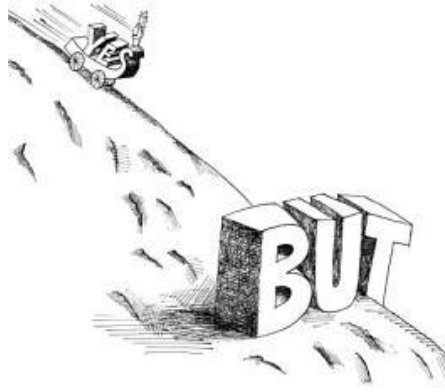


COLLECTED POEMS

MARK STRAND

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE



Collected Poems

Mark Strand

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Collected Poems Mark Strand

Longlisted for the 2014 National Book Award

Gathered here is a half century's magnificent work by the former poet laureate of the United States and Pulitzer Prize winner whose haunting and exemplary style has influenced an entire generation of American poets.

Beginning with the limited-edition volume *Sleeping with One Eye Open*, published in 1964, Mark Strand was hailed as a poet of piercing originality and elegance, and in the ensuing decades he has not swerved from his vision of how a poem should be shaped and what it should deliver. As he entered the middle period of his career, with volumes such as *The Continuous Life* (1990), Strand was already well-known for his ability to capture the subtle music of consciousness, and for creating painterly physical landscapes that could answer to the inner self: "And here the dark infinitive to feel, / Which would endure and have the earth be still / And the star-strewn night pour down the mountains / Into the hissing fields and silent towns." In his later work, from *Blizzard of One* (1998) which won the Pulitzer Prize, through the sly, provocative riddles of his recent *Almost Invisible* (2012), Strand has delighted in reminding us that there is no poet quite like him for a dose of dark wit that turns out to be deep wisdom and self-deprecation. He has given voice to our collective imagination with a grandeur and comic honesty worthy of his great Knopf forebear Wallace Stevens. With this volume, we celebrate his canonical work.

Collected Poems Details

Date : Published September 30th 2014 by Knopf (first published January 1st 2014)

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Author : Mark Strand

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From Reader Review Collected Poems for online ebook

Ken says

Sometimes I wonder about the merits of reading collected poems, especially when the body of work (in one volume) is huge, like, say, Mark Strand's *Collected Poems*, here weighing in at 510 pages.

After a while, you begin to pick up on themes and tropes, images and even words that the poet goes to like a touchstone. The poet might argue, "My poems are not *meant* to be read like this. They should not be swallowed in one massive gulp like Jonah and all that well-Red Sea water."

Well, maybe the poet would say such. I know I would. But I'm a lousy barometer.

For Strand, one favorite theme is death. Thus, his own recent death gave both obit and tribute writers plenty to work with. Strand thought a lot about his mortality, but there's just no way out of the box, which is why so many poems echo this theme, even make gentle fun of those who might dream differently. Strand also liked writing about the moon. Yes, the sky and stars and ocean, but especially the moon.

For those who like accessibility and the vernacular, Strand's your man. He buys little stock in high-falootin', though his ideas can play in that yard at times. Here's a typical Strand poem, one featuring not only the moon but early awareness of mortality, distant but sure.

My Name

*Once when the lawn was a golden green
and the marbled moonlit trees rose like fresh memorials
in the scented air, and the whole countryside pulsed
with the chirr and murmur of insects, I lay in the grass,
feeling the great distances open above me, and wondered
what I would become and where I would find myself,
and though I barely existed, I felt for an instant
that the vast star-clustered sky was mine, and I heard
my name as if for the first time, heard it the way
one hears the wind or the rain, but faint and far off
as though it belonged not to me but to the silence
from which it had come and to which it would go.*

In typing "the scented air," I was reminded that Strand doesn't traffic in excess imagery. He shuns overuse of adjectives and adverbs, too. Lots of nouns and verbs. Lots of repetition and wordplay. And most definitely an ironic sense of humor.

I'll leave you with another musing on mortality called "In the Afterlife." It's quintessential Strand, I think (note: line breaks are off due to the long line lengths and GR's wonky, anti-poem formatting):

*She stood beside me for years, or was it a moment? I cannot
remember. Maybe I loved her, maybe I didn't. There was a
house, and then no house. There were trees, but none remain.
When no one remembers, what is there? You, whose moments*

are gone, who drift like smoke in the afterlife, tell me something, tell me anything.

Linnie Greene says

From Shelf Awareness:

"To live in the world of Mark Strand's poetry is to inhabit a dream (or a nightmare, depending on your tolerance for the bizarre). In his *Collected Poems*, which spans the breadth and depth of his work as a Pulitzer Prize winner and former poet laureate, camels wander through suburban back yards and women undress mid-conversation. Strand morphs quotidian moments into revelations, a series of existential shrugs at life's absurdity and wonder.

Collected Poems traces Strand's career from infancy to establishment; while some other artists' collected works reveal a quantum leap from the first piece to the last, Strand's oeuvre remains remarkably high in caliber, with his earliest poems nearly as masterful as his most recent. Part of the pleasure of following his career is watching thematic interests shift and recur, reappearing throughout the years like coats buried at the back of a closet. Wind, moons, sleep, breath: all of these symbols cycle through volumes between 1962 and 2012, their meaning and menace varying with each use.

From his disturbing dreamscapes to his subtler quips on artistic ambition, the poet's voice is as inviting as it is uncanny. The intricate gives way to the bluntly truthful. In "The Good Life," from his 1970 collection *Darker*, Strand writes, "The good life gives no warning./ It weathers the climates of despair/ and appears, on foot, unrecognized, offering nothing,/ and you are there." Where? Well, that's not entirely clear, but the reader is lucky to occupy this space alongside an iconic national voice."

Carmen Petaccio says

no shortage of bangers in this bad boy!

relevant link: <http://www.theparisreview.org/fiction...>

Jobie says

I wanted to read Mark Strand ever since I read his poem "Eating Poetry." Even after reading this whole book of poems, That is still my favorite poem.

I enjoyed this book and I enjoyed reading all the different poems that he wrote over the years. I think I like his earlier times better. I feel like I identified with them more. They have more of a magical and lyrical quality. I feel like it's a later point tend to veer off into a more pros bent.

I wanted to get through the book to get an overall impression. I will definitely go back and reread my favorite and read them in the slow way they deserve.

Jenny (Reading Envy) says

While his narrative poems are not my favorite, re-reading the poetry in this collected volume made me incredibly happy, soothed, and full. I need to own it.

Some old and new favorites:

- No Man is Continent Who Visits Islands
 - Eating Poetry
 - Breath
 - The Remains
 - Coming to This
 - My Son
 - Black Sea
 - Harmony in the Boudoir
-

Brian says

It's always interesting to have a collection that spans a poet's lifetime of work. While I didn't connect with most of it (for me, the clever, witty language seemed a screen that often blocked that connection instead of being a conduit), Strand was clearly an important poet, worthy of our attempted attention.

Lee says

Undoubtedly a fine poet who seems to be caught up on cold winters and death in much of his work. Enjoyed his earlier work more than the more recent pieces. I especially recommend The Everyday Enchantment of Music, a more recent work. As Poet Laureate for 1999 one can hardly complain!

Katharine Holden says

Didn't fall in love with any of the poems.

Miriam says

I received this as a gift, not this Christmas but the one before, along with several other books which I did not read last year. This Christmas I got no books! Karma? I better read them all before my birthday or I might get another round of "useful" gifts.

Psycho Kanev says

Have a peaceful transition to Eternity, Mark! Bon voyage!

Lisa says

An always inspiring poet!

Jsavett1 says

This book is a treasure and I'm very glad to own it, though I'm sad to have finished it. The book was released in the weeks surrounding Mark Strand's death and so there is an air of tragedy and nobility infused (even more than usually) in his poems here.

As well as being a Pulitzer prize winner and critically acclaimed teacher, Strand is a tremendous personal influence. This book is a joy because you can watch the power of the surreal and the linguistic freedom which characterizes Strand's poetry grow with each collection. My personal favorites are the poems in *Blizzard of One* and the prose poems of *Almost Invisible*. This latter collection (which does contain some wide misses) shows Strand at the height of powers, perfecting his play with what we can say and what we can know, how we can say it and how we can know we said it. Unclear? Exactly. That's the way Strand likes it and that's the way he left it.

Don't be worried, however, that Strand's poetry is too cerebral and gauzy. This imprecision he's after, this liminality, is always brought to the reader through the world of the senses. It's just that these senses are scrambled and free to associate.

Thank you Mr. Strand and rest.

Lake County Public Library says

By far my favorite collection of poems. Strand's dark but powerful prose will captivate any poetry lover.

-- Pete, Merrillville Branch
