



The Collected Poems of Samuel Beckett

By Samuel Beckett

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Samuel Beckett began his career by publishing poems in literary reviews in Paris during the 1930s, and—although primarily considered a playwright and novelist—he continued writing poetry throughout his life. This new, definitive volume presents Beckett’s poetry in the order it was composed, from pre-war to post-war, and contains previously unpublished and never-before-reprinted work. Along with his translations of Apollinaire, Mallarme, Rimbaud, and many others, this book brings together all of the pieces from *Collected Poems in English and French*, selections from *Mexican Poetry: An Anthology* (translated by Beckett), and poems that appeared in his novels and plays. Extensive critical notes by editors Seán Lawlor and John Pilling detail the circumstances of their composition, explaining obscure allusions and references (frequently sourced to Beckett's notebooks), and identifying resonances across his oeuvre.

Poetry allowed Beckett to reconcile his penchant for opulent phrasing with his preference for minimalism, and it profoundly influenced his approach to the drama and fiction for which he’s revered. This complete collection is an informative and essential addition to the libraries of Beckett’s readers.

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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for *Collected Poems*

"A totalizing project . . . one that, perhaps more realistically than his collected novels or dramas, opens the iris of history onto the great writer's formal development." —Flavorwire

"Collecting so many poems into a single volume makes it much easier to trace the patterns that are worked into Beckett's imaginative DNA. . . . For anyone interested in the evolution of his plays, Beckett's poems are essential reading. . . . Above all, we are given a bird's-eye view of the process by which he made meaningful patterns out of his 'wordshed'." —*Telegraph*

"[An] admirable, annotated scholarly edition. . . . Treasurable." —*The London Evening Standard*

"The voice we hear exemplifies the stoic injunction 'Fail again. Fail better' . . . but, more than that, it shows how beauty can be won from a vision as bleak as any other to be found in world literature." —*New Statesman*

"[A] sumptuously annotated edition. . . . Beckett's poetic successes, in any genre, are matters of musical cadence, of the rich interplay of sounds: they obey the Imagist prescription to compose in the rhythm of the musical phrase, not in that of the metronome. . . . Beckett's poems trace in miniature his lifelong inability, despite his best efforts, to keep silent." —*The New Criterion*

"Peculiar magic [and] genius imbues even the slightest lines." —*Times Literary Supplement*

"Toweringly important . . . funny and bleak and overflowing with laughter in the dark and melancholy joy. Featuring copious notes and a buzzing introduction, this is a work of dazzling, still-fresh brilliance." —Stuart Hammond

"Like [Beckett's] prose, with which they have so much in common, the poems are instantly striking and mysteriously persistent in the mind and even the nerves." —Derek Mahon

About the Author

Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), one of the most important writers in twentieth-century literature and drama, was born in Foxrock, Ireland and attended Trinity College Dublin. In 1969, Beckett was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature and commended for having "transformed the destitution of man into his exaltation."

Users Review

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