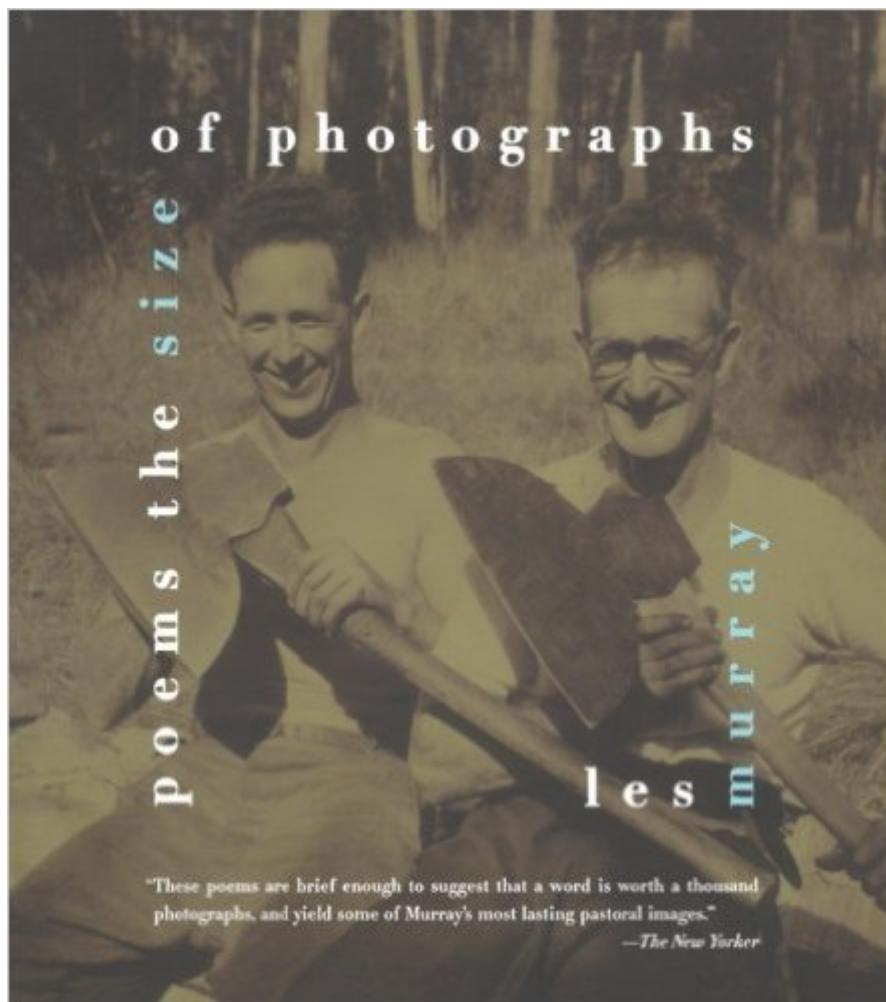


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Poems The Size Of Photographs



Synopsis

Brief, that place in the year when a blossoming pear tree with its sweet laundered scent inhabits wooden roads that arch and diverge up into electronic snow city. --"Brief, That Place in the Year" In Poems The Size of Photographs, Les Murray deftly maneuvers through familiar themes--the local terrain of the Australian people, politics, and landscape, as well as the terrain that is harder to render tangible: history, myth, and symbol. As if trying to find the fissure through which to crack open his subject matter, Murray has sharpened his form to an ideogrammatic brevity. Each snapshot-like poem in this volume develops before the reader's very eyes, as the initially observed object or moment in time changes meaning and grows in complexity and resonance line by line.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Les Murray is an iconoclast poet. His style is very much his own and while his precedents are apparent in ee cummings, John Berryman, and even Gerard Manley Hopkins, his voice remains one of a singer on the plains of the Australian landscape. This collection of short poems forces him (by choice) into brevity and for him this is not an easy assignment. Each poem is indeed like a photograph of a captured thought or sight or flight of fancy that he then gives to us as though we are in his darkroom, watching the meanings alter with each bath solution. Example: "THE MEANING OF EXISTENCE Everything except language/knows the meaning of existence./Trees, plants, rivers, time/know nothing else. They express it/moment by moment as the universe. //Even this fool of a body/lives it in part, and would/have full dignity within it/but for the ignorant freedom/of my talking mind." Terse, funny, touching, self critical.....this is a warm little volume of beautifully wrought poems. Makes you want more.

This sells so much less than his selected poems, it's absurd. It's not as if the selected poems is the only worthwhile writing of his. The sounds of this book are intense, so great; from the beginning all the way though, he has a powerful ear. & the thoughts & poetry his mind offers in this book are so crazy. It often flirts with nature poetry, but it is not nature poetry (don't worry). It's very modern. It's smart, & pretty carefree, also with some autobiographical little poems & Australian mythology. I learned that some of these are autobiographical from a reading of his I attended recently. These poems are, in fact, even much cooler than I was able to tell at the reading. I wouldn't say he's one of the greatest living masters by any means, but this is fun writing. You should read this. You'll like it. It won't take long.

I bought a used copy for cheap as I needed the book for my English class. I expected it to be beaten and old, with the jacket torn if it still even had its original covering. But what I got was a book in great condition. It looked completely new, and every page was straight and clean. It also came in really fast.

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