

Theodore Roethke

Poet Description:

Theodore Roethke was born and raised in Saginaw, Michigan, where his family managed greenhouses that were the subject of several of his early lyrics. In these densely nurtured spaces, Roethke began to forge a kind of mystical animism that stayed with him throughout his career. From these contained, miniature natural worlds, embodying a whole range of human sexual and generative impulses, he would eventually reach outward to the large scale visionary landscape poems of "North American Sequence," landscapes at once meticulously observed and psychologically suggestive. Along the way he composed major elegies and love poems and a series of sequences that each broke unique ground. Throughout these poems despair contends with a will to transcendence. Roethke was educated at the University of Michigan and Harvard and for the last decade and a half of his life taught at the University of Washington. He was subject throughout his adult life to frequent mood swings, sometimes alternating between extravagant bravado and paralyzing self-doubt. He also went on numerous drinking binges and suffered a series of mental breakdowns that required hospitalization, but he also clearly learned from them things he used in his writing.

Race/Ethnicity:

European [1]

Picture:



Gender:

Male [2]

Sexuality:

Straight [3]

First Name:

Theodore

Last Name:

Roethke

Birth & Death Dates:

Monday, May 25, 1908 to Thursday, August 1, 1963

School of Poetry:

Confessional ^[4]

Birth Place:

Saginaw , Michigan

United States

See map: Google Maps ^[5]

Michigan US

Death Place:

Bainbridge Island , Washington

United States

See map: Google Maps ^[6]

Washington US

Group visibility:

Private - accessible only to group members

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Links

[1] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/race-ethnicity/european>

[2] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/gender/male>

[3] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/sexuality/straight>

[4] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/school-poetry/confessional>

[5] <http://maps.google.com?q=46.880607+-87.363281+%28%2C+Saginaw%2C+MI%2C+%2C+us%29>

[6] <http://maps.google.com?q=47.645833+-122.543441+%28%2C+Bainbridge+Island%2C+WA%2C+%2C+us%29>