

From reviews of **THE GOLDEN LEGEND**:



The fabric of the verse of Jeffery Beam is amazing. I have not come upon such a sure and sensuous talent for a good while. ... You can see the shining, luminescent, humane intelligence.

—Ron Bayes, poet and former editor of **St. Andrews Review** and Press, in **The Pilot** (February 1982)

His first book, and slim enough to make one want more.

—Ian Young, poet and editor, in **The Body Politic** (January / February 1982)

Beam's poems [have] a clear mythic quality about them. There are messages in these poems ... we find they demand careful consideration, and even then leave us wondering if we have plumbed all the depths.

—Lindsay Thompson in the **Saint Andrews Review** (1982)

The title poem ... is solace to the thousands, millions? of fine and serious writers and artists that thrive in America despite the poverty of imagination and recession of thinking.

—Rochelle Dubois, poet and publisher, in **Small Press Review** (October 1982)

At times one suspects a new world has been discovered, the curiosity and awe felt when a first snow falls and we walk out into it. Other times I feel certain an ancient rite has been uncovered and Beam is reblessing spiritual objects for our use. Both archeology and expedition are possible in this work.

—Maudy Benz, poet, journalist, and fiction writer in **Small Press Review** (May 1983)

This is Beam's first book. It's really a chapbook: there are only twenty-two poems, none of which runs over one page. These are prosy poems, whether cast in the form of verse or prose, and are in fact often reminiscent of that master of

the prose poem, the Symbolist Arthur Rimbaud: they're full of passion, strange imagery, and arresting language. Five poems face woodcuts by Durer that inspired them. Beam has become a highly economical poet with a sure feel for what Charles Olson called "projective" verse; it's easy to look back at these poems and regard them in contrast as being overly lush and imprecise. If you read them as a beginning poet's belated entries in the Symbolist tradition, however, you'll be more likely to enjoy them. —Poet and critic Robert West on **Amazon.com** (May 29, 2001)

and....

**Jonathan Williams**, poet and publisher, The Jargon Society, in letter to North Carolina Arts Council (1982)

Mr. Beam has an authentic poetic imagination and he has been at the task of writing long enough to reveal his devotion to the demands of language. He manages to produce fresh lines — which is all that the reader ever need require of any poet — and there is a flowered, visionary rapture in his best work that is rare in any time or place, particularly in this place of geography we call North Carolina. He is not boring; he is not trying to milk some academy for tenure; he is not parading the products of a disorderly life in some aggressive, up-to-the-minute way. His **graciousness** deserves our attention.

**Thomas Meyer**, poet and publisher, The Jargon Society (Introduction at poetry reading 1982)

It is hard for me to imagine these things otherwise: a cool, clear handful of icy water from the spring where it wells up through the rock, so fine and so intense a devotion has Jeffery Beam to his art. The grace and attention, the waiting and allowing which characterize that work, each poem and its process, time and again, are rare. All too rare, these days. His mode is neither fashionable nor valued in our culture.

The late **Anais Nin**, fiction writer and diarist (letter to author 1982)

Your poems have life, radiance, and depth of feeling. They have vigor and color. I am sure you are a writer who will be read by many.