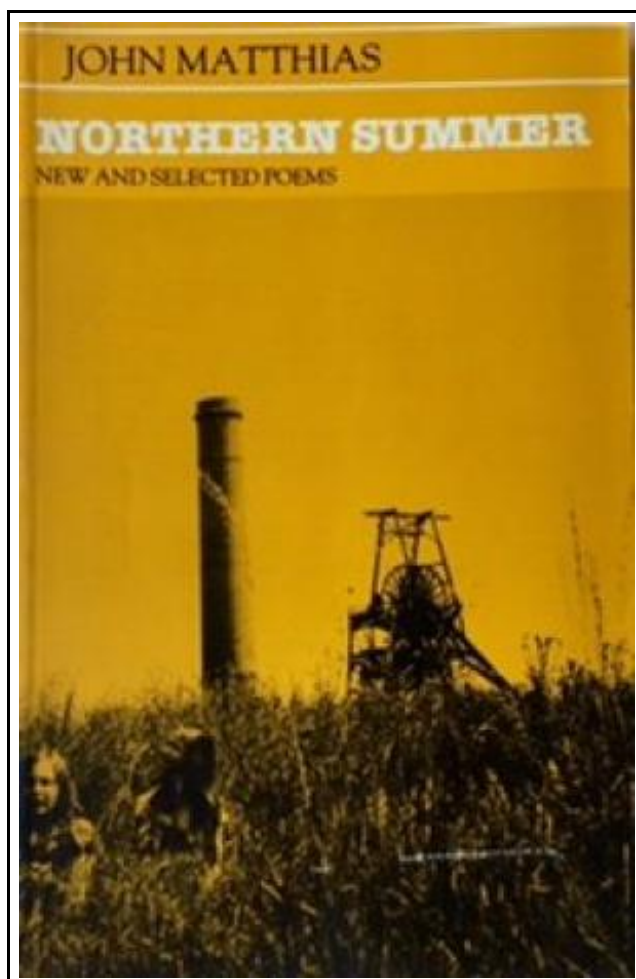


Northern Summer: New and Selected Poems 1963-1983



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Reviews

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Carcenet Press Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Northern Summer: New and Selected Poems 1963-1983, John Matthias, "Northern Summer" is a representative selection from John Matthias' previous books, together with a group of poems written since 1980. Robert Duncan wrote of his first book, "Bucyrus", that in part 'Matthias is a Goliard - one of those wandering souls out of a dark age in our own time'. The present selection includes the three epistolary poems from "Turns" - hailed as 'major art' by Arthur Oberg in "Western Humanities Review" - as well as the long "Poem for Cynouai" from "Crossing", which extends and modifies their idiom. The book reprints entire "The Stefan Batory Poems", written on a Polish liner while Matthias travelled to America after a year in England during the last stages of the Watergate controversy, along with three sections of "The Mihail Lermontov Poems", written two years later while returning on a Russian ship to England. The comic vision of these poems has been widely acknowledged since the publication of "Crossing", a book the "TLS" found 'bursting with masterful intelligence' and "Thames Poetry" called 'packed with poetic thought, devilment, and complexities of spirit'. The new work in "Northern Summer" culminates in the title poem, a personal and historical meditation set in Scotland. In it a new landscape and history - that of Fife and "The Matter of Scotland" - join the East Anglian and mid-western American concerns of his earlier work. It is a poem that bears out Neil Corcoran's observation in "PN Review" that Matthias is a poet 'whose exceptionally original work has something of David Jones' magpie eclecticism and much of his sustaining interest in specific re-imagined historical occasions'.

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