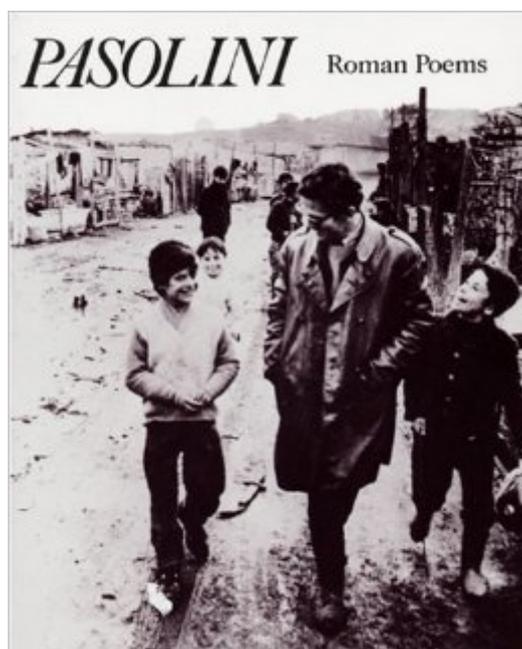


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Roman Poems (City Lights Pocket Poets Series) (Italian Edition)



Synopsis

The Italian film-maker Pier Paolo Pasolini was first and always a poet "the most important civil poet, according to Alberto Moravia, in Italy in the second half of this century. His poems were at once deeply personal and passionately engaged in the political turmoil of his country. In 1949, after his homosexuality led the Italian Communist Party to expel him on charges of "moral and political unworthiness," Pasolini fled to Rome. This selection of poems from his early impoverished days on the outskirts of Rome to his last (with a backward longing glance at his native Friuli) is at the center of his poetic and filmic vision of modern Italian life as an Inferno. Pier Paolo Pasolini was born in 1922 in Bologna. In addition to the films for which he is world famous, he wrote novels, poetry, and social and cultural criticism. He was murdered in 1975.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Roman Poems," by Pier Paolo Pasolini, is a bilingual edition with Italian and English versions of the poems on facing pages. The translations are by Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Francesca Valente. The book includes a preface by Alberto Moravia, who describes Pasolini as "a civil poet," by which Moravia means "a poet who sees his native land in a way that the powerful of the country do not and cannot see it." There are a number of recurring themes and motifs in this book: the urban environment, poverty, politics, the life of a poet. Many of the poems have a strong autobiographical or confessional flavor; a number of them deal with death. Another thing that struck me about these

poems was that many of them evoke a gritty, down-and-dirty sense of life. Pasolini's words evoke a world of "sweaty delivery boys," "the sticky smell of coal," "ancient whores," and "alleys choked with darkness and garbage." Much of the book is very rooted in specific places; Pasolini cites such geographic names as the Viale Marconi, Trastevere Station, the fields of Aniene, Piazza Bologna, and the Garibaldi Bridge. Pasolini creates a particularly powerful and mesmerizing portrait of the city. He takes the reader from "the bourgeois quarter" to "a poor people's house at the city's far edge," and vividly appeals to the senses as he describes what he encounters on the journey. Some of the poems that appealed to me the most are as follows. "The Privilege of Thinking" offers the speaker's thoughts and observations while on a train ride; the poem is very down-to-earth, yet also has a transcendent quality. "Sex, Consolation for Misery" is a darkly prophetic vision of a "new world" being born; the poem offers a paradoxical message and hallucinatory imagery. "I Work All Day. . .

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