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Song Of The Simple Truth: The Complete Poems Of Julia De Burgos



Synopsis

This first bilingual edition of Julia de Burgos' complete poems, more than 200 of them, is a literary landmark--the first time her poems have appeared in a complete edition in either English or Spanish. In fact, some of these poems have been essentially "lost"--tucked away in archives and never before printed in book form. She broke new ground in her poetry by fusing a romantic temperament with keen political insights. This book will be essential reading for lovers of poetry and for feminists.

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Customer Reviews

Julia de Burgos is probably Latin America's greatest female poet. Although she never gained the mass media attention Gabriela Mistral gained after winning the Nobel Prize in Literature, de Burgos' work is eternally mesmerizing. Here is a woman who led an unhappy life searching for love, only to find heartbreak most of the times. A protege of Neruda's, de Burgos' political activism in supporting various causes (including criticism of the Franco regime in Spain and Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic, in addition to her passionate support for independence for Puerto Rico) is clearly shown in her work. Her romanticism and her cultural reconnection can also be read in some of

her poems. The one that really captivated me was Poem #37, "I Love You," which will cause the reader to grasp their chest with the emotion she has poured in letting the love of her life know how much he moved her world. Ms. De Burgos died a tragic death in New York, however after it was discovered she had been buried on Hart Island (New York City's version of a potter's field) a movement to give her a proper and glorious funeral took place and although she left the island as an unknown schoolteacher, she returned a national hero. Her glorious return to Puerto Rico was well deserving. I can tell you that reading this book brought me to tears. The great thing is that the entire book is a bilingual edition, which will allow both English & Spanish-language readers to discover one of the greatest poets of the 20th century. A must have for readers of poetry, Latin American literature, and Spanish students. I also recommend it for those who love Neruda. Best book of poetry I ever read!

"...The translated poems stand tall as de Burgos herself." --Publishers Weekly
"Perhaps this is an omen, for as we stand on the eve of one hundred years of the United States' colonial relationship with the island of Puerto Rico, perhaps the publication of this book is a symbolic representation of Puerto Rican authenticity and a sign of how seriously it must be taken." --American Book Review
"Julia de Burgos (1914-1953) is considered Puerto Rico's greatest female poet... Seductive in their raw emotional honesty her poems define and make concrete the spongy category of love poetry... Here, poetry is the poet incarnate: defiant, proud, a 'nude of restlessness.'" --Harvard Review

"Song of the Simple Truth: The Complete Poems of Julia de Burgos" is a landmark volume for Puerto Rican studies. This book brings together all 203 known poems by de Burgos, who was born in Puerto Rico in 1914 and died in New York City in 1953. This is a bilingual edition, with the author's Spanish poems paired with the English translations by Jack Agueros. Agueros also compiled this volume, and wrote a fascinating introduction. De Burgos writes about politics, nature, inner emotions, and the poet's vocation. She often advocates Puerto Rican independence, but her political ideas also encompass a vision that is pan-American, and even global. She pays tribute to a number of iconic figures from Latin American culture: Pedro Albizu Campos, Jose Marti, Simon Bolivar, and Jose de Diego. Much of her work has a surreal, hypnotic quality. She often uses startling, Daliesque language that is rich in images from the natural world. Her love poetry ranges from the melancholy to the ecstatic. Her voice is often paradoxical, often mystical--at times she reminds me of Emily Dickinson. One of my favorite romantic lines comes from poem #63, "Inward

Song": "Don't remember me! Feel me! / A nightingale has us in his throat." In poem #71, "My Road Is Space," de Burgos writes, "I am the dancing imbalance of the stars." This is a good image to apply to her poetry: celestial, joyous, with its own inner logic. All who love Latin American literature or 20th century poetry should explore the bountiful "Song" of Julia de Burgos.

A dazzling collection that seduces you with a raw emotional honesty that can wake up the dead. Her poems speak directly, refusing literary contortions that have succeeded to alienate so many students from poetry. This book elevates and redefines two categories: Confessionalism and Love Poetry, with such lines as: "Who am I? / A scream of waves washing itself of dragged and useless paths." ... "My soul? A broken harmony/ that hops over its dementia/ on one cushion of time." ... "When you take me tremulous, / there will be lilies born in my soul,/ and some child asleep from a caress/ in each blue nest that detains you." ... "Let's sing now because life is leaving."

I bought this as a gift for a couple that loves poetry, but one is fluent in English and the other person in Spanish. Needless to say, they loved it! It has a very complete collection of Julia de Burgos poetry and the translations are true to the meaning in Spanish.

Julia de Burgos work is an important woman not only in literature, but also to the Puerto Rican/Latino culture. There are buildings, schools, and streets named after her, so I thought it was important for my sister to understand why and who she is, since it is not taught in our school system.

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