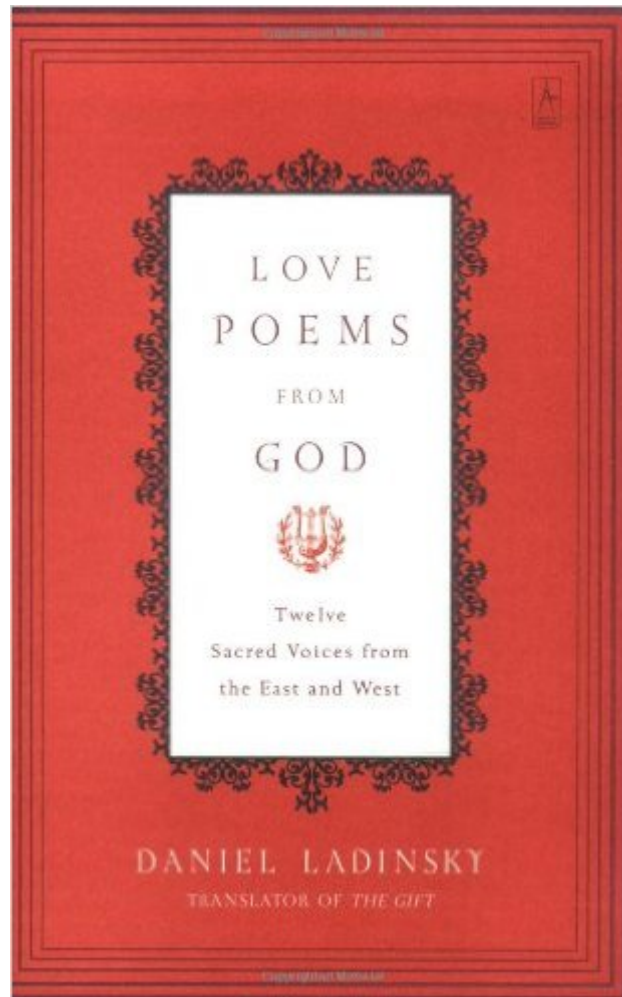


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Love Poems From God: Twelve Sacred Voices From The East And West (Compass)



Synopsis

Sacred poetry from twelve mystics and saints, rendered brilliantly by Daniel Ladinsky, beloved interpreter of verses by the fourteenth-century Persian poet Hafiz. In this luminous collection, Daniel Ladinsky—best known for his gifted and bestselling interpretations of the great Sufi poet Hafiz—brings together the timeless work of twelve of the world's finest spiritual writers, six from the East and six from the West. Once again Ladinsky reveals his talent for creating profound and playful renditions of classic poems for a modern audience. Rumi's joyous, ecstatic love poems; St. Francis's loving observations of nature through the eyes of Catholicism; Kabir's wild, freeing humor that synthesizes Hindu, Muslim, and Christian beliefs; St. Teresa's sensual verse; and the mystical, healing words of Sufi poet Hafiz—these along with inspiring works by Rabia, Meister Eckhart, St. Thomas Aquinas, Mira, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and Tukaram are all love poems by God—• from writers considered to be "conduits of the divine." A spiritual treasure to cherish always.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've had this book for a couple of years and I used to enjoy it. I would recommend caution to anyone thinking of buying it, though. Daniel Ladinsky has a history of writing his own poetry and selling it as though it were translated material. Many people in the West know the name of the Iranian poet, Hafiz, through Ladinsky. Although Ladinsky has admitted at times that his writings are not translations of Hafiz but are based on his vision of Hafiz, he has continued to market his material as

though it were actually authored by that poet. Many people now read Ladinsky and think that they are reading Hafiz. I think Daniel Ladinsky is a dishonest person for doing this. That said, his work is beautiful. If what I've said doesn't bother you, then don't worry about it. This book is a pleasure to read. If you are interested in Hafiz or any of the other sacred poets whose names are mentioned in this book, then I would be very careful and not trust anything that has Daniel Ladinsky's name on the cover.

It has been said that just as every river is winding its way to the sea so every soul is returning to a glorious reunion with our source, God. ~Daniel Ladinsky Daniel Ladinsky presents poems from the past in a new clarity. He not only translated these poems, he lovingly selected poems of great beauty and meaning. While many of the poems do sing with his voice, a new understanding emerges and the message of an ecstatic union with God is very present. What is even more interesting than the poet's desire to worship God, is God's worship of humans, which can at times seem foreign unless you think of this as an admiration of His creation. Then, like two human lovers, God and mankind enter a space of love, adoration, blissful unconditional love and shared communion. In this regard, the poems are ecstatically beautiful, although not always about God. There are plenty of love poems that seem to have been written for human lovers: One regret that I am determined not to have When I am lying upon my deathbed is that we did not kiss enough. ~Hafiz (c. 1320-1329) Hafiz influenced Emerson, Goethe and Brahms and Daniel Ladinsky explains how he wrote wild love songs to the world from God. Priests also long for the love of a woman and yet maintain the vows they took and some poets compare their love to the vows the sun and the moon took as they will never touch. One of the most beautiful poems contains references to giving God a "pet" name and that he responded more to prayers when he was loved this way. I loved Rabiya of Basra's poem about the moon once being a moth: The moon was once a moth who ran to God, they entwined. Now just her luminous soul remains as we gaze at it at night. Many of the poems are secretive, sensuous and tell stories from mythology. While many authors present poems without introductions, Daniel Ladinsky gives an introduction to each poet and the twelve chapters then become meaningful studies of a poet's life and longings. We learn about Tukaram and how he survived a famine or how Rumi was influenced by Rabiya of Basra who was actually sold into slavery because of her beauty. Meister Eckhart gives us insight into why we all want to be loved. St. Catherine of Siena talks about only wanting to "hear the hymns of the earth, and the laughter of the sky." So, there are many poems about nature. Love Poems From God is a unique window from which to view spiritual love and you may find yourself writing your own poems, inspired by the

beauty in this collection. Featured Poets: Rabia, St. Francis of Assisi, Rumi, Meister Eckhart, St. Thomas Aquinas, Hafiz, St. Catherine of Siena, Kabir, Mira, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross and Tukaram. ~The Rebecca Review, author of *Moonflower Dreams*

I read Mr. Legge's review below before purchasing this, but decided he was probably just a Christian offended at Ladinsky taking liberties with some of the great poets/writers from this tradition. Unfortunately, I wish I would have listened to him. I have trouble believing that these poems, or even something similar, were written by the sources credited. They all come off sounding a bit like Hafiz, (or at least, as I'm beginning to suspect, Daniel Ladinsky's version of Hafiz), but not nearly as good as the Hafiz translations in Ladinsky's other volumes. Something about the "translations" just seemed a little smart-alecky to me and not very deep. I don't think for instance, that Kabir really said "a fish in the water that's thirsty needs professional help." Buy at your own risk.

I was drawn to this book after having read a review about it in a periodical I trust, that called Daniel Ladinsky, "An audacious talent with a gigantic heart and a keen sense of humor." Indeed Ladinsky's remarkable work in this book, and the majority of pages in it, reflect a great artist's love. There is a poem in this book by Thomas Aquinas called, "The Christ Said." In this poem only the first few words are those of Aquinas, the rest are all attributed to Jesus, actually they are presented as a verbatim quote?? The astonishing wonder and potential significance of these words (no matter a scholarly origin) should be deeply studied by any religious student for they are sublime, profound theology. And after reading them in amazement - several times - I could not help but to keep flipping back to the opening sentence in a short essay in the front of this book, titled: The Genesis of These Poems. That first sentence presented an intrigue to me, and it seemed a bit of spiritual (metaphysical if you will) genius. That sentence was a quote by the 14th century Persian poet Hafiz, who apparently is Ladinsky's main man in that Ladinsky has translated three other books of Hafiz. That first sentence in the essay goes: "No one could ever paint a too wonderful picture of my heart or God." I can believe that about God. But the fascination becomes: is this book an aspect of that PICTURE that has somehow reached us? The most discerning regions of me say this: few books I have held may benefit our world as much. And enchantment - yes. Often in these pages I felt I was seated before a living Teacher. A penetrating thought from this volume by Meister Eckhart made clear some of my own thoughts, spoke for me as it were when Eckhart said, "How long will grown men and women in this world keep drawing in their coloring books an image of God that makes them sad?" p. 117. Indeed, for do not our lives reflect (and in some cases ARE) our heart's image of

God. And I don't think it is possible to look into this book and not see our Beloved's soul more clearly. Bravo Daniel Ladinsky, bravo!

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