrima, Elizabeth Spires

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you start by accepting that hip-hop is the only truly living style of verse in America today, the bar is not terribly high for a book of contemporary, mostly American poetry. That being said, the poems

here are notable first for being contemporary and second for being consistently high-quality, if not always ground-breaking. The range of experiences, class and ethnic backgrounds of the poets are what you might expect from a progressive NPR show- fairly broad but ultimately safe; the introductions also read predictably like NPR intros. The women poets supply some of the best material; maybe Bowman's ear is especially attuned to irony and pathos of a particularly female type. But most importantly this collection contains many fresh voices and avoids falling back into tired material such as beat writers, with the notable exception of Diane Di Prima.

Wonderful variety. I love reading so many poets I never had heard of before.

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