



Madness, Rack, and Honey: Collected Lectures

Mary Ruefle

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This is one of the wisest books I've read in years... —*New York Times Book Review*

No writer I know of comes close to even trying to articulate the weird magic of poetry as Ruefle does. She acknowledges and celebrates in the odd mystery and mysticism of the act—the fact that poetry must both guard and reveal, hint at and pull back... Also, and maybe most crucially, Ruefle's work is never once stuffy or overdone: she writes this stuff with a level of seriousness-as-play that's vital and welcome, that doesn't make writing poetry sound anything but wild, strange, life-enlargening fun. —*The Kenyon Review*

Profound, unpredictable, charming, and outright funny...These informal talks have far more staying power and verve than most of their kind. Readers may come away dazzled, as well as amused... —*Publishers Weekly*

This is a book not just for poets but for anyone interested in the human heart, the inner-life, the breath exhaling a completion of an idea that will make you feel changed in some way. This is a desert island book. —*Matthew Dickman*

The accomplished poet is humorous and self-deprecating in this collection of illuminating essays on poetry, aesthetics and literature... —*San Francisco Examiner*

Over the course of fifteen years, Mary Ruefle delivered a lecture every six months to a group of poetry graduate students. Collected here for the first time, these lectures include "Poetry and the Moon," "Someone Reading a Book Is a Sign of Order in the World," and "Lectures I Will Never Give." Intellectually virtuosic, instructive, and experiential, *Madness, Rack, and Honey* resists definition, demanding instead an utter—and utterly pleasurable—immersion. Finalist for the 2012 National Book Critics Circle Award.

Mary Ruefle has published more than a dozen books of poetry, prose, and erasures. She lives in Vermont.

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