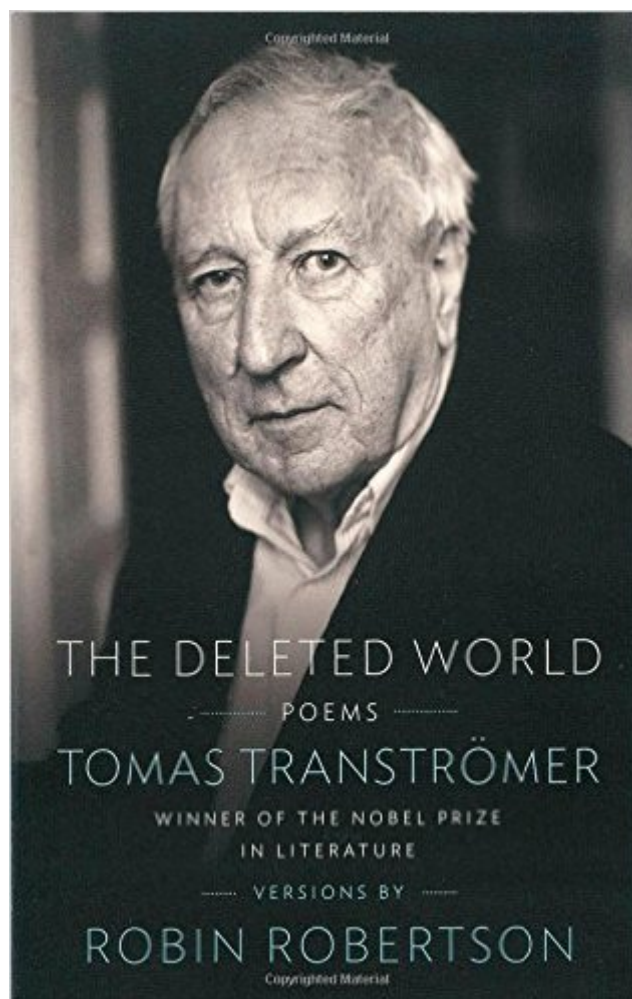


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The Deleted World: Poems



Synopsis

A short selection of haunting, meditative poems from the winner of the 2011 Nobel Prize in Literature. Tomas Transtr mer can be clearly recognized not just as Sweden's most important poet, but as a writer of international stature whose work speaks to us now with undiminished clarity and resonance. Long celebrated as a master of the arresting, suggestive image, Transtr mer is a poet of the liminal: drawn again and again to thresholds of light and of water, the boundaries between man and nature, wakefulness and dream. A deeply spiritual but secular writer, his skepticism about humanity is continually challenged by the implacable renewing power of the natural world. His poems are epiphanies rooted in experience: spare, luminous meditations that his extraordinary images split open, exposing something sudden, mysterious, and unforgettable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a very annoying book. It is neither fish nor fowl. British reviewers have heaped undeserved praise on what they have called "Robin Robertson's magnificent translations" but without knowing Swedish, and Robertson himself knows very little Swedish and so cannot be relied upon to supply accurate translations of our Nobel Laureate. The book's front cover and title-page calls these "versions by Robin Robertson", not translations, and when the book was first published in 2006 Robertson explained what this meant in an article for the London Guardian (which anyone can read online), quoting Robert Lowell quoting Boris Pasternak saying that "the usual reliable translator gets the literal meaning but misses the tone. I have been reckless with literal meaning, and laboured hard to get the tone." Robertson then writes: "In my relatively free versions of some of

Transtr mer's poems I have attempted to steer a middle ground between Lowell's rangy, risk-taking rewritings and the traditional, strictly literal approach. I have kept the shape of the poem, opened out its sense more clearly, and tried - as Lowell rightly insists one must try - to get the tone." So by his own admission these are not accurate translations but "relatively free versions". In his acknowledgements at the back of the book, Robertson writes: "The English versions would not exist in this form without the encouragement of Dr Karin Altenberg; I am indebted to her for her invaluable help with the original texts - though any infelicities of translation are mine alone." A line by line comparison with the Swedish reveals many such infelicities which initially I took to be howlers or misreadings but which I now understand from his pronouncements to be deliberate rewritings by the so-called translator.

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