

*“Pocket Poets Collection”*

Matthew Pakula

As a kid, I had a penchant for collecting baseball cards. As an adult, that affinity for collecting turned to books when I began to work in publishing in New York City. It was a natural extension of my collecting bug.

The first thing that drew me to the Pocket Poets series was the design of the books. They are small, about 4 1/2 inches wide by 6 1/2 inches tall. Each one is a cloth hardcover and they are various bright and vibrant colors. The dust jacket for each title is craftily designed. Each anthology volume has some snazzy picture/graphic element, while each individual author compilation has a cover designed to highlight the name of the poet and set them apart from the anthologies. The spines of each edition help to unify the set because they all incorporate a unique graphic element patterned in the same way as the other editions in the set. Every book also has a ribbon bookmark. It's great because the color of the bookmark is similarly vibrant and matches the color scheme of the book. Some have said that aside from the obvious appeal of a book, that books are a form of furniture around the home. I enjoy displaying them so that they become a conversation piece for visitors.

Though it was the design that first attracted me, I became interested in the poetry typed within the pages of each volume. One rarely hears about poetry in mainstream media these days or the influence of some of the great poets. The poetry collections in each of the Pocket Poets editions, whether an anthology or dedicated to a particular poet's work, are fascinating to consider. Though I wish I could say I had read each and every one, I can't. It's fun to grab one off the shelf and open it to a page just to read a quick poem. Sometimes it is right on point with things that are happening in my life and other times it provides just a moment of amusement or reflection.

Some of our greatest writers have written poetry that few have ever read. Poetry month comes and goes each year, but my collection of Pocket Poets keeps me thinking about it all year long.

I haven't acquired them all yet, but the Pocket Poets are easy and inexpensive to obtain. I like to buy them around my birthday (June) as a present to myself and then again around Christmas. So my hope is to finish the collection in the near future, unless more new editions are released.