



The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-century Poetry in English (Oxford Companions)

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The first and only comprehensive work of its kind, *The Companion to Twentieth Century Poetry in English* charts the development of poetry from 1900 to the present, across the whole of the English-speaking world, from the United States, Great Britain, and Ireland to New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, Trinidad and Zimbabwe--anywhere where poets write in English. Alphabetically arranged for ease of reference, it offers biographical entries on some 1,500 individual poets, as well as over one hundred entries covering important magazines, movements, literary terms and concepts.

As readable as it is comprehensive, the *Companion* offers a fascinating survey of this century's shift from 'poetry' to 'poetries,' as American and British traditions of poetry have made way for a growing diversity of voices, and as the burgeoning poetries of Australia, Canada, and other English-speaking countries assert their own identities. The range of poets represented in this *Companion* is extraordinary. Here are in-depth discussions of Yeats, Eliot, Pound, and Joyce alongside provocative assessments of W.H. Auden, Elizabeth Bishop, Wallace Stevens, and Marianne Moore. John Ashbery, Margaret Atwood, Maya Angelou, and Mary Oliver are accounted for, as well as Carolyn Forché, David Bottoms, Jorie Graham, and many other younger poets just coming into prominence. Chinua Achebe, Jack Mapanje, Femi Oyebode and other important African poets writing in English are here, as well as poets from the Caribbean, India, and even Russia. Readers will relish this *Companion's* many insightful contributions from celebrated poet-critics, writing on other poets in intriguing author-subject combinations. For example, Seamus Heaney writes on Robert Lowell ("Lowell had invented a way of getting at life, of making poetry kick and freak at the edge of contemporary reality"), Ann Stevenson discusses Sylvia Plath ("In the quarter-century following her suicide, Sylvia Plath has become a heroine and martyr of the feminist movement. In fact, she was a martyr mainly to the recurrent psychodrama that staged itself within the bell jar of her tragically wounded personality"), and Tom Paulin weighs in on Ted Hughes ("His appointment as Poet Laureate in 1984 sealed his essentially shaman-like conception of his poetic mission and enabled him to speak out on environmental issues while celebrating royal weddings and babies"). Other pairings include Jay Parini on Wallace Stevens, Jon Stallworthy on Wilfred Owen and Rupert Brooke, and William H. Pritchard on Robert Frost and Randall Jarrell. Each entry includes a wealth of biographical and bibliographical information, and a select bibliography at the end of the book supplies a handy source of information on poets whose work is not otherwise in print, or readily available to readers.

From Abse and Auden to Zaturenska and Zukofsky, *The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Poetry in English* is an essential reference for students, lovers of poetry, and for poets themselves.

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