

An Idea With Poems And Translations: An Exploration of Language, Identity, and the Human Condition

JOHN AMBRY

THE PAINTER

Sitting between the sea and the buildings
He enjoyed painting the sea's portrait.
But just as children imagine a prayer
Is merely silence, he expected his subject
To rush up the sand, and, seizing a brush,
Plaster its own portrait on the canvas.

So there was never any paint on his canvas
Until the people who lived in the buildings
Put him to work: "Try using the brush
As a means to an end. Select, for a portrait,
Something less angry and large, and more subject
To a painter's moods, or, perhaps, to a prayer."

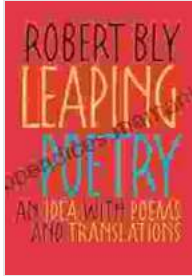
How could he explain to them his prayer
That nature, not art, might usurp the canvas?
He chose his wife for a new subject,
Making her vast, like ruined buildings,
As if, forgetting itself, the portrait
Had expressed itself without a brush.

Slightly encouraged, he dipped his brush
In the sea, murmuring a heartfelt prayer:
"My soul, when I paint this next portrait
Let it be you who wrecks the canvas."
The news spread like wildfire through the buildings:
He had gone back to the sea for his subject.

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Leaping Poetry: An Idea with Poems and Translations
(Pitt Poetry Series) by Robert Bly

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5



Language	: English
File size	: 371 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Print length	: 136 pages
Screen Reader	: Supported



John Ashbery's *An Idea With Poems And Translations* is a collection of poems that explores the themes of language, identity, and the human condition. The poems in this collection are written in a variety of styles, from traditional sonnets to free verse, and they are translated into several languages. This collection is a must-read for fans of contemporary poetry and anyone interested in the power of language.

Language

Language is one of the central themes in *An Idea With Poems And Translations*. Ashbery's poems explore the ways in which language can be used to create meaning, communicate ideas, and express emotions. He also examines the relationship between language and identity, and how language can be used to construct and define our sense of self.

In the poem "The Skaters," Ashbery writes:

The skaters glide across the ice, Their movements like a language I cannot understand. But I am drawn to their grace, Their effortless flow.

In this poem, Ashbery explores the idea that language can be a barrier to communication. The skaters' movements are like a language that the

speaker cannot understand, but he is still drawn to their beauty. This suggests that there is something beyond language that can be communicated, and that language is not always necessary for understanding.

Identity

Identity is another major theme in *An Idea With Poems And Translations*. Ashbery's poems explore the ways in which our sense of self is shaped by our experiences, our relationships with others, and the world around us. He also examines the fluidity of identity, and how it can change over time.

In the poem "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror," Ashbery writes:

I am not what I seem to be, A face in the mirror, A name on a page. I am the sum of all my experiences, The sum of all my relationships, The sum of all my failures and successes.

In this poem, Ashbery explores the idea that our sense of self is not fixed, but rather is constantly changing and evolving. He suggests that our identity is the sum of all our experiences, and that it is impossible to define ourselves in a single word or phrase.

The Human Condition

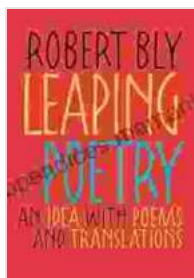
The human condition is the third major theme in *An Idea With Poems And Translations*. Ashbery's poems explore the joys and sorrows of human existence, the challenges we face, and the hopes and dreams we hold. He also examines the human condition in relation to the natural world, and how we are all connected to each other.

In the poem "The Tennis Court Oath," Ashbery writes:

We are all born with the same hopes and dreams, The same fears and insecurities. We are all connected to each other, In ways that we do not always understand.

In this poem, Ashbery explores the idea that we are all part of a larger human family. We are all connected to each other, regardless of our differences, and we all have the same basic needs and desires. This suggests that we should strive to live in harmony with each other, and to work together to create a better world for all.

An Idea With Poems And Translations is a thought-provoking and moving collection of poems that explores the themes of language, identity, and the human condition. Ashbery's poems are written with a deep understanding of the human experience, and they offer us insights into ourselves and the world around us. This collection is a must-read for fans of contemporary poetry and anyone interested in the power of language.



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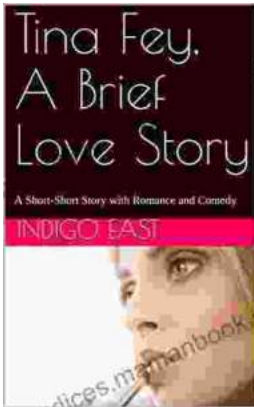
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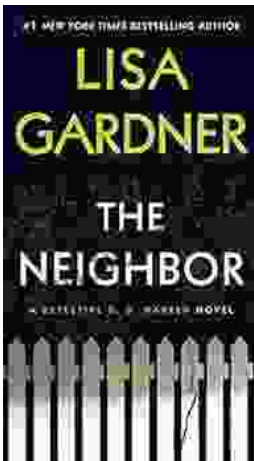
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