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BILLY COLLINS

United States Poet Laureate (2001–2003)



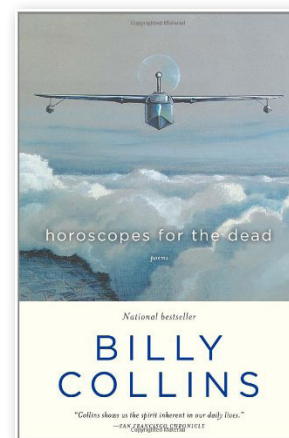
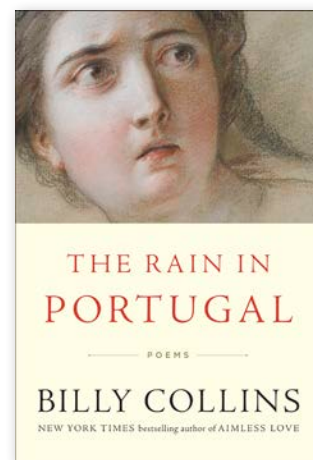
Photo: Bill Hayes

Billy Collins is an American phenomenon. No poet since Robert Frost has managed to combine high critical acclaim with such broad popular appeal. His work has appeared in a variety of periodicals including *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, and *The American Scholar*, he is a Guggenheim fellow and a New York Public Library “Literary Lion.” His last three collections of poems have broken sales records for poetry. His readings are usually standing room only, and his audience – enhanced tremendously by his appearances on National Public Radio – includes people of all backgrounds and age groups. The poems themselves best explain this phenomenon. The typical Collins poem opens on a clear and hospitable note but soon takes an unexpected turn; poems that begin in irony may end in a moment of lyric surprise. No wonder Collins sees his poetry as “a form of travel writing” and considers humor “a door into the serious.” It is a door that many thousands of readers have opened with amazement and delight.

Billy Collins has published ten collections of poetry, including *Questions About Angels*, *The Art of Drowning*, *Sailing Alone Around the Room: New & Selected Poems*, *Nine Horses*, *The Trouble With Poetry and Other Poems*, *Ballistics*, *Horoscopes for the Dead* and *Picnic, Lightning*. A collection of his haiku, *She*

“Billy Collins writes lovely poems... Limpid, gently and consistently startling, more serious than they seem, they describe all the worlds that are and were and some others besides.”

— John Updike



Was Just Seventeen, was published by Modern Haiku Press in fall 2006. He has also published two chapbooks, *Video Poems* and *Pokerface*. In addition, he has edited two anthologies of contemporary poetry: *Poetry 180: A Turning Back to Poetry* and *180 More: Extraordinary Poems for Every Day*,

was the guest editor of *The Best American Poetry 2006*, and edited *Bright Wings: An Illustrated Anthology of Poems about Birds*, illustrated by David Allen Sibley (November 2009). His book, *Aimless Love: New and Selected Poems 2003 – 2013*, was a *New York Times* bestseller. His new book of poetry is titled *The Rain in Portugal*, (October 2016) and is a *New York Times* bestseller.

Included among the honors Billy Collins has received are fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He has also been awarded the Oscar Blumenthal Prize, the Bess Hokin Prize, the Frederick Bock Prize, and the Levinson Prize — all awarded by Poetry magazine. He has also received the Aiken-Taylor Award in Modern American Poetry, The Hall-Kenyon Prize, the Mailer Prize for Poetry, and the Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award. In October 2004, Collins was selected as the inaugural recipient of the Poetry Foundation's Mark Twain Award for Humor in Poetry. His poems have been translated into numerous languages.

In June 2001, Billy Collins was appointed United States Poet Laureate 2001-2003. In January 2004, he was named New York State Poet Laureate 2004-06. He is a former Distinguished Professor of English at Lehman College of the City University of New York. In 2016 he was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts & Letters.

“Luring his readers into the poem with humor, Mr. Collins leads them unwittingly into deeper, more serious places, a kind of journey from the familiar to quirky to unexpected territory, sometimes tender, often profound.”

— *The New York Times*

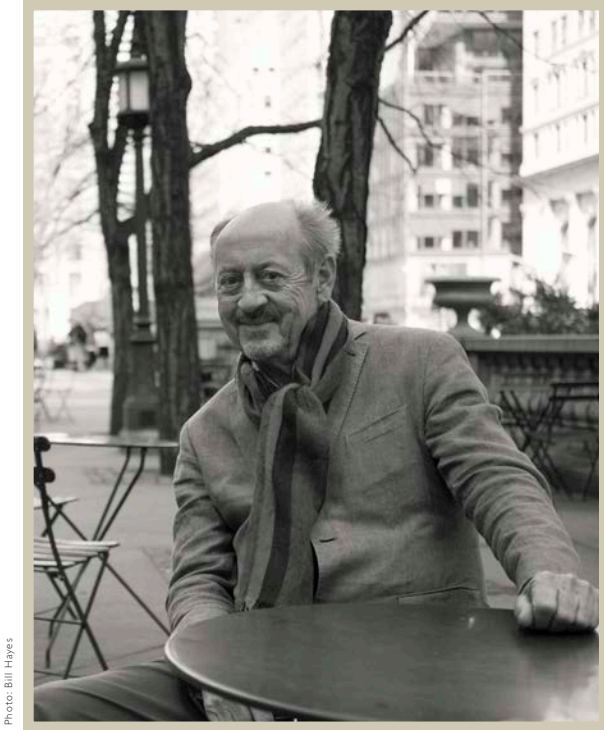
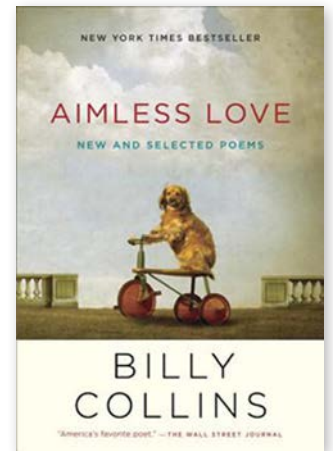
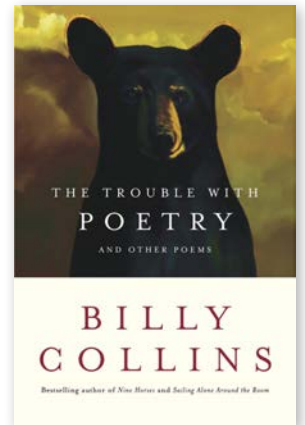


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