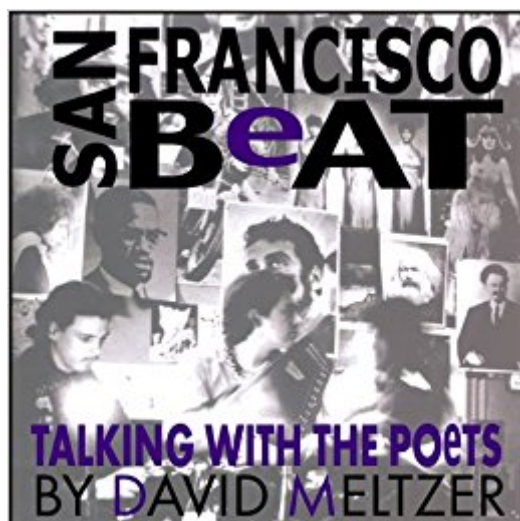


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San Francisco Beat: Talking With The Poets



Synopsis

San Francisco Beat is an essential archive of the Beat Generation, a rich moment in a fortunate place. Americaâsomnolent, conformist, and paranoid in the 1950sâwas changed forever by a handful of people who refused an existence of drudgery and enterprise, opting instead for a life of personal, spiritual, and artistic adventure. In these intimate, free-wheeling conversations, a baker's dozen of the poets of San Francisco talk about the scene then and now, the traditions of poetry, and about anarchism, globalism, Zen, the Bomb, the Kabbalah, and the Internet. Thirty years ago, poet David Meltzer interviewed his poet friends for The San Francisco Poets. Now in San Francisco Beat he has combined these classic interviews with recent follow-up. San Francisco Beat features major new interviews with Philip Lamantia, Joanne Kyger, Gary Snyder, Jack Hirschman, Diane di Prima, Jack Micheline, Philip Whalen, and David Meltzer himself. David Meltzer is the author of many books of poetry, including Tens, The Name, Arrows: Selected Poetry 1957â1992, and No Eyes: Lester Young. He is the editor of Birth, The Secret Garden, Reading Jazz, and Writing Jazz, among other collections. His agit-smut fictions include The Agency Trilogy. Meltzer read poetry at the Jazz Cellar in the 1950s and in the 1960s fronted the band, Serpent Power. Meltzer teaches poetics at New College of California.

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Customer Reviews

When David Meltzer's "The San Francisco Poets" appeared in 1971, I somehow stumbled across a copy & promptly lost myself in its pages, amazed & dazzled by the way these poets opened up about their lives, their art, their experiences of the world. I simply hadn't known how rich & complex the inner life of the poet really was -- not any living ones, anyway. While they provided plenty of ideas for me to wrestle with, what made a lasting impact was their unfettered mode of expression. So this was what a genuine human being could be like! Now, decades later, that book of interviews has been reissued, with the original interviews not only expanded upon but followed up, and new interviews added as well. The result is a volume that spans half a century or more, offering both the immediate responses to then-current events, and reflections on them much later in life. From Kenneth Rexroth to Lawrence Ferlinghetti to Michael McClure & more, we're invited to listen in on fascinating, challenging conversation, filled with anecdote, social commentary, personal memories, and a fair amount of hard-won wisdom. While certainly of interest to both budding poets & historians of the recent decades past, what makes this collection continually relevant is the questions it raises for each of us: How do we live? What do we cherish? What gives us meaning? What is the place & purpose of art? In short, it makes us think about who we are & what we want to be -- not in terms of worldly "success" but as whole human beings. As such, it's well worth reading & highly recommended! (As a rueful footnote to how times have changed, I bought my old copy of "The San Francisco Poets" from a drugstore spinner rack. You won't find that happening today, alas!)

Interviews with makers of San Francisco's "beat scene" are captured by Metzger, himself a Beat generation artist, in San Francisco Beat, a outstanding and informative collection of recent interviews which relate what happened. Ferlinghetti, Everson, Rexroth and other major literary figures of the times reflect on experiences and philosophy.

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