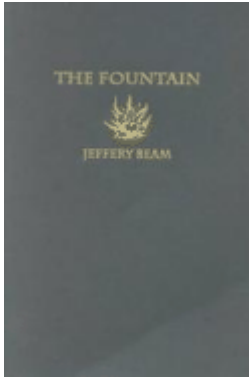


From reviews of THE FOUNTAIN:



Nominee American Library Association Notable Book.

Simply wrought, but dense with meaning, Beam's poems ... demonstrate his singular ability to draw on many traditions at once. In many ways Beam's is a poetry of alchemy - a poetry of spiritual, mystical, and even religious dimensions. Beam clearly is a poet who is led by the natural, by intuition, by his senses. He tells us that the direction our love - and our lives - take, even when we encounter difficulty, is the proper direction. Faith will ease despair. With the clever innocence of a sophisticated child, he finds direction through what he finds around him and puts what he finds to use. Jeffery Beam is a poet who takes nothing for granted and possesses a spirit that revels in the physical sensations of being alive. [He] is a poet who deserves a wide audience. His poetry is an essential antidote to our times.

—Kenny Fries in the **San Francisco Bay Times** (July 1992)

This book is the product of immense patience and attention to language ... [the poems] are meticulous creations. Beam's method combines delicacy with directness. He has a way of making his poems convey a whole thought, a feeling, but as broken-up pieces of a complex idea, recombined in the sort of "dance" William Carlos Williams proclaimed poetry (or a poem) is, or ought to be. The ability to generate startling and original images is also one of this poet's strengths. It is a poetry of visible economies. But more than even economy ... is that way of giving his poems a deliberate and worldly strangeness. Each is an elegant reaching for subject, offering little opportunity for final interpretation, for ultimate decoding. This is a book which requires, and rewards, continuous re-reading.

—James Cory in **The James White Review** (Spring 1993)

I love the way you keep it simple but don't leave out the complexities. Anyone who can surprise with the delightful use of "witchly" as an adverb, is OK in my book! "The Spell" is just plain gorgeous (and not so plain). How well you get away with your cheeky homage to Emily, the way she and her dashes dash through the poem.

—Novelist **Michael Rumaker** (letter to author)

Beam draws on ... public sources of literature and myth ... [and] is not merely name-dropping; he is in genuine dialogue with these other voices.... **The Fountain** demonstrates not only that Beam is well read, but also that he is a talented poet, true to his own mystical aesthetic, which has little support in today's publishing world.

—Megan Simpson in **The North Carolina Literary Review** (Spring 1993)

Jeffery Beam reveals the soul of the poems' body like a surgeon. Blake's poems of vision come to mind — or A. R. Ammons' short poems, the way motion is matter forming often overlooked detail. The verity of art in the thing itself as seen through Jeffery Beam's eye is true to instinct. The poem is a salute! Beam's poems move syllables to the least skittering sound, the beginnings of growing things — the poem itself, the made thing! Beam is a singer's singer, a real lyric poet. He brings the unredeemable past to bear up inheritance, acknowledging corruption, imperfection at the heart, and the hope and need to keep on singing.

—Poet and editor Shelby Stephenson in **The Pilot** (1992)

You and others like you are inspiration for continuing to live and work and *be* in our beautiful state with that walking pustulance (i.e. Helms) still poisoning the air. Thanks for your joyful, beautiful book. A deep *abrazo* from this ancient brother.

—Poet and North Carolina expatriat **Will Inman** (letter to author)

The Fountain ... a carefully built treasure. Your pursuit of beauty in your rocky meadow is a quest of essences.

—The late poet and filmmaker **James Broughton** (letter to author)

Uniquely imaginative.

—Poet **Antler** (letter to author, 2001)

[The poems] are composed out of a rare quality of breath, a special delicate tension that is also rich and supple. The cadence follows a voice that is firm and both familiar and unexpected at once. Some of the poems open themselves, show their faces, as if their petals were opening, or as if a bird after hesitating stated himself clearly. In the aridities of the "big" magazines and the wasteland of most books of poetry surrounding us, it is a deep pleasure and refreshment to find your words. May the tides of "fashion" be cursed so that the true note can be heard.

—The late poet **Hilda Morley** (letter to author)

I've enjoyed **The Fountain**. Your poems are clean and, well, limpid. I know that's an old fashioned cornball term, but I can't think of a better term this morning. "Transparent" won't do because of all the allusion and covert ironies. Limpid is it, I reckon, on a Thursday. Maybe I could've done better on a Sunday.

—Poet, Fiction Writer, and North Carolina Poet Laureate **Fred Chappell** (letter to author)

The collection offers a variety of lyrical and narrative poems, which vary from predictable to memorable. Any reader will endure the predictable to find the memorable poems.

—**Charlotte Poetry Review**, William Sullivan (Summer / Fall 1993)

Poet and The Jargon Society editor **Thomas Meyer** speaks in a letter to the author:

The Fountain, so grown up. By which I mean "old-fashioned." Courtly. For isn't that where the "fountain" is? At the center of the court (yard)? As the teachers make clear: the fountain is not the source. Just as talent (cunning) is not a presentation of individuality. Rather, it is a nearness to the source, and its conduit. [**The Fountain**] is filled with a lovely confidence: the unflinching soufflé; a certain breathless quality that I love.

As does Novelist **H. E. Francis**:

[Your book] came like an act of grace. One is bitten by things, or captured, captivated, lost in, overwhelmed in, drowned but with joy, so it is hard to tell a poet...what one *experienced*. So I won't attempt anything more than my private pleasure — I keep it — though you startle with your range of line, form, subject: and I am much taken, as I was before, with a kind of precise sensuous observation which turns into sensual magic, sometimes even little glimpses of big mystery. You seem to have rich — varied classical/modern — attachments, and they have made an enormous contribution to poetry that has benefited from them without being freighted with the academic. Congrats on that. Difficult tightrope walking!