



Cool Gardens

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From Serj Tankian, lead vocalist for critically acclaimed band System of a Down, comes a striking debut poetry collection highlighting his best work of the past eight years.

Like System of a Down's platinum-selling second album, *Toxicity* -- hailed by *Rolling Stone* as "a bouquet of smart rock and ardent social argument" and by *SPIN* as "the sound of now" -- Tankian's poetic style is willfully eclectic. Sometimes introspective, sometimes direct and cutting, these poems deal with subjects as wide-ranging as euthanasia and the nature of time itself.

Featuring original artwork created by Sako Shahinian, a young Los Angelesbased artist, *Cool Gardens* is honest, heartfelt, and humorous -- a talented artist at his uncompromising best.

Cool Gardens Details

Date : Published October 1st 2002 by MTV Books

ISBN : 9780743457415

Author : Serj Tankian

Format : Paperback 96 pages

Genre : Poetry

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From Reader Review Cool Gardens for online ebook

Alyssa McNeil says

Just like his music, Serj Tankian's poetry is just inspiring and informative .

Michael says

I enjoyed a lot of the poetry here and learnt some new words along the way. Some of the poems were good, yet others were not. However, the poems I did enjoy reading made up the disappointment from the others and I rate this book a three. Among my favourites were the poems: Friik, Circus Tiger, My Words, Death and 12 Lives. As a side note, there was also some fantastic artwork in the book.

Tyler says

A pretty damn good collection of poetry written by the frontman of System of a Down. Lots of deep, meaningful stuff here, tucked away between poems about losing his virginity or how hot this girl is. Serj certainly has a unique way with words. If you like poetry, System of a Down, or both, this is for you.

Renata says

I can confess that the only reason I ever bought this poetry collection was because of the author, who is the lead singer of one of my favorite bands, System of a Down. Aside from that, there wasn't much to this collection. I don't know if it was just me, but most of these poems just went totally over my head... The only thing keeping me from giving it 1 star was that I actually liked 2 of the poems ("Businessman vs. Homeless" and "Soil"), but it probably was because those were the only 2 I understood.

Jonathan Stemberger says

Cool Gardens

Cool Gardens is a collection of poems by Serj Tankian. Tankian is a musician and uses a lot of rhythm and rhyme in his poems. I also enjoy using these tools and was pleased to see an adult author using them to confront issues of today. Tankian uses a lot of alteration like in the poem From Words To Portraits "A shifting of polarities, to portraits, from words. He also uses hard rhyme in pieces like Duty Free Fear "Don't torture me, the river will arise,/encompassing the earth, evil, demise," I would like to be able to use rhyme in my own poems. His poems do not use a lot of concrete imagery, instead Tankian relies on the abstract like "Though she loves them alike,/ In her true timeless nature/ my time here is sacred, pure" in order to address larger concerns.

Kim says

This book definitely seems like something that Serj Tankian would write.

I think my favorite part of this book is the pictures and illustrations by Sako Shahinian that were included. That being said, I was a little disappointed that Tankian himself didn't do the illustrations. I liked the very unusual typeface that was used at first, to make the book appear handwritten, but it began to bother me after reading for awhile. The lowercase g and capital N looked more like a q and u respectively and it took me awhile to get used to it. Still, the typeface and the illustrations combined really nicely in a way that made the book feel like you were almost reading a personal notebook, which I found interesting. The look and feel of the book, however, is where the second star of my rating comes from.

If I was rating this book solely on the poems, it would definitely get one star. The poems felt largely unrefined, like they were just taken from a notebook Tankian had been writing in. A lot of times they felt more like rejected song lyrics than anything else. The subject matter could be thought-provoking at times but a less-than-stellar writing style really distracted from it. Tankian can also be somewhat crass at times. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for crassness in poetry if it is used to an effect, but in this book it was just...crass.

I would have enjoyed this book more if I had read it in high school or my freshman year of college when I would have related to it more (and, honestly, it would have been more similar to my own writing style then). As it is, this book is just not my kind of poetry.

Franco Santos says

Serj, mejor dedícale a componer música, por favor.

Este libro de poesía lo compré porque está escrito por Serj Tankian, el cantante de mi banda favorita (System of a Down). Serj encima tiene varios trabajos de solista que también me encantan (Elect the Dead, Imperfect Harmonies y Harakiri)... Y además está firmado.

Algunos poemas están buenos, como por ejemplo:

I live in a city of blinds,
I wake up from life,
To fall asleep in light,
Can't open my blinds to the blind.
A blind man walks his blind dog,
To the left, the right,
Just enough to sense the light
And feel the warmth.
Even flowers, plotted in soil
Take in the light and live.
The blind man ignores the day.
He is immortal.
Death, a surprise.

O:

A pen is but a pen,

When the time has come
For its retirement.
A career is but a job,
Modern indentured servitude,
If not for the challenge
And dreams.
And a day is just a
Collection of hours,
If not for that one
Sparkling, coaxing,
Loving smile on your
Face.

Pero después están estas cosas...

Every time I fart, of late,
I feel the excretory juices of my
Feces,
Squishing and squashing between my
butt cheeks,
However I have no desire to wipe
my ass, anymore.
A metaphor?

O:

Ostriches murmur in the sand,
Rhinos whine at night,
Owls growl at the night's tragic mood,
Spitting into the crevices of
The damned bastard moon.
And you baby,
you suck a good dick.

WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAT??

Gharam El-Hendy says

"You will live death, in your life,
If all you do with your life, is avoid death.
My goal is to stop reacting in life,
While reacting more in sports.
It is great work to strip man from his home,
Clothes, education, social circle, and job,
In order to preserve his freedom and individuality,
Giving him his own dreams,
Rather than those of society.
Life's cruelty is in its forced forfeit
of all worldly possessions
In trade for one's life.

Death should only be the reward,
The aftermath, not the focus of life.
The world lives according to death,
Rather than in accordance to life."

Very deep, has morals behind it and sometimes really weird it's funny. Just what one would anticipate from Serj.

The Vampire Bookworm says

I must say this was a very mixed quality book for me. There were beautiful poetic pieces as well as nonsensical ramblings. Some things reminded me of songs and some just didn't flow well. The political pieces are still relevant though. I'd take it better if this was advertised as a notebook kind of literature but since it's supposed to be poetry, I didn't find it in all of the "snippets".

Claire says

What can I say about this tiny pocket-sized book? It's friggin great poetry! Honest and perverse.

Wild-Rogue-Rose says

I will admit that Serj has a talent for poetic imagery in his own unique way. Sadly, like when I was in high school, and every other CD player was spinnin' a 'System of A Down' disc, it was just not my cup of tea.

On a side note, the typeface was a little hard for me to read- it might just be me, whatever.

Odin (josh) says

now system of a down/serj tankian is my FAVORITE band/singer of ALL TIME. so when i heard that serj came out with a book of poetry(which i love and write myself) i just had to get my hands on it. i opened the book and immediatly took notice of the illustrations. they were enough for me to love this book. but anyway the poems, some whimsical, some political, and some loving in a way captured my thoughts and inspired me. im 15 and want to be writer. many of my writings are inspired by poems or songs by serj and hes just...amazing. all i can say is hes done it again. another act of genius from serj tankian.

Zach says

Simply Amazing. Became inspired and uplifted as soon as I read it, Serj is not only one of my favorite singers from one of my favorite bands (system of a down), but he is one of my favorite solo artists, and poets/writers/activists.

Ashley Lynne says

First of all, I just want to say that my favorite thing about this book - and the main reason I am giving it 3 stars instead of 2 - is the artwork. All artwork is done by Sako Shahinian. I recommend checking out his work.

Regarding the poetry, I am sad to say that I found a lot of it to be unrelatable. He obviously writes a lot about politics and that's not something I have any passion or interest in. However, some poems I felt went deeper and were very personal. Those I liked. An example, and probably my favorite one in the whole book, is titled "I Am My Woman."

Serj Tankian is a brilliant and talented man and I really enjoy his music and his unique singing voice, but I am thinking that he's not one of my favorite poets. However, he does have another poetry book that I happen to have downloaded on my Kindle app, and I still plan on reading that one and comparing it to this one.

Shane says

This reminds me a lot of my journals and songs from about age 15-23. That's in no way saying that Serj is an angsty teen-ager, just that it was probably very satisfying to write it and I'm sure it makes sense to him, but probably not to many others. There's a brilliant comprehensible line here and there, but much of it almost seems like automatic writing with a little bit of word play added. The closest thing I can compare it to is Burroughs. If you enjoy digging through the non-sense to get to the gems of thought, check this out. It makes good bathroom reading. OR if you're into psychedelic drugs it may also make much more sense, until you're down again that is. Long live System of a Down! Keep fighting the "good" fight Serj.
