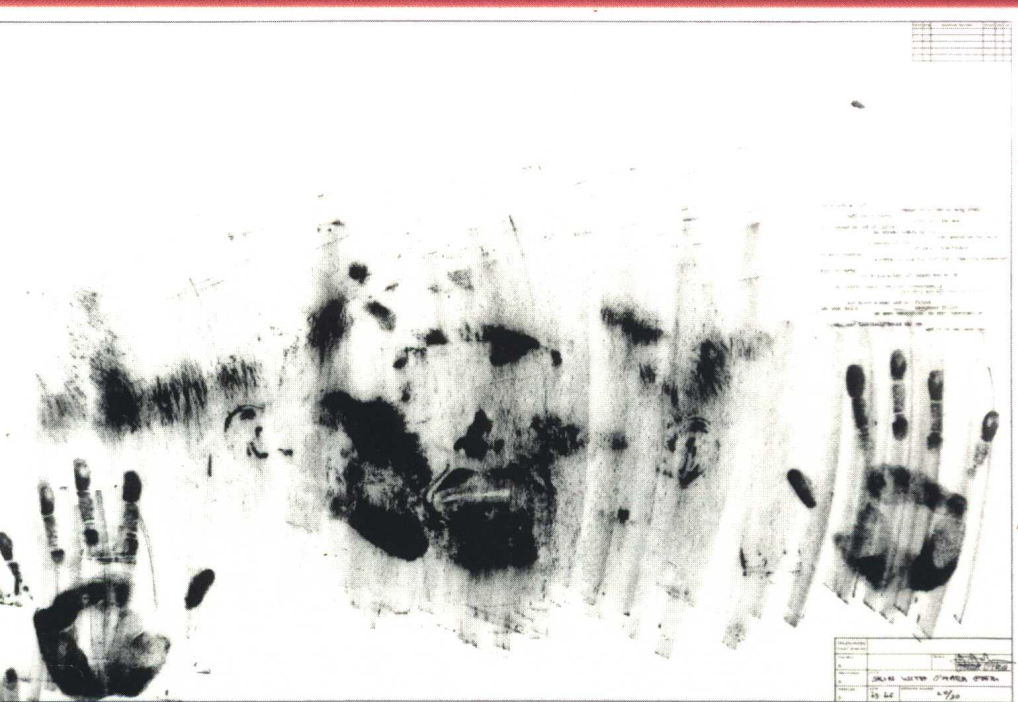


A Concise Companion to

TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN POETRY

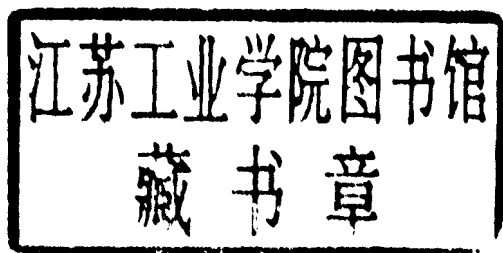
Edited by Stephen Fredman



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A Concise Companion to
Twentieth-century American Poetry

Praise for *A Concise Companion to Twentieth-century American Poetry*

"If I had to recommend a single book on the culture of twentieth-century American poetry to students or colleagues, I would choose Stephen Fredman's *Concise Companion*. Fredman wisely decided to treat the entire century as a whole rather than adopting the usual Modernist/Postmodernist division or treating decades and poets separately. From the opening 'Wars I Have Seen' to the final treatment of philosophy and theory in US poetry, Fredman's contributors carefully examine the intersecting worlds of our poetry – the New York art world, the impact of various diasporas, and the curious intersections with politics, gender, and religion. Yet the poetry itself always comes first, and no reader can fail to profit from these clearly written, concise, and truly expert chapters."

Marjorie Perloff, Stanford University

"This book offers a fresh and comprehensive reading of modern American poetry in several important ways. It takes in the whole of the twentieth century instead of dividing into decades like the 1920s and 1930s or into periods labelled Modernism and Postmodernism. Moreover, instead of focusing on individual poets, the successive chapters relate an often overlapping range of poets to the crucial and defining cultural issues within which the poetry took form and direction and to which the poetry spoke. Stephen Fredman has assembled an extraordinary group of critics to write the chapters. There is nothing else like this rich and trenchant book in the field of modern poetry."

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Notes on Contributors

Maria Damon teaches poetry and poetics at the University of Minnesota. She is the author of *The Dark End of the Street: Margins in American Vanguard Poetry*, and coauthor of *The Secret Life of Words* (with Betsy Franco) and *Literature Nation* (with Miekal And).

Michael Davidson is Professor of Literature at the University of California, San Diego. He is the author of *The San Francisco Renaissance*, *Ghostlier Demarcations: Modern Poetry and the Material Word*, and *Guys Like Us: Citing Masculinity in Cold War Poetics*. He is the editor of *The New Collected Poems of George Oppen*. He has published eight books of poetry.

Alan Filreis is Kelly Professor of English, Faculty Director of the Kelly Writers House, and Director of the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of *Wallace Stevens and the Actual World* (1991), *Modernism from Right to Left* (1994), and numerous articles on modernism and the literary left. He is editor of Ira Wolfert's *Tucker's People*, and *Secretaries of the Moon: The Letters of Wallace Stevens and Jose Rodriguez Feo*. His new book is entitled *The Fifties' Thirties: Anticommunism and Modern Poetry, 1945–60*.

Stephen Fredman has taught at the University of Notre Dame since 1980, and is presently Professor and Chair of the English Department. He is the author of three books of criticism, *Poet's Prose: The Crisis in American Verse* (1983, 1990), *The Grounding of American Poetry: Charles*

Olson and the Emersonian Tradition (1993), and *A Menorah for Athena: Charles Reznikoff and the Jewish Dilemmas of Objectivist Poetry* (2001), three books of translation, and a book of poetry.

Alan Golding is Professor of English at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, where he teaches American literature and twentieth-century poetry and poetics. He is the author of *From Outlaw to Classic: Canons in American Poetry* (1995) and of numerous essays on modernist and contemporary poetry. His current projects include *Writing the New Into History*, which combines essays on the history and reception of American avant-garde poetics with readings of individual writers, and *Isn't the Avant-Garde Always Pedagogical*, a book on experimental poetics and pedagogy. He also coedits the Wisconsin Series on Contemporary American Poetry.

David Herd is Senior Lecturer in English and American Literature at the University of Kent, UK, and coeditor of *Poetry Review*. His book of criticism, *John Ashbery and American Poetry*, was published in 2000. His book of poems, *Mandelson! Mandelson! A Memoir*, is to be published in 2005.

Lynn Keller is Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the author of *Re-Making it New: Contemporary American Poetry and the Modernist Tradition* (1987) and *Forms of Expansion: Recent Long Poems by Women* (1997). With Cristanne Miller, she coedited *Feminist Measures: Soundings in Poetry and Theory* (1994). With Alan Golding and Adalaide Morris, she coedits the University of Wisconsin Press Series on Contemporary North American Poetry.

A. Robert Lee, formerly of the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK, is Professor of American Literature at Nihon University, Tokyo. He has held frequent visiting professorships at universities in the USA including University of Virginia, Northwestern, University of Colorado, and Berkeley. His recent books include *Multicultural American Literature: Black, Native, Latino/a and Asian American Fictions* (2003), *Postindian Conversations*, with Gerald Vizenor (2000), *Designs of Blackness: Mappings in the Literature and Culture of Afro-America* (1998), and the essay collections *Herman Melville: Critical Assessments* (2001), *The Beat Generation Writers* (1996), and *Other Britain, Other British: Contemporary Multicultural Fiction* (1995).

Peter Middleton is a Professor of English at the University of Southampton, UK, and the author of *The Inward Gaze* (with Tim Woods), *Literatures of Memory*, and *Distant Reading: Performance, Readership and Consumption in Contemporary Poetry*, as well as a volume of poetry, *Aftermath*.

Cristanne Miller is W. M. Keck Distinguished Service Professor of English at Pomona College in California. She is the author of *Emily Dickinson: A Poet's Grammar* (1987), *Marianne Moore: Questions of Authority* (1995), and *Placing Modernism and the Poetry of Women: Marianne Moore, Mina Loy, and Else Lasker-Schüler* (forthcoming 2005). With Lynn Keller, she coedited *Feminist Measures: Soundings in Poetry and Theory* (1994).

Peter Nicholls is Professor of English and American Literature at the University of Sussex, UK. He is the author of *Ezra Pound: Politics, Economics and Writing* (1984), *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (1995), and of many articles and essays on twentieth-century literature and theory. He has coedited (with Giovanni Cianci) *Ruskin and Modernism* (2001) and is editor of the journal *Textual Practice*.

Rowan Ricardo Phillips is Assistant Professor of English and Codirector of the Poetry Center at SUNY, Stony Brook. He was a finalist for the 2004 Walt Whitman Award of the Academy of American Poets. His work has appeared in *The Kenyon Review*, *The Harvard Review*, *The New Yorker*, *The Iowa Review*, and other journals.

Brian M. Reed is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Washington, Seattle. He has written articles on the poets Susan Howe, Ezra Pound, Carl Sandburg, and Rosmarie Waldrop, and he has coedited, with Nancy Perloff, a collection of art-historical essays titled *Situating El Lissitzky: Vitebsk, Berlin, Moscow*. His first book, *Hart Crane: After His Lights*, is forthcoming.

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Chronology

1872

Birth of **Paul Laurence Dunbar**

1873

Birth of **Lola Ridge**

1874

Birth of **Robert Frost, Amy Lowell, Gertrude Stein**

1875

Birth of **Alice Dunbar-Nelson**

1878

Birth of **Carl Sandburg**

1879

Birth of **Vachel Lindsay, Wallace Stevens**

1882

Birth of **Mina Loy**; death of **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

1883

Birth of **William Carlos Williams**

1885

Birth of **Ezra Pound**, **Elinor Wylie**

1886

Birth of **Hilda Doolittle (H. D.)**; Death of **Emily Dickinson**

1887

Birth of **Robinson Jeffers**, **Marianne Moore**

1888

Birth of **T. S. Eliot**, **John Crowe Ransom**

1889

Birth of **Conrad Aiken**

1890

Birth of **Claude McKay**

1891

Death of **Herman Melville**

1892

Birth of **Archibald MacLeish**, **Edna St Vincent Millay**; death of **Walt Whitman**; final edition of **Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*** published

1894

Birth of **E. E. Cummings**, **Charles Reznikoff**, **Jean Toomer**

1899

Birth of **Hart Crane**, **Allen Tate**

1900

Birth of **Yvor Winters**

1901

Birth of **Sterling Brown**, **Laura (Riding) Jackson**

1902

Birth of **Arna Bontemps**, **Kenneth Fearing**, **Langston Hughes**; **Edwin Arlington Robinson's *Captain Craig*** published; **President McKinley** assassinated

Chronology

1903

Birth of **Countee Cullen**, **Lorine Niedecker**; **Wright brothers' pioneer flight**

1904

Birth of **Louis Zukofsky**

1905

Birth of **Stanley Kunitz**, **Robert Penn Warren**; **Einstein's first paper on relativity**

1906

Death of **Paul Laurence Dunbar**

1907

Birth of **W. H. Auden**

1908

Birth of **George Oppen**, **Theodore Roethke**; **Ezra Pound's *A Lume Spento* and *A Quinzaine for this Yule* published**

1909

Ezra Pound's *Personae of Ezra Pound* and *Exultations of Ezra Pound* published; Ford introduces Model T

1910

Birth of **Charles Olson**

1911

Birth of **Elizabeth Bishop**, **Kenneth Patchen**

1912

Birth of **John Cage**, **William Everson**; **Amy Lowell's *A Dome of Many-Colored Glass***, **Ezra Pound's *Ripostes* published; the **Titanic sinks**; founding of ***Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*****

1913

Birth of **Carlos Bulosan**, **Charles Henri Ford**, **Robert Hayden**, **Muriel Rukeyser**, **Delmore Schwartz**; **Robert Frost's *A Boy's Will***, **William Carlos Williams's *The Tempers* published; Ford Company introduces assembly line; 69th Regiment Armory Art Exhibition**

1914

Birth of John Berryman, David Ignatow, Randall Jarrell, Weldon Kees, William Stafford; Robert Frost's *North of Boston*, Vachel Lindsay's *The Congo and Other Poems*, Amy Lowell's *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*, Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons* published; outbreak of World War I

1915

Birth of Ruth Stone; Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*, Ezra Pound's *Cathay* published; D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*; sinking of the *Lusitania*; Labor leader Joe Hill convicted of murder and executed

1916

Birth of John Ciardi; H. D.'s *Sea Garden*, Amy Lowell's *Men, Women, and Ghosts*, Carl Sandburg's *Chicago Poems* published; Einstein's General Theory of Relativity published

1917

Birth of Gwendolyn Brooks, Robert Lowell; T. S. Eliot's *Prufrock and Other Observations*, Vachel Lindsay's *The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems*, Edward Arlington Robinson's *Merlin* published; Associated Press publishes the "Zimmerman Telegram," United States enters World War I.

1918

Birth of William Bronk, Mary Tallmountain; Lola Ridge's *The Ghetto and Other Poems* published; Wilson issues Fourteen Points plan

1919

Birth of Robert Duncan; John Crowe Ransom's *Poems About God* published; Versailles Treaty

1920

Birth of Charles Bukowski, Barbara Guest, Howard Nemerov; Edna St Vincent Millay's *A Few Figs from Thistles* and *Aria da Capo*, Ezra Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberly* and *Umbra*, William Carlos Williams's *Kora In Hell: Improvisations* published; Chicago "Black Sox" scandal; American women achieve the right to vote

Chronology

1921

Birth of **Mona Van Duyn**, **Richard Wilbur**; **Marianne Moore's** *Poems*, **Elinor Wylie's** *Nets to Catch the Wind* published

1922

Birth of **Jack Kerouac**, **Jackson Mac Low**; **T. S. Eliot's** *The Waste Land*, **E. E. Cummings's** *The Enormous Room*, **William Carlos Williams's** *Spring and All* published

1923

Birth of **James Dickey**, **Alan Dugan**, **Anthony Hecht**, **Denise Levertov**, **James Schuyler**, **Louis Simpson**, **Philip Whalen**; **Roberts Frost's** *New Hampshire*, **Edna St Vincent Millay's** *The Harp-Weaver and Other Poems*, **Wallace Stevens's** *Harmonium* published

1924

Birth of **Cid Corman**; **Emily Dickinson's** *Collected Poems* (first published edition), **Robinson Jeffers**, *Tamar and Other Poems*, **Marianne Moore**, *Observations* published; **André Breton's** "First Surrealist Manifesto" published

1925

Birth of **Robin Blaser**, **Bob Kaufman**, **Kenneth Koch**, **Maxine Kumin**, **Jack Spicer**; death of **Amy Lowell**; **H. D.'s** *Collected Poems*, **Ezra Pound's** *A Draft of XVI Cantos* published; **Scopes Monkey Trial**

1926

Birth of **A. R. Ammons**, **Paul Blackburn**, **Robert Bly**, **Robert Creeley**, **Allen Ginsberg**, **James Merrill**, **Frank O'Hara**, **W. D. Snodgrass**; **Hart Crane's** *White Buildings*, **Langston Hughes's** *The Weary Blues* published

1927

Birth of **John Ashbery**, **Larry Eigner**, **Galway Kinnell**, **Philip Lamantia**, **Philip Levine**, **W. S. Merwin**, **James Wright**; **E. A. Robinson's** *Tristram*, **Carl Sandburg's** *The American Songbag* published; **Lindbergh's** first transatlantic flight; execution of **Sacco and Vanzetti**; *The Jazz Singer*, first sound film

1928

Birth of **Ted Joans**, **Anne Sexton**; death of **Elinor Wylie**; **Countee Cullen's *Ballad of the Brown Girl***, **Archibald MacLeish's *The Hamlet of A. MacLeish***; **Carl Sandburg's *Good Morning, America*** published

1929

Birth of **Ed Dorn**, **Kenward Elmslie**, **Adrienne Rich**; **Conrad Aiken's *Selected Poems***, **Countee Cullen's *The Black Christ and Other Poems***, **Vachel Lindsay's *The Litany of Washington Street*** published; **Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago**; **"Black Tuesday"** stock market crash; **"Second Surrealist Manifesto"** published; opening of the **Museum of Modern Art**, New York

1930

Birth of **Gregory Corso**, **Gary Snyder**; **Hart Crane's *The Bridge***, **T. S. Eliot's *Ash-Wednesday***, **Ezra Pound's *A Draft of XXX Cantos*** published; television begins in the USA; photo flashbulb invented

1931

Death of **Vachel Lindsay**; **Conrad Aiken's *Preludes for Memnon*** published; **Louis Zukofsky publishes "Objectivists"** issue of *Poetry*, the **Scottsboro Boys case** establishes African Americans' right to serve on juries

1932

Birth of **David Antin**, **Sylvia Plath**; death of **Hart Crane**; **Sterling A. Brown's *Southern Road***, **An "Objectivist's" Anthology** published; **Lindbergh baby kidnapped**; **Presidential candidate Franklin D. Roosevelt announces New Deal**

1933

Birth of **Etheridge Knight**; **E. A. Robinson's *Talifer*** published; **Adolf Hitler appointed Chancellor**; **Roosevelt becomes President**; **Prohibition repealed**

1934

Birth of **Amiri Baraka**, **Wendell Berry**, **Diane di Prima**, **Audre Lorde**, **N. Scott Momaday**, **Sonia Sanchez**, **Mark Strand**, **John Wieners**; **George Oppen's *Discrete Series***, **Ezra Pound's *Eleven***

New Cantos XXXI–XLI, Louis Zukofsky's *First Half of "A"*-9 published; Public Enemy number one, John Dillinger, shot and killed; radioactivity discovered

1935

Birth of Russell Edson, Clayton Eshleman, Robert Kelly, Joy Kogawa, Mary Oliver, Tomás Rivera, Charles Wright; death of Alice Dunbar Nelson, Edwin Arlington Robinson; E. E. Cummings' *No Thanks* and *Tom*, Muriel Rukeyser's *Theory of Flight*, Wallace Stevens's *Ideas of Order* published

1936

Birth of Lucille Clifton, Jayne Cortez, Marge Piercy; Robert Frost's *A Further Range*, Genevieve Taggard's *Calling Western Union*, Allen Tate's *The Mediterranean and Other Poems* published; Spanish Civil War begins

1937

Birth of Kathleen Fraser, Susan Howe, Alicia Ostriker, Diane Wakoski; Robinson Jeffers's *Such Counsels You Gave Me*, Muriel Rukeyser's *Mediterranean*, Wallace Stevens's *The Man With The Blue Guitar* published; *Kenyon Review* founded

1938

Birth of Michael S. Harper, Charles Simic; death of James Weldon Johnson; E. E. Cummings's *Collected Poems*, Muriel Rukeyser's *U. S. I*, Delmore Schwartz's *In Dreams Begin Responsibilities* published

1939

Birth of Clark Coolidge; death of Sigmund Freud; Muriel Rukeyser's *A Turning Wind* published; Spanish Civil War ends; World War II begins

1940

Birth of Fanny Howe, Angela de Hoyos, Robert Pinsky; Ezra Pound's *Cantos LII–LXXI*, Yvor Winters' *Poems* published

1941

Birth of Toi Derricotte, Robert Hass, Lyn Hejinian, Simon Ortiz, Tino Villanueva; death of Lola Ridge; Marianne Moore's *What*

***Are Years*, Theodore Roethke's *Open House*, Louis Zukofsky's 55 Poems** published; Pearl Harbor invasion marks the United States's entrance into WWII

1942

Birth of Gloria Anzaldúa, Haki Mahubuti, Sharon Olds; Langston Hughes's *Shakespeare in Harlem*, Randall Jarrell's *Blood for a Stranger*, Wallace Stevens's *Parts of the World* and *Notes Towards a Supreme Fiction* published

1943

Birth of Nikki Giovanni, Louise Glück, Michael Palmer, Quincy Troupe; T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* published; Zoot Suit riots in Los Angeles; Benito Mussolini forced to resign

1944

H. D.'s *The Walls Do Not Fall*, Kenneth Rexroth's *The Phoenix and the Tortoise*, Melvin B. Tolson's *Rendezvous with America* published

1945

Birth of Alice Notley, Anne Waldman; Gwendolyn Brooks's *A Street in Bronzeville*, Gertrude Stein's *Wars I Have Seen* published; Adolf Hitler commits suicide; V-E Day – Germany surrenders to Allies, atomic bomb is dropped on Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrenders to Allies

1946

Death of Countee Cullen, Gertrude Stein; Elizabeth Bishop's *North and South*, Robert Lowell's *Lord Weary's Castle*, James Merrill's *The Black Swan*, William Carlos Williams's *Paterson* (Book I), Louis Zukofsky's *Anew* published

1947

Birth of Ai, Rae Armantrout, Yusef Komunyakaa, Nathaniel Mackey; Robert Duncan's *Heavenly City, Earthly City* published; Jackie Robinson becomes first African-American major league baseball player

1948

Birth of Leslie Marmon Silko; death of Claude McKay; Ezra Pound's *The Pisan Cantos*, Theodore Roethke's *The Lost Son and Other Poems*, William Carlos Williams's *Paterson* (Book II), Louis