



Love Poems

Bertolt Brecht

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An historic publication in which the legendary German poet and dramatist emerges, quite like Goethe, as a poet driven by Eros.

Bertolt Brecht is widely considered the greatest German playwright of the twentieth century, and to this day remains best known as a dramatist, the author of *Mother Courage*, *The Threepenny Opera*, and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, among so many other works. However, Brecht was also a hugely prolific and eclectic poet, producing *more than 2,000* poems during his lifetime—indeed, so many that even his own wife, Helene Weigel, had no idea just how many he had written.

"A thieving magpie of much of world literature," the full scope and variety of his poetic output did not become apparent until after his death. Now, the English-speaking world can access part of his stunning body of work in *Love Poems*, the first volume in a monumental undertaking by award-winning translators David Constantine and Tom Kuhn to translate Brecht's poetic legacy into English. *Love Poems* collects his most intimate and romantic poems, many of which were banned in German in the 1950s for their explicit eroticism.

Written between 1918 and 1955, these poems reflect an artist driven not only by the bitter and violent politics of his age but, like Goethe, by the untrammelled forces of love, romance, and erotic desire. In a 1966 *New Yorker* article, Hannah Arendt wrote of Brecht that he had "staked his life and his art as few poets have ever done." In these 78 poems, we see Brecht's astonishing and deeply personal love poems—including 22 never before published in English—many addressed to particular women, which show Brecht as lover and love poet, engaged in a bitter struggle to keep faith, hope, and love alive during desperate times.

Featuring a personal foreword by Barbara Brecht-Schall, his last surviving child, *Love Poems* reveals Brecht as not merely one of the most famous playwrights of the twentieth century but also one of its most fiercely creative poets.

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