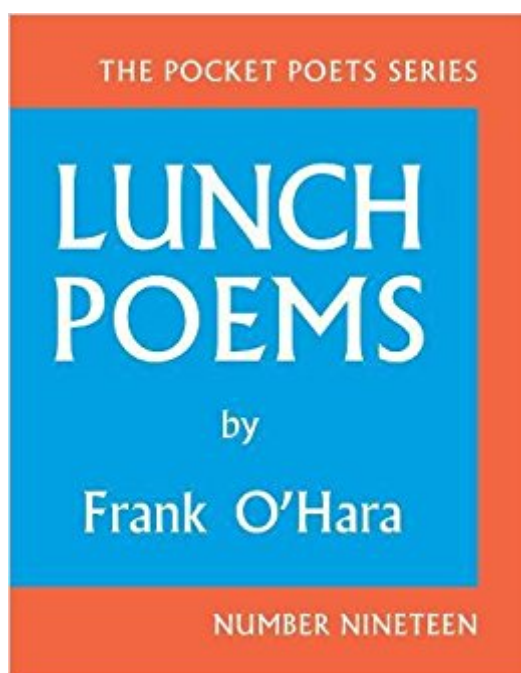


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# Lunch Poems: 50th Anniversary Edition (City Lights Pocket Poets Series)



## Synopsis

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Frank O'Hara's *Lunch Poems*! *Lunch Poems*, first published in 1964 by City Lights Books as number nineteen in the Pocket Poets series, is widely considered to be Frank O'Hara's freshest and most accomplished collection of poetry. Edited by the poet in collaboration with Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Donald Allen, who had published O'Hara's poems in his monumental *The New American Poetry* in 1960, it contains some of the poet's best known works including "The Day Lady Died," "Ave Maria," and "Poem" [Lana Turner has collapsed!]. This new limited 50th anniversary edition contains a preface by John Ashbery and an editor's note by City Lights publisher Lawrence Ferlinghetti, along with facsimile reproductions of a selection of previously unpublished correspondence between Ferlinghetti and O'Hara that shed new light on the preparation of *Lunch*. "Frank O'Hara's *Lunch Poems*, the little black dress of American poetry books, redolent of cocktails and cigarettes and theater tickets and phonograph records, turns 50 this year. It seems barely to have aged . . . This is a book worth imbibing again, especially if you live in Manhattan, but really if you're awake and curious anywhere. O'Hara speaks directly across the decades to our hopes and fears and especially our delights; his lines are as intimate as a telephone call. Few books of his era show less age."--Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* "City Lights' new reissue of the slim volume includes a clutch of correspondence between O'Hara and Lawrence Ferlinghetti . . . in which the two poets hash out the details of the book's publication: which poems to consider, their order, the dedication, and even the title. 'Do you still like the title *Lunch Poems*?' O'Hara asks Ferlinghetti. 'I wonder if it doesn't sound too much like an echo of *Reality Sandwiches* or *Meat Science Essays*.' 'What the hell,' Ferlinghetti replies, 'so we'll have to change the name of City Lights to Lunch Counter Press.'"--Nicole Rudick, *The Paris Review* "Frank O'Hara's famed collection was first published in 1964, and, to mark the fiftieth anniversary, City Lights is printing a special edition."--The New Yorker "The volume has never gone out of print, in part because O'Hara expresses himself in the same way modern Americans do: Like many of us, he tries to overcome the absurdity and loneliness of modern life by addressing an audience of anonymous others."--Micah Mattix, *The Atlantic* "I hope that everyone will delight in the new edition of Frank's *LUNCH POEMS*. The correspondence between Lawrence and Frank is great. Frank was just 33 when he wrote to Lawrence in 1959 and 38 when *LUNCH POEMS* was published! The fact that City Lights kept Frank's *LUNCH POEMS* in print all these years has been extraordinary, wonderful and a constant comfort. Hurray for independent publishers and independent bookstores. Many thanks always to Lawrence Ferlinghetti and everyone at City Lights."--Maureen

O'Áçâ ãâ„çHara, sister of Frank O'Hara"Frank O'Hara's Lunch Poems--which has just been reissued in a 50th anniversary hardcover edition--recalls a world of pop art, political and cultural upheaval and (in its own way) a surprising innocence."--David Ulin, Los Angeles Times

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Out to Lunch: Frank O'Hara's Masterwork Turns 50:""We all know lunch hour isn't actually for eating lunch; it's for running to the bank, going shopping, or throwing back a few midday business shots. In the case of Frank O'Hara, it was for poetry, and his might have been the best use of those precious 60 minutes in the whole dreary history of the corporate custom."--Heather Baysa, The Village Voice"Frank O'Áçâ ãâ„çHara's delightful conversational volume Lunch Poems was published by City Lights in San Francisco fifty years ago, and has remained in print in its original Pocket Poets format ever since. In an anniversary hardback edition, Lawrence Ferlinghetti writes that the poems 'established a certain tone, a certain turn of phrase, a certain urbane wit, at once gay and straight, that came to identify the New York School of poets in the 1960s.'"--James Campbell, Times Literary Supplement UK"O'Áçâ ãâ„çHara's mystique, and the seductive power of his work, have lingered, and in recent years have grown even stronger. What distinguishes O'Hara's poetry? It is not just a remarkable grasp of the zeitgeist but the way his poems manage to feel contemporary, no matter what the year, the ways in which he broke new ground."--Jane Ciabattari, BBC.com "Don't miss out. With your fave libation in hand, celebrate Lunch Poems--the little book that's still the life of the party."--Kathi Wolfe, The Washington Blade"Although scholars have

discussed and quoted from the correspondence between O'Áâ â¸¸Hara and Ferlinghetti about the publication of Lunch Poems before, this is the first time the letters have been published, so it's a real treat to see them in print."--Andrew Epstein, Associate Professor, English Dept, Florida State University "My life held precariously in the seeing / hands of others.' Fifty years since its now-iconic orange and blue cover re-entered the bustling, amorous New York City from which they were derived, City Lights has reissued the collection with a new introduction and a supplementary appendix with facsimile drafts, letters, and other wonders."--Staff at WORD Bookstore, Brooklyn, NY

Nearly 50 years since his death, much American lyrical poetry today also seems timid by comparison, suggestive of pious poets in ascetic isolation from a vulgar, fallen world. . . . What is happening to him now is that his influence on both contemporary American poetry and on pop culture is greater than ever. . . . Lunch Poems has just been republished by City Lights Books in an expanded edition that includes a preface by O'Áâ â¸¸Hara's New York compatriot John Ashbery and an appendix filled with facsimiles of correspondence spanning 1963 to 1965 between O'Áâ â¸¸Hara and the book's publisher, Lawrence Ferlinghetti."--Tim Keane, The Brooklyn Rail

In the 1950s people like me noticed O'Hara because his subjects were often the subjects we would have chosen if we had been poets--jazz, movie stars, abstract expressionist painting, race, the intensity of urban life. Music, art and their attached legends energized his lines. The poems were crafted with care but always seemed spontaneous, as if scrawled in his notebooks during parties, meetings, trips on the subway. They were always personal, city life woven into a rueful version of himself. To like him it was necessary to like irony."--Robert Fulford, National Post

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Frank O'Hara was born on March 27, 1926 in Baltimore and grew up in Grafton, Massachusetts. He was a leader of the "New York School" of poets, a group that included John Ashbery, Barbara Guest, Kenneth Koch, and James Schuyler. He died on July 25, 1966, struck by a dune buggy on the Fire Island beach.

I was taking a MOOC through Univ of Pa--Modern American Poetry and Frank O'Hara was one of the NYC poets introduced in the class. O'Hara is very readable--walks through the city during his breaks or lunch and records life as he sees it--captures the pulse and vibrancy of the city in the 1950's. Coursera offers the course--free, on line--as do other universities. Great way to go back and reread poets I knew of and find new favorites!

There have been some lovely additions to the original edition: Ashbery's preface and Ferlinghetti's introduction to the letters O'Hara and Ferlinghetti exchanged in 1964. And now on page 21 "The Day Lady Died" is always hauntingly beautiful. If you love O'Hara, you should have it!

These stunning poems are as fresh as when I first read them fifty years ago. It is a pleasure to see them re-issued in this attractive format with letters between O'Hara and his publisher Lawrence Ferlinghetti and a perfect preface by John Ashbery.

Frank O'Hara is just special.. cutdown much too early but at least attained immortality via his art. Truly special, and a nice addition is the correspondence between him and City Lights publisher .

Frank O'Hara's poems have become windows into a vibrant past, and to have this little book of some of his best is to have a portable time machine.

I carry this everywhere. Essential poetry.

I'm researching the New York School - artists, photographers, poets, and came across O Hara - what a gift this little book is, I keep it next to my bed and keep dipping into it. Eclectic, clever, worth reading

Great book, great service. Thanks

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