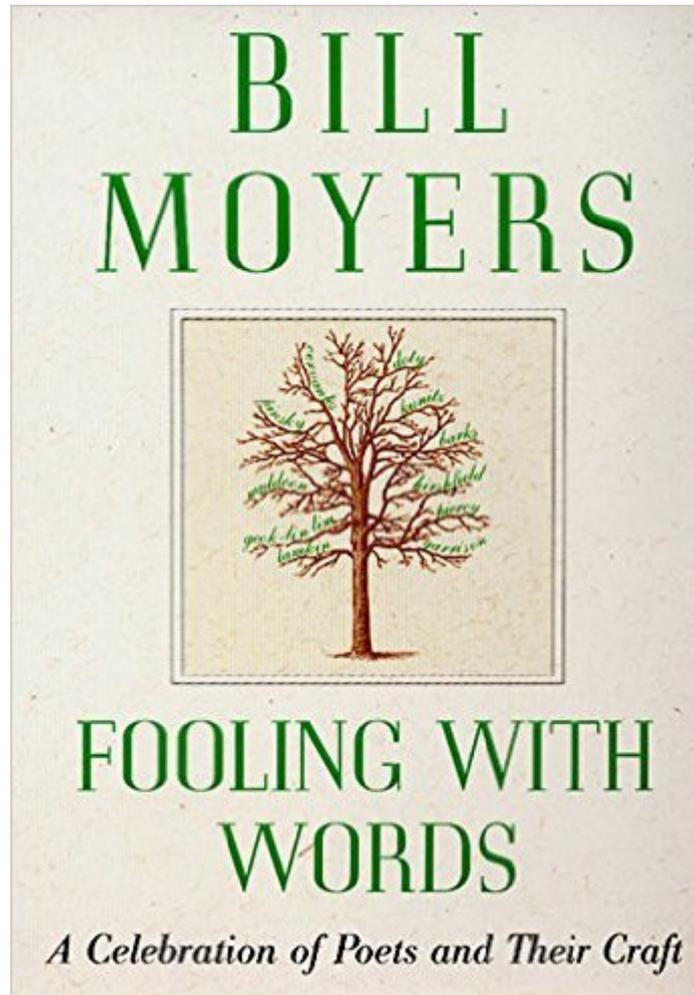


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# Fooling With Words: A Celebration Of Poets And Their Craft



## Synopsis

A Celebration of Poets and Their Craft  
Coleman Barks  
Lorna Dee Cervantes  
Mark Doty  
Deborah Garrison  
Jane Hirshfield  
Stanley Kunitz  
Kurtis Lamkin  
Shirley Geok-Lin Lim  
Paul Muldoon  
Marge Piercy  
Robert Pinsky

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Unlike most poetry books, this one focuses on the poet's insights into his/her own work and some very accessible poems by modern poets. Moyers refuses to get bogged down in the technique of poetry (rhyming, meter, scansion, etc...) and instead focuses on each author's comments and explications of his own work. Each chapter picks one poet and starts with his/her reading at the festival and then an informal Q and A that sheds light into how poets become poets. No surprises here -- most who write it can't think how they could NOT have written, even at an early age. In some cases, poetry literally rescued their authors from their borderline lives. For anyone interested in the creative process, this is an easy to follow and enlightening short volume on poetry and poems.

I found this book because I've just discovered Jane Hirshfeld and she is one of the poets he interviews in this collection. Often a transcription of an interview doesn't come across as well as seeing or hearing the real thing. Not so here. If you have even the slightest interest in poetry and any at all in the written word you will love this slim volume. I am really sorry I missed the original

broadcasts of these interviews. As a result of this book, I learned about the Geraldine R Dodge Poetry Festival, an event I had never been aware of before. It is fabulous! I managed to attend one day this fall, all because of this book. I will be a regular attendee from now on.

As an English teacher, I already love reading books on poetry anyway, but Bill Moyers is such an amazing interviewer (as any viewer of his amazing NOW show on PBS already knows) that he brings out elements of the poems and the poets that make the reading more profound. I discovered some great poets I was not previously familiar with (Coleman Barks, Lorna Cervantes) and was thrilled to see Stanley Kunitz discuss one of the most riveting poems ever put to paper, "Touch Me." If you have not read this poem, go online immediately and check this one out. Kunitz is in his 90's, but is an inspiration to all by the vitality he exudes in his life and in his poetry. Including "Touch Me" in the book would have guaranteed 5 stars from me alone, but the other worthy additions make this a great read even for a casual lover of poetry.

The enduring brilliance of Moyers shines in this discussion of the craft and music of poetry. His choices represent a segment of America's most gifted poets, but his own gift for sharing an understanding of the subtleties in word choice, rhythm, slant rhymes -- the several and many textures from which poems are woven -- is clear. He is, himself, a sort of poet in his admiration of this neglected art.

I grabbed this book on a whim from my local library - oh, I haven't seen this one before, what the heck, I've got the weekend free. And proceeded to spend the next two days riveted to the pages. Bill Moyers makes 230 pages go a long way. Each section is an interview with a different poet, a mixture of general discussion on poetry and specific details about their own work methods and beliefs with commentary on a couple of their own poems. In essence, you get to listen in to someone asking all those questions that you would like to ask! It manages to be both informative and very entertaining. A little more accessible than Lehman's "Ecstatic Occasions, Expedient Forms", it is also an excellent introduction to a fascinating variety of poets. Thoroughly recommended! If only it were longer ...

Bill Moyers is the most insightful interviewer I have ever experienced. With each writer, he gets to the soul of poetry and what inspired each to start writing. During intimate conversation with Mr. Moyers, poems are inserted as examples of each writer's work. Comments by both the writer and

interviewer following these poems are inspiring and touching. It is rare that I pick up this book without writing or at least beginning a poem. Ira G

The content is a great collection of approaches and styles of various poets. Allows the reader to hear the voice of each, distinct and varied. The book itself is in fine condition and nicely priced!

i have been trying (with mixed results) to develop an appreciation of poetry over the last year. so many people seem to love the stuff, why not me then? the more you enjoy in life, the richer your life is. so i want to get there with this poetry stuff. i really do. so lately i've been arming myself with an arsenal of books that i think will help poetry shine for me as it does for others. this is the first of such books i have finished, and it was very enjoyable. it made me want to read poems and fall in love with their words. stanley kunitz (who i had never heard of), in particular, was fascinating in his interview, and the poetry samples of his work were wonderful. i immediately purchased a collection of his work and am looking forward to it. rather than explaining the nuts and bolts (tools) of poetry, this book illuminates the drive and vision of the poets included here. a good place to start to wet my appetite for poems is what i found in this collection. hopefully this will lead me onward to a new passion in life. hopefully i am not simply too stupid to make it up the hill into this world of words. wish me luck.

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