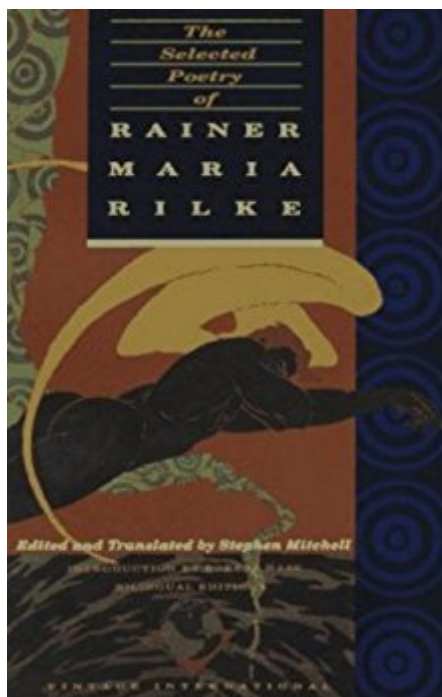


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The Selected Poetry Of Rainer Maria Rilke



Synopsis

"This miracle of a book, perhaps the most beautiful group of poetic translations this century has ever produced," (Chicago Tribune) should stand as the definitive English language version. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

With this particular volume of Rilke, you get two things: (1) perhaps the finest example of German poetry (the book is bilingual) this side of Schiller, and (2) without a doubt the finest translation of Rilke, or probably any poet, you will ever encounter in English. Hefty praise, but I can say no less about this magnificent book. I often find myself reading the English more than the German, the translations are so elegant. In its review of the volume, the New York Times Book Review said that "it is easy to feel that, if Rilke had written in English, he would have written in this English." I concur. I am no fan of Mitchell's Daodejing translation, though I know that he says up front that he is interpreting more than translating in that work. But Rilke volume is a triumph. Often, translators of poetry feel that they have to re-write the poem in order to get der Sinn, and Mitchell, himself a minor poet, could have done that easily and given us a nice book (even bad Rilke by a good translator is better than no Rilke at all). Mitchell did not do that; he very simply gave us Rilke, Rilke's poems, in

English. They say what Rilke said, I don't know how else to say that. Mitchell wisely does not try to reproduce Rilke's rhyme schemes, though he does seem to match Rilke's alliterations note for note. This is not a flaw in the translations by any means; complex, artful, infuriating German sentence structure being what it is, I cannot imagine successfully duplicating the rhymes and still making a book as beautiful as the one Mitchell has made.

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