



Chemistry Imagined Reflections on Science

By Roald Hoffmann, Vivian Torrence

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A Nobel Prize-winning chemist uses collages, short essays, personal commentary, and poems to show the magic and mysteries of his field and stress the social, literary, and psychological aspects of chemistry.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A Nobel Laureate in chemistry, Hoffman assembles brief essays, word portraits of chemists and prose poems to celebrate the wonder he unceasingly finds in his field. Torrence's accompanying painted collages are less persuasive. As in his earlier collections, including *Gaps and Verges*, Hoffman's inspiration comes from the most fundamental of phenomena--"the science of molecules." But it is the teaching power of the written word, not the double carbon bond, that dominates here, as Hoffman's short pieces of prose leave the reader craving his fuller treatment of more complex topics. Difficult though it may be to get at the fine, hard truth of a crystal lattice from a poem, the impact of Hoffman's effort here suggests that the curiosity-squashing damage wrought by rote drills of the periodic table could be redeemed by the sense of awe and far-reaching appreciation embraced in these writings.

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From School Library Journal

YA-An unusual, imaginative blending of scientific concepts with artistic illustrations, interesting discussions, and creative poetry. Hoffmann, a Nobel laureate, and Torrence, a visual artist, combine efforts to show the importance of chemistry in daily life. The drawings are surrealistic, thought-provoking, and appropriately placed. The book will be a wonderful resource for advanced students and for teachers, particularly with the increased emphasis on writing across the curricula. The lack of an index will require readers to garner the topics from the broad listing in the table of contents. A well-written, entertaining, and enjoyable book that presents chemistry from an entirely different perspective.

Donna West, W.T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, VA

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From Library Journal

"Chemistry is the science of molecules and their transformations," claims Noble Laureate Hoffmann, where one is able to know without seeing. Yet after reading this short collection of short essays and poems, the mind's eye will come away with sharp images of chemistry's historical roots as well as its mysteries and utilities. Hoffmann's topics range from Chinese folk medicine to scanning tunneling microscopy, from alchemy to polymer chemistry, and more. Couple this with a series of full-color collages by artist Torrence, and you will find a rich blend of science and art. Intelligently written for the general reader, this popularization of a usually inaccessible subject is recommended for public libraries.

- *Nancy Chipman-Shlaes, Governors State Univ. Lib., University Park, Ill.*

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Kristi Duncan:

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