Collected Poems James Merrill

A Whole WorldLetters from James MerrillKnopf
A series of mystical poems explores the author's experiences communicating through a Ouija board with a spirit named Ephraim who guides the poet through a series of conversations with W. H. Auden, W. B. Yeats, Plato, and others.
James Merrill--winner of the Pulitzer and National Book Award--is one of America's most celebrated poets. This acclaimed memoir--nominated for the National Book Critics Circle Award--traces Merrill's painful yet often hilarious life as a young man. "Stands with Merrill's finest work".-- Los Angeles Times Book Review.
Detailed readings of works by the five American poets cast light on the ways that they have found to write about their lives
Selected Poems
Collected Poems
Letters from James Merrill
From the First Nine
Collected Novels and Plays
This volume of Merrill's work includes material from all of his books. Merrill brings his resourceful diction to traditional and invented forms. Readers who find his poems baroque discover on closer acquaintance control, balance and containment.
The selected correspondence of the brilliant poet, one of the twentieth century's last great letter writers. "I don't keep a journal, not after the first week," James Merrill asserted in a letter while on a trip around the world. "Letters have got to bear all the burden." A vivacious correspondent, whether abroad, where avid curiosity and fond memory frequently took him, or at home, he wrote eagerly and often, to family and lifelong friends, American and Greek lovers, confidants in literature and art about everything that mattered--aesthetics, opera and painting, housekeeping and cooking, the comedy of social life, the mysteries of the Ouija board and the spirit world, and psychological and moral dilemmas--in funny, dashing, unrevised missives, composed to entertain himself as well as his recipients. On a personal nemesis: "the ambivalence I live with. It worries me less and less. It becomes the very stuff of my art"; on a lunch for Wallace Stevens given by Blanche Knopf: "It had been decided by one and all that nothing but small talk would be allowed"; on romance in his late fifties: "I must stop acting like an orphan gobbling cookies in fear of the plate's being taken away"; on great books: "they burn us like radium, with their decisiveness, their terrible understanding of what happens." Merrill's daily chronicle of love and loss is unfettered, self-critical, full of good gossip, and attuned to the wicked irony, the poignant detail--a natural extension of the great poet's voice.
Embodying urbanity, intellect and prismatic emotion, this exceptional selection of works from a poet at the forefront of American poetry gives readers a full tour of his celebrated career.
A compilation of poetry spans four decades and includes such classic works as "The Broken Home," "Lost in Translation," "Summer People," "Self-Portrait in a Tyvek," and "Windbreaker."
Five Temperaments
Counterbalance Poetry Presents Readings by J.D. McClatchy & Stephen Yenser of Collected Poems
James Merrill
Braving the Elements
New Collected Poems

"Everything abandoned comes alive" Pamela Yenser writes in CLOSE ENCOUNTERS Down Home, which becomes an invocation for resilience in a world filled with disaster at every turn: whether it's the wreckage of flying saucers in Roswell, or a brother and a mother who are irrevocably changed after a complicated birth, or an abusive father who is always in the driver's seat-whether it's by plane or car. Yenser does the difficult work of reckoning with trauma and the "family / history slamming the lid on truth." And though there's comfort in escape, and beauty to be found in the landscapes these poems traverse in a wide range of traditional and open poetic forms, Yenser reminds us "As long as you live / you won't forget," and there's danger everywhere. Lucky for us, we have a wonderful guide who knows her way around language and line, and is cunning enough to "have razor blades sewn / into the hem of every poem." -Gary Jackson Pamela Yenser is a learned poet who knows the context, history, and texts of literature. Here she uses her supple and strict prosody to tell a family story about an abusive, daredevil father, a denying-praying mother, her "little retarded brother" ("She is her brother's keeper") and more. In airplanes and Airstream trailers "one catastrophe after another" happens to mark a childhood where "Visions of the devil / made you tithe, trade in the family silver." This astonishing chapbook delivers one revelation after another in poems exquisitely structured: "The past is a trap the Jaws of Life / can't break," she writes, "... but isn't this the work a poet is meant to do?" One poem in exact rhyming couplets is called "In the Garden of Demented Parents." Another, also in couplets, ends: "Look! I have razor blades sewn / into the hem of every poem." Read this brilliant and triumphant chapbook by a poet who limns the tragedy and triumph of her life. -Hilda Raz Pamela Yenser's brave and tender poems spin together family history, personal resilience, and imaginative perseverance "sharp as that wreckage/ strewn like tinsel on glitter-/fields of tumbled rock" (as she writes in the title poem). Encompassing everything from a "bad weather balloon made of Kryptonite" to "a pineapple/ ruffled doily," Yenser juxtaposes the images and dreams of the otherworldly and the day-to-day life while also writing deeply of love and survival, monsters and angels, magic tricks and memories. This is a captivating and sparkling collection. -Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg Pamela Yenser's CLOSE ENCOUNTERS refers to, yes, the Roswell UFO, as well as family relationships that are a parallel encounter. The poems' narrator sees the flying saucer wreckage as a four-year-old. She writes about this iconic disruption of the skies as a way to reveal the workings of memory itself. This is an exciting personal fable that blends journalism, verse, and narration. -Denise Lowe
"The definitive collected edition of one of our most innovative and beloved poets, Marianne Moore"--
A definitive compilation of prose works by the distinguished author and poet features essays, interviews, and intimate reminiscences, covering such topics as fellow authors Truman Capote, M. F. K. Fisher, Dante, and Cavafy, as well as reflections on the people and places of Greece, his coming of age as a gay man, his travels in Europe, and his family legacy.
Bloemlezing uit negen bundels.
The Book of Ephraim
The Collected Poems
With the Stage Adaptation Voices from Sandover
Poems
A Scattering of Salts

One of the unique voices in our century, James Merrill was known for his mastery of prosody; his ability to write books that were not just collected poems but unified works in which each individual poem contributed to the whole; and his astonishing evolution from the formalist lyric tradition that influenced his early work to the spiritual epics of his later career. Merrill's accomplishments were recognized with a Pulitzer Prize in 1977 for Divine Comedies and a National Book Critics Circle Award in 1983 for The Changing Light at Sandover. In this meticulously researched, carefully argued work, Evans Lansing Smith argues that the nekyia, the circular Homeric narrative describing the descent into the underworld and reemergence in the same or similar place, confers shape and significance upon the entirety of James Merrill's poetry. Smith illustrates how pervasive this myth is in Merrill's work – not just in The Changing Light at Sandover, where it naturally serves as the central premise of the entire trilogy, but in all of the poet's books, before and after that central text. By focusing on the details of versification and prosody, Smith demonstrates the ingenious fusion of form and content that distinguishes Merrill as a poet. Moving beyond purely literary interpretations of the poetry, Smith illuminates the numerous allusions to music, art, theology, philosophy, religion, and mythology found throughout Merrill's work.
Brief poems deal with nature, creativity, changing landscapes, city life, class structure, the sea, drama, history, religion, and memory
Presents a collection of poetry in which the author transforms autobiographical insights and experiences into profound meditations on life and the world around him
A verse play about a saint carver accompanies poems about travel, memory, Japan, religion, friendship, and mortality
Last Looks, Last Books
Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Lowell, James Merrill, Adrienne Rich, John Ashbery
Stevens, Plath, Lowell, Bishop, Merrill
Familiar Spirits
The Seraglio

Following the widely celebrated Collected Poems, this second volume in the series of James Merrill's works brings us Merrill as novelist and playwright. Just as in his poems we come upon prose pieces, dramatic dialogue, and even a short play in verse, in his novels and plays we find the rhythms of his poetry reflected and given new form. Merrill's first novel, The Seraglio, is a daring roman à clef derived in large part from his early life as the cosmopolitan son of Charles Merrill, one of America's most famous twentieth-century financiers. Written in a highly refined prose that owes something to Henry James, the book is a compelling portrait of the luxury and treachery swirling around the Southampton beach house of an irrepressible family patriarch, with his many mistresses and ex-mistresses in attendance, told from the point of view of his lively but troubled son. At the other end of the narrative spectrum we find The (Diblos) Notebook, an experimental novel in which a young American's adventures on a Greek island are deconstructed and assembled into a tentative fiction before our eyes. Merrill's plays, including the one-act comedy of manners The Bait and the Chekhovian The Immortal Husband—a reinvention of the myth of Tithonus, who was granted eternal life but not eternal youth—are also fresh turns on his characteristic themes: home and travel, reality and artifice, simplicity and complication. And, for the first time in print, here is Merrill's short play The Birthday, a fledgling effort written in 1947 and a fascinating window onto the concern with spiritual communication and the otherwordly that would later blossom into his great epic, The Changing Light at Sandover.
A narrative poem dealing with a host of characters, both real and imagined, in dialogues from this world to another
Two long poems: "The thousand and second night", and "From the cupola" plus sixteen others.
"James Merrill once called his body of work "chronicles of love and loss," and in twenty books written over four decades he used the details of his own life--comic and haunting, exotic and domestic--to shape a portrait that in turn mirrored the image of our world and our moment. Like Wallace Stevens and W. H. Auden before him, Merrill sought to quicken the pulse of a poem in surprising and compelling ways--ways, indeed, that changed how we came to see our own lives. Years ago, the critic Helen Vendler wrote of Merrill, "He has become one of our indispensable poets." This volume brings together an entirely new pocket-sized selection of the best of Merrill's work."
Nights and Days
The Country of a Thousand Years of Peace, and Other Poems
Life and Art
The Fire Screen

The award-winning novelist shares her insights into the life of a major American poet as she explores the relationship between James Merrill and his long-time partner, David Jackson, and its influence on Merrill's acclaimed work. 12,000 first printing.
An original collection of criticism, essays, and interviews written over the last 40 years by one of America's foremost poets.
A wealthy American businessmen finds his life increasingly complicated by his large circle of mistresses and ex-wives
An invaluable road map for the epic poem of our time
Selected Poems, 1946-1985
with parallel Greek text
The Changing Light at Sandover
Recitative
Myth and Poetics

Collects fifty years of the author's poetry, celebrating a lifetime of verse.
The tragic death of James Merrill in February 1995 coincided with the publication in hardcover of this, his last book of poems. "In these last poems, lucid, deft, fond, shrewd, faithful, Merrill once again reveals himself as our most visual poet, combining a superb eye with an unfailing ear."--Peter Davison, Boston Globe. "From the Trade Paperback edition.
Best known as a poet, James Merrill is also an accomplished novelist, and in The (Diblos) Notebook artfully lays bare the process of writing a novel. A young American writer keeps a notebook that records at one and the same time a series of events on the Greek island of Diblos in which he is deeply involved, and his attempts to transform these events into a novel. Everything that might be found in such a notebook is used here with great cunning: the false starts that end in the middle of a thought; the endless revisions, canceled out in the search for the right word or phrase; the many approaches and backtrackings as the writer seeks an entrance to the materials through several possible doors; the musings on how the material is to be treated; and the wrestlings with the problem of appearance and assumed reality. The author has written an afterword for this new edition of his 1965 novel.
For the first time in a stand-alone edition, the acclaimed poet's classic poem about his communication with Ephraim, a guiding spirit in the Other World, is here introduced and annotated by poet and Merrill scholar Stephen Yenser. "The Book of Ephraim," which first appeared as the final poem in James Merrill's Pulitzer-winning volume Divine Comedies (1976), tells the story of how he and his partner David Jackson (JM and DJ as they came to be known) embarked on their experiments with the Ouija board and how they conversed after a fashion with great writers and thinkers of the past, especially in regard to the state of the increasingly imperiled planet Earth. One of the most ambitious long poems in in English in the twentieth century, originally conceived as complete in itself, it was to become the first part of Merrill's epic The Changing Light at Sandover (1982), the multiple prize-winning volume still in print. Merrill's "supreme tribute to the web of the world and the convergence of means and meanings everywhere within it" is introduced and annotated by one of his literary executors, Stephen Yenser, in a volume that will gratify veteran readers and entice new ones.
Including the Whole of the Book of Ephraim, Mirabell's Books of Number, Scripts for the Pageant, and a New Coda, the Higher Keys
Late Settings
The (Diblos) Notebook
Collected Prose
The Inner Room

'a Greek gentleman in a straw hat, standing absolutely motionless at a slight angle to the universe' E. M. Forster E. M. Forster's description of C. P. Cavafy (1863-1933) perfectly encapsulates the unique perspective Cavafy brought to bear on history and geography, sexuality and language in his poems. Cavafy writes about people on the periphery, whose religious, ethnic and cultural identities are blurred, and he was one of the pioneers in expressing a specifically homosexual sensibility. His poems present brief and vivid evocations of historical scenes and sensual moments, often infused with his distinctive sense of irony. They have established him as one of the most important poets of the twentieth century. This volume presents the most authentic Greek text of the 154 authorized poems ever published, together with a new English translation that conveys the accent and rhythm of Cavafy's individual tone of voice. ABOUT THE SERIES: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the widest range of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, helpful notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.
Langdon Hammer has given us the first biography of the poet James Merrill (1926–95), whose life is surely one of the most fascinating in American literature. Merrill was born to high privilege and high expectations as the son of Charles Merrill, the charismatic cofounder of the brokerage firm Merrill Lynch, and Hellen Ingram, a muse, ally, and antagonist throughout her son's life. Wounded by his parents' bitter divorce, he was the child of a broken home, looking for repair in poetry and love. This is the story of a young man escaping, yet also reenacting, the energies and obsessions of those powerful parents. It is the story of a gay man inventing his identity against the grain of American society during the eras of the closet, gay liberation, and AIDS. Above all, it is the story of a brilliantly gifted, fiercely dedicated poet working every day to turn his life into art. After college at Amherst and a period of adventure in Europe, Merrill returned to the New York art world of the 1950s (he was friendly with W. H. Auden, Maya Deren, Truman Capote, Larry Rivers, Elizabeth Bishop, and other midcentury luminaries) and began publishing poems, plays, and novels. In 1953, he fell in love with an aspiring writer, David Jackson. They explored "boys and bars" as they made their life together in Connecticut and later in Greece and Key West. At the same time, improbably, they carried on a forty-year conversation with spirits of the Other World by means of a Ouija board. The board became a source of poetic inspiration for Merrill, culminating in his prizewinning, uncanny, one-of-a-kind work The Changing Light at Sandover. In his virtuosic poetry and in the candid letters and diaries that enrich every page of this deliciously readable life, Merrill created a prismatic art of multiple perspectives and comic self-knowledge, expressing hope for a world threatened by nuclear war and environmental catastrophe. Holding this life and art together in a complex, evolving whole, Hammer illuminates Merrill's "chronicles of love & loss" and the poignant personal journey they record.
Twenty-six poems by a contemporary American poet celebrated for his depth of meaning and creativity of form
Mystical poems explore the author's experiences communicating with a spirit named Ephraim through an Ouija board
James Merrill, Postmodern Magus
Merrill
Two Poems: From the Cupola and The Summer People
New and Selected Poems
Water Street

Modern American poets writing in the face of death In Last Looks, Last Books, the eminent critic Helen Vendler examines the ways in which five great modern American poets, writing their final books, try to find a style that does justice to life and death alike. With traditional religious consolations no longer available to them, these poets must invent new ways to express the crisis of death, as well as the paradoxical coexistence of a declining body and an undiminished consciousness. In The Rock, Wallace Stevens writes simultaneous narratives of winter and spring; in Ariel, Sylvia Plath sustains melodrama in cool formality; and in Day by Day, Robert Lowell subtracts from plenitude. In Geography III, Elizabeth Bishop is both caught and freed, while James Merrill, in A Scattering of Salts, creates a series of self-portraits as he dies, representing himself by such things as a Christmas tree, human tissue on a laboratory slide, and the evening/morning star. The solution for one poet will not serve for another; each must invent a bridge from an old style to a new one. Casting a last look at life as they contemplate death, these modern writers enrich the resources of lyric poetry.
These are the collected poems of a master whose work includes many of the most compelling, savage, and tender poems in the language. Frederick Seidel is, in the words of the critic Adam Kirsch, "the best American poet writing today."
Features 121 poems including "The Black Swan," The Country of a Thousand Years of Peace," "An Urban Convalesence," "Nightgown," "Lorelei," "Log," "The Kimono," and "Grass"
A Memoir of James Merrill and David Jackson
Poems 1959-2009
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS Down Home
A Reader's Guide to James Merrill's The Changing Light at Sandover
Prose