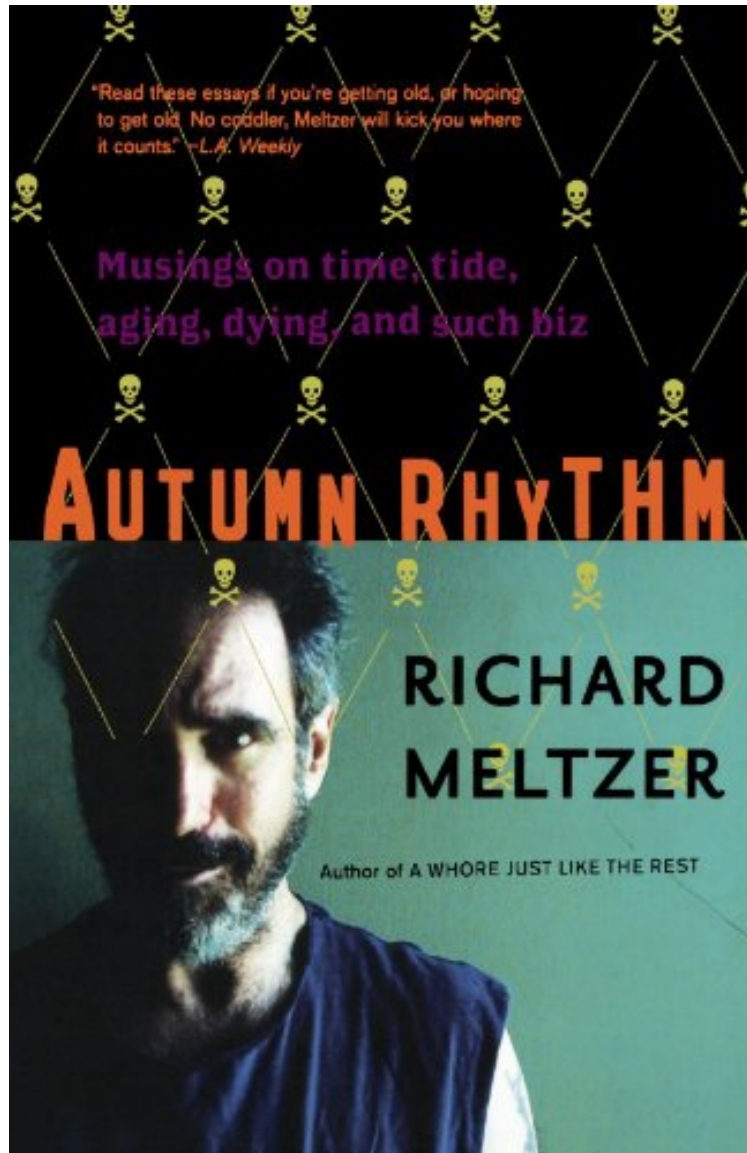


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Autumn Rhythm: Musings On Time, Tide, Aging, Dying, And Such Biz

Richard Meltzer

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Richard Meltzer : Autumn Rhythm: Musings On Time, Tide, Aging, Dying, And Such Biz before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Autumn Rhythm: Musings On Time, Tide, Aging, Dying, And Such Biz:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One of the great writers of our half-century. Not as good as Gulcher. Still good. By Tim Midyett Starts off kinda phoned in but Meltzer always ends up giving up the goods after about two thousand words. He can't help himself. It's like if Stravinsky tried to write something half-assed--he just constitutionally can't do it past a certain point. Certainly not a whole book. Anyway, it's about getting old and there's some incredible insight in it. The bit about old people's clothes really really stuck with me. I have s*** I will wear for the rest of my life. That's heavy. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. None Better than Meltzer By CustomerLook, there are hundreds of thousands of writers on . Some who try to be funny and insightful but are not honest, and -- well you get the drift. I've read Meltzer's early work; his middle stage stuff that was probably 100 times more brilliant; and now Autumn Rhythm, which presumably captures the autumn years. It falls into the 100 times brilliance categorization. You don't read Meltzer so much as hear it through your eyes. While musings about getting old are in the sloppy-joe essay crock-pot of nearly every writer who makes it to 55, this collection is a bright peony among wilted dandelions. Make friends with Meltzer and his work. You'll be glad you did. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Rants on Geezerhood from Old Man Meltzer By Frank Clover This is an uneven collection of rants and reflections on growing old from the grey area between middle and old age. Like most people who find the world changing more quickly than their ability to adjust to those changes as they grow old, Meltzer strives to make a virtue out of his inability to adapt to computers and the Internet, indiscriminately lumping them together with MTV and other, less benign, cultural excrescences. These sections are rather hackneyed and about what you'd hear from any aging 60's-survivor barfly muttering over his beer. More effective are Meltzer's unflinching descriptions of the physical decay and the loss of old friends and enemies that accompany staying alive over time. Read and heed, young people, and see what you have to look forward to (not that there's much you can do about it).

A sublime and moving collection of essays by an eloquent master writer, Autumn Rhythm is equal parts candor, courage, humor, and desperation. A true-tongued, almost joyous gallows humor permeates the book, a meditation on what it's like to be on the outer edge of "boomerhood," on the cusp of official seniority; what it's like to have been so long associated with a youth movement-rock music-yet to no longer be young. Autumn Rhythm comes from a man whose work has always been music as much as it's been about it, and who now brings his syncopation of word, sound, and sense to the subject of life itself, as lived and lost: a frank, brilliant, and ultimately poetic contemplation of physical decline, the deaths of friends and family, and the confounding, ever-accelerating changes in our culture. "A rant in [Meltzer's] finest and funniest manner, an epic vernacular monologue with stylistic roots in nineteenth-century humorists Bill Nye, Artemus Ward, and Mark Twain."

From Publishers Weekly Meltzer (A Whore Just Like the Rest), who has pioneered rock 'n' roll criticism since the 1960s, explores the intricacies of growing old while looking back on some of the highs and lows of the years that he can remember. Penned in his usual out-of-the-blue writing style, these poems, essays and haikus seem to all blend into one long rant at times. But that's by design, since Meltzer's credo on aging argues that people should get everything out of their systems before time runs out. "The Wisdom in Our Underwear," a far-out take on the 20th century, is both entertaining (on 1984: "Reagan had to be Prez; the Olympics had to be staged in L.A.... There was no irony left in the world") and stimulating, if not hard to follow at times. Still, saying that anything that happened after 1969 has been off "the frigging map" does show a hint of '60s smugness, especially for someone who drops pop culture references from the 1970s through the '90s throughout his book. His "musings" on old age are basically a collection of journal entries on what he does, or did, as well as people he has known. Among these ruminations are some nuggets of truth about aging, like his football analogy that once a person hits a certain age, life's playing field gets shorter and you have to settle for "three yards and a cloud of dust" instead of "80-yard passes." The book's narrative structure supports this thought; plow through the parts that strike your fancy and for the rest throw a Hail Mary pass and hope for the best. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Meltzer's agent once wanted to turn him into "the new Charles Bukowski." Catch was, he would have to "be and behave like an 'old curmudgeon.'" No dice then, but now, at 58, though Meltzer still doesn't cop to being old, he has noticed things . . . and forgotten others, which induces "Autumn Rhythm," a rant in his finest and funniest manner, an epic vernacular monologue with stylistic roots in nineteenth-century humorists Bill Nye, Artemus Ward, and Mark Twain. The piece is, of course, on aging, a subject Meltzer's apparently absent-minded self-interruption and digression suit to a tee. The other long pieces here vary the theme. "The Wisdom in Our Underwear" ruminates on the end of the twentieth century, and "Middle Beginning End" considers Meltzer's relations with his mother, now quite senile; both are less manic than "Autumn Rhythm," with the latter achieving genuine emotional weight. The accompanying short pieces are poems and essays about departed acquaintances, including a very perspicacious assessment of . . . Charles Bukowski. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Vivid, graceful, desperate, and funny-always funny." -- Village Voice