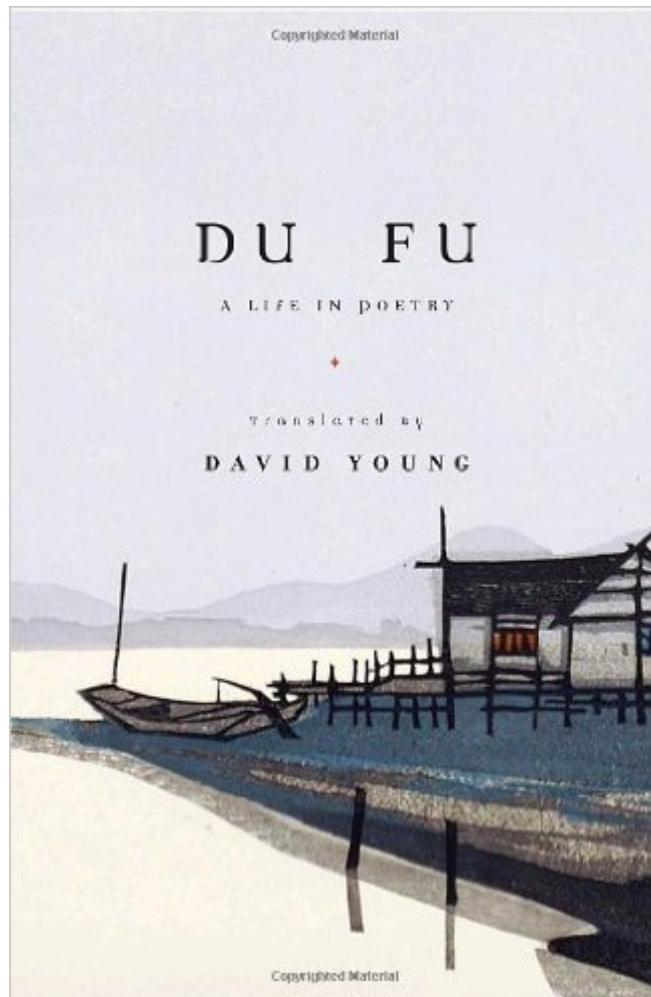


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Du Fu: A Life In Poetry



Synopsis

Du Fu (712â "770) is one of the undisputed geniuses of Chinese poetryâ "still universally admired and read thirteen centuries after his death. Now David Young, author of *Black Lab*, and well known as a translator of Chinese poets, gives us a sparkling new translation of Du Fuâ ™s verse, arranged to give us a tour of the life, each â œchapterâ • of poems preceded by an introductory paragraph that situates us in place, time, and circumstance. What emerges is a portrait of a modest yet great artist, an ordinary man moving and adjusting as he must in troubled times, while creating a startling, timeless body of work. Du Fu wrote poems that engaged his contemporaries and widened the path of the lyric poet. As his societyâ "one of the worldâ ™s great civilizationsâ "slipped from a golden age into chaos, he wrote of the uncertain course of empire, the misfortunes and pleasures of his own family, the hard lives of ordinary people, the changing seasons, and the lives of creatures who shared his environment. As the poet chases chickens around the yard, observes tear streaks on his wifeâ ™s cheek, or receives a gift of some shallots from a neighbor, Youngâ ™s rendering brings Du Fuâ ™s voice naturally and elegantly to life. I sing what comes to mein ways both old and modern my only audience right nowâ "nearby bushes and trees elegant houses standin an elegant row, too many if my heart turns to ash esthen thatâ ™s all right with me . . . from â œMeandering Riverâ •

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Knopf; First Edition edition (November 4, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375711600

ISBN-13: 978-0375711602

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #899,663 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #96 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Regional & Cultural > Asian > Chinese #229 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > World Literature > Asian > Chinese

Customer Reviews

It is most of a life in poetry--and occasionally, pictures from that life that are startling, both for their strangeness and their familiarity. How much do we know of the the private feelings of a man from

8th century China? David Young ties the story together, with his translation, and his references to people, places, times, and the translators who have gone before him. (All my comments around the three poems are either his, or inspired by his). Du Fu has already failed the Imperial exam, already met Li Bai, whose poetry he loves, and thinks, but restlessly, of becoming a hermit-poet. At thirty, he looks at a painting--with the eyes of a young man (how many old Chinese paintings can we see today with "white" silk? How many--fragments-- that anyone could have seen in 742?): Memorable portrait of a falcon the white silk gives off wind and frost is he watching fiercely for a rabbit? angry foreigner he looks at me askance he has a chain and ring ready to unfasten I could almost take him off his perch send him out to find some of those little larks scatter blood and feathers on the prairie. *Five years before the An-Lushan rebellion (755), the border fighting which--partly-- inspired it was already underway:...tax gatherers go back and forth but where will the taxes come from? it makes us question whether there's any sense in having sons daughters can marry neighbors boys seem born to die in foreign weeds have you seen how the bones from the past lie bleached and uncollected near Black Lake?

Oh, mine! Du Fu in his life time never was praised and respected with such attention, even though he (my idol) deserved all the praise! A Poet's Biography and his Poetry in one booklet in picturical and musical English! This is the best way to honor a poet, and all of English poems of Du Fu, that I always telling myself that poetry can be translated when I become a part of that poet, and what's better than a bio and poems on every page in the order of years (timeline). David Young is awesome poet and I can feel how much life he spends to just meditate with the words of Du Fu, I am a Chinese and American too, I could recite most beautiful verses of Tang and Song poets, I have so many poetry dictionaries that categorized by topic, object, style, scene, image... but I have not seen a lot of poet's bio and poems in 'one', but Mr. Young created something new for poets. This way readers may understand the poet more, why he writes curtain poem and how he feels at that moment in his life, and the same journey we are guided by this. This book is must buy! and Mr. Young's Five Tang Poets too! If our parent is smart, then we must give our teenage children this book and along some others, these poets are the best teachers in human history, because they condense their life and soul into a few beautiful words that we can obtain the lesson of art, wisdom and humanity thru all the natural English poems. And this translation, all the poems are natural as Chinese aesthetic standard, Natural (Zi Ran) "the highest standard for art or skill, which the thought and character and action of a person harmoniously meld into one with nature and society, and Wang Wei, Li Po, Du Fu... and many are all natural, and now Mr.

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