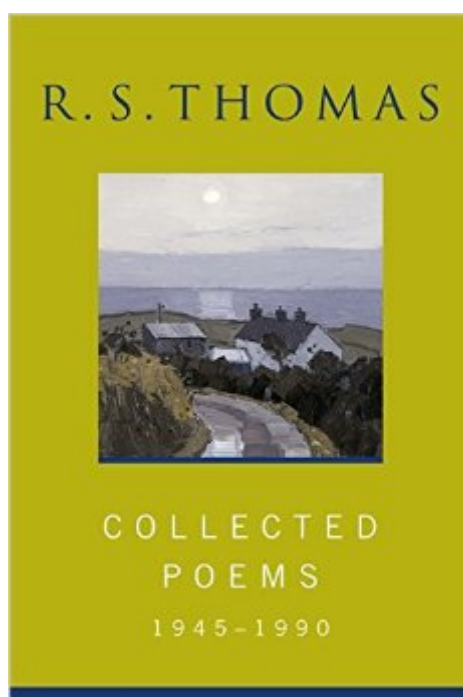


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Collected Poems : R S Thomas



Synopsis

Published to mark the poet's 80th birthday, this collection confirms R. S. Thomas as our pre-eminent poet. 'This is the book I've been waiting for' Ted Hughes

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Welshman R.S. Thomas is the author of some of the most memorable religious poetry of the century. As a clergyman in rural Wales Thomas had to face a country and a church in decline; this inspired poetry of an austere beauty. The poem "The Bright Field" seems to me to capture the essence of Thomas' poetry: "I have seen the sun break through / to illuminate a small field / for a while, and gone my way / and forgotten it. But that was the pearl / of great price, the one field that had / the treasure in it. I realize now / that I must give all that I have / to possess it. Life is not hurrying // on to a receding future, nor hankering after / an imagined past. It is the turning / aside like Moses to the miracle / of the burning bush, to a brightness / that seemed as transitory as your youth / once, but is the eternity that awaits you."

Close to half a century of his poetry; unique, forthright, deeply reflective; a journey into spiritual and cultural ambivalence, where contrasting and opposite images and ideas battle to be reconciled.

R S Thomas has got to be in the top five poets of the 20th Century. If you're after confirmation of pleasing platitudes or gooey emotionalism, go elsewhere. These are poems rich in insight and surprising spiritual epiphanies.

Not as well-known as his Welsh namesake, Dylan, R.S. Thomas wrote wonderful poetry often encapsulating the spirit of his homeland. Born in my home town of Cardiff in Wales, Thomas was known in his lifetime as much as an eloquent and passionate preacher as he was as a poet. Although all these poems are in English, Thomas was a great advocate of all aspects of Welshness, though he did not learn the language until he was an adult. There is no Commentary in this collection on the man or his work, but it provides a comprehensive overview of Thomas' poetry with over four hundred examples, steeped in the Wales he knew all of his life. I cannot compare his poetic style with anyone, for it is unique. This is a collection for those who wish to know something of the atmosphere of life in Wales during the twentieth century.

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