

Love: Ten Poems


By Pablo Neruda

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Poems from the Film *Il Postino*. The poems collected in this book are at the heart of the film *Il Postino*, a cinematic fantasy spun from an apocryphal incident in the life of the Chilean poet and Nobel laureate, Pablo Neruda. Together they show why many consider Neruda to be the finest love poet of the century. Few writers of any age have described the pleasures and torments of erotic love with such un-sentimental directness and sensual precision. Here, too, we find Neruda at his most accessible, the language of his odes and lyrics refined to the point at which it achieves, in critic Jean Franco's words, "the naturalness of song". This short selection draws on work from throughout his writing life, from the famous early collection *Twenty Love Songs & a Song of Despair* (1924) to the key works of his maturity, *Residence on Earth* (1935), *Elemental Odes* (1954) and the autobiographical *Memorial de Isla Negra* (1964). It offers an enticing glimpse of one of modern poetry's greatest masters.

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Love: Ten Poems By Pablo Neruda Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1221506 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Miramax
- Published on: 1995-05-19
- Released on: 1995-05-19
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.75" h x .0" w x 5.25" l, .20 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 48 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Neruda is a monster. Like all great epic monsters, when he's not bellowing, preaching or lamenting, he is capable of amazing delicacy and contained passion, especially in the lyrical poems - sonnets, romances, and free-verse 'odes' - which are netted in this book. It dazzlingly distills a profound, tender imagination" -- Michael Schmidt "The poems today remain as urgently gorgeous as freshly picked flowers" -- Carol Ann Duffy Daily Telegraph

Language Notes

Text: English, Spanish (translation)

Original Language: Spanish

About the Author

Born Neftal-Ricardo Reyes Basoalto in southern Chile in 1904, Pablo Neruda led a life charged with poetic and political activity. His first book, *Crepusculario* (Twilight) was published in 1923. The following year, he published *Veinte Poemas de Amor y una Cancion Desesperada* (Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair), which turned him into a celebrity. In 1927 he began his long career as a diplomat, serving as Chilean consul in numerous places including Burma, Buenos Aires, Madrid, Mexico and France. He was elected to the Chilean Senate in 1943 but later expelled for being a Communist. In 1952 the government withdrew the order to arrest leftist writers and political figures, and Neruda returned to Chile. For the next twenty-one years, he continued a career that integrated private and public concerns and became known as the people's poet. During this time, Neruda received numerous prestigious awards, including the International Peace Prize in 1950, the Lenin Peace Prize and the Stalin Peace Prize in 1953, and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971. He died of leukaemia in Santiago, Chile in 1973.

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