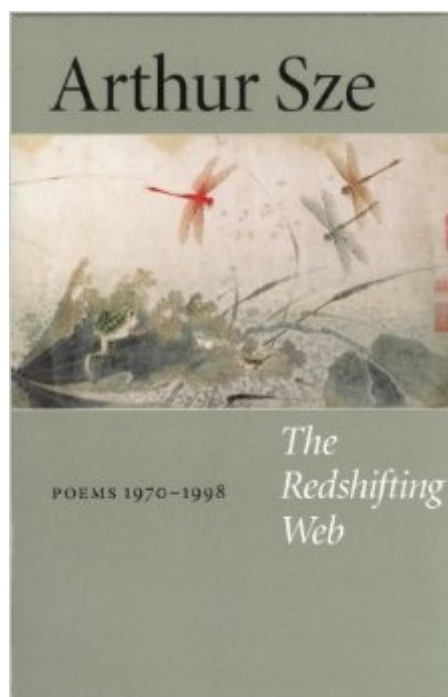


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The Redshifting Web: New & Selected Poems



Synopsis

A comprehensive collection by one of the most intensely musical and visionary poets writing today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you don't know Sze's work, this is a good place to start, and if you do it's a fine "Best of" collection with a few new poems added. I liked it a great deal, and kept picking it up and rereading some of the poems. However, Sze isn't one of my favorite poets, and after some thought I finally decided why. He belongs to the school of poets (both Western and Eastern) who see everything in the universe as interconnected and every part, from a dragonfly to a planet, as emblematic of the whole. In some of his more recent poems, I felt that he just presented lengthy lists of objects or events (however memorably described) and left it up to the reader to make the connection between them. While often the result can be enlightening, for me this sometimes injected too much intellectual effort into the process of appreciating a poem -- which, to my way of thinking, should be more like a lightning flash that illuminates the whole landscape. Also, the specificity of some of his allusions troubled me. He'll briefly mention an event that loomed large in local news, so I (as a local) will have an intense reaction to it -- but does he expect someone from (say) Dubuque to have as strong a reaction? Which reaction did he intend when he mentioned that event, and how does that affect the way a reader "takes" the whole poem? Again, his ex-wife is a well-known Hopi weaver; does knowing about this emotional connection change the way you read some of his allusions to Hopi beliefs? At one point he mentions her pulverizing bugs in a blender -- is the reader supposed to think that she's practicing a refined form of cruelty to insects, or are we expected to recognize that she's making

cochineal dye?

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