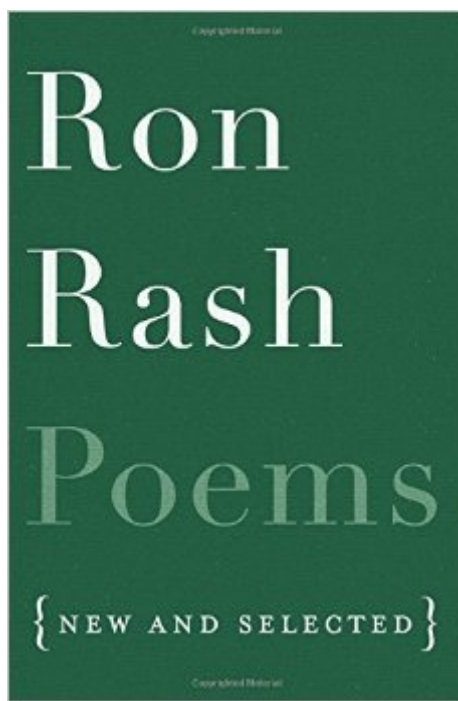


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Poems: New And Selected



Synopsis

A collection of haunting lyricism that evokes the beauty and hardship of the rural South, by a revered American master of letters—the award-winning, bestselling author of the novels *Serena*, *Something Rich and Strange*, and *Above the Waterfall*. In this incandescent, profound, and accessible collection, beloved and award-winning poet, novelist, and short-story writer Ron Rash vividly channels the rhythms of life in Appalachia, deftly capturing the panoply of individuals who are its heart and soul—men and women inured to misfortune and hard times yet defined by tremendous fortitude, resilience, and a fierce sense of community. In precise, supple language that swerves from the stark to the luminous, Rash richly describes the splendor of the natural landscape and poignantly renders the lives of those dependent on its bounty—in cotton mills and tobacco fields, farmlands and forests. The haunting memories and shared histories of these people—their rituals and traditions—animate this land, and are celebrated in Rash's crystalline, intensely imagined verse. With an eye for the surprising and vivid detail, Ron Rash powerfully captures the sorrows and exaltations of this wondrous world he knows intimately. Illuminating and indelible, *Poems* demonstrates his rich talents and confirms his legacy as a standard-bearer for the literature of the American South.

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Customer Reviews

Such a joy to witness the blooming of Ron Rash's career. I first caught a story by him almost by accident over a decade ago. I bought an O. Henry anthology in Toronto, hoping to read an old teacher's entry and while away a plane journey home to England. Rash's entry ('Speckled Trout')

ended up stealing the show. Before the month had ended I got hold of his novels and story collections from sellers in the US, and enjoyed them all. Today, Rash's work has enjoyed slots on the bestseller lists, two film adaptations, and glowing reviews on our side of the Atlantic from Irvine Welsh and others. Canongate publish Rash's recent fiction, but have yet to print any of his poetry. For UK readers this volume was sorely needed. Les Murray once said publishing a Selected Poems was like having your life put on trial. I doubt any Judge could convict Rash of anything, except for writing well, and consistently well. This volume reprints selections from Rash's three earlier volumes, with more recent verse crowning the whole. If I don't see much progression from front to back, that's really because there doesn't need to be. Rash's poetry hits its stride early on. His subject matter is his native turf, Appalachia, which he surveys without condescension, stereotype or hysteria. I imagine that has drawn comparisons with Cormac McCarthy and Breece D'J Pancake, but the comparison misleads. There is a serenity in Rash's work, a timelessness. Melodrama is outlawed; people and scenes are trusted to speak for themselves. In this he seems to have more in common with the Orcadian poets George Mackay Brown and Edwin Muir. (A Muir poem, 'One Foot in Eden', provides the title for Rash's first novel.

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