

[PDF] Gilgamesh: A New Rendering In English Verse

David Ferry - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Gilgamesh: A New Rendering in

Author: David Ferry

Released: 1993-06-01

Language:

Pages: 96

ISBN: 0374523835

ISBN13: 978-0374523831

ASIN: 0374523835



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Description:

This is one of the more recent translations of the Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, about the hero-king of ancient Mesopotamia whose adventures--searching for eternal life, surviving a worldwide deluge in an ark filled with animals, to name a couple--make up one of oldest pieces of literature on record. David Ferry's version attempts to provide the most readable rendering of the epic, artfully finding a poetic voice that's particularly accessible to the modern ear, as well as working to smooth over the gaps in the poem caused by the fragmentary record of the original clay tablets. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly Ferry's (*On the Way to the Island*) version of this Mesopotamian epic is not simply a translation but an artful interpretation which aims to convey the spirit rather than the

letter of the fragmentary original. Working from scholarly translations of the Sumerian and Akkadian tablets but departing from them freely, he has produced a "rendering" with shape and wholeness. And Ferry has enhanced the closeness of the relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, the wild man created by the gods to temper the hero's fierceness. Early in the poem, Gilgamesh sagely tells Enkidu, "The life of man is short. / What he accomplishes is but the wind." After Enkidu's death, Gilgamesh is driven to seek the secret of eternal life from Utnapishtim, who was granted eternal life. Gilgamesh learns bitterly the truth of his own words in the beautiful but unconsoling speech of the wise man: "Time after time the river has risen and flooded. / The insect leaves the cocoon to live but a minute." Ferry's iambic pentameter is more lyrical than epic, and captures the elegiac and ironic undertones of Gilgamesh's failed search for immortality. One senses that he has restored the poetry of this oldest epic.

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