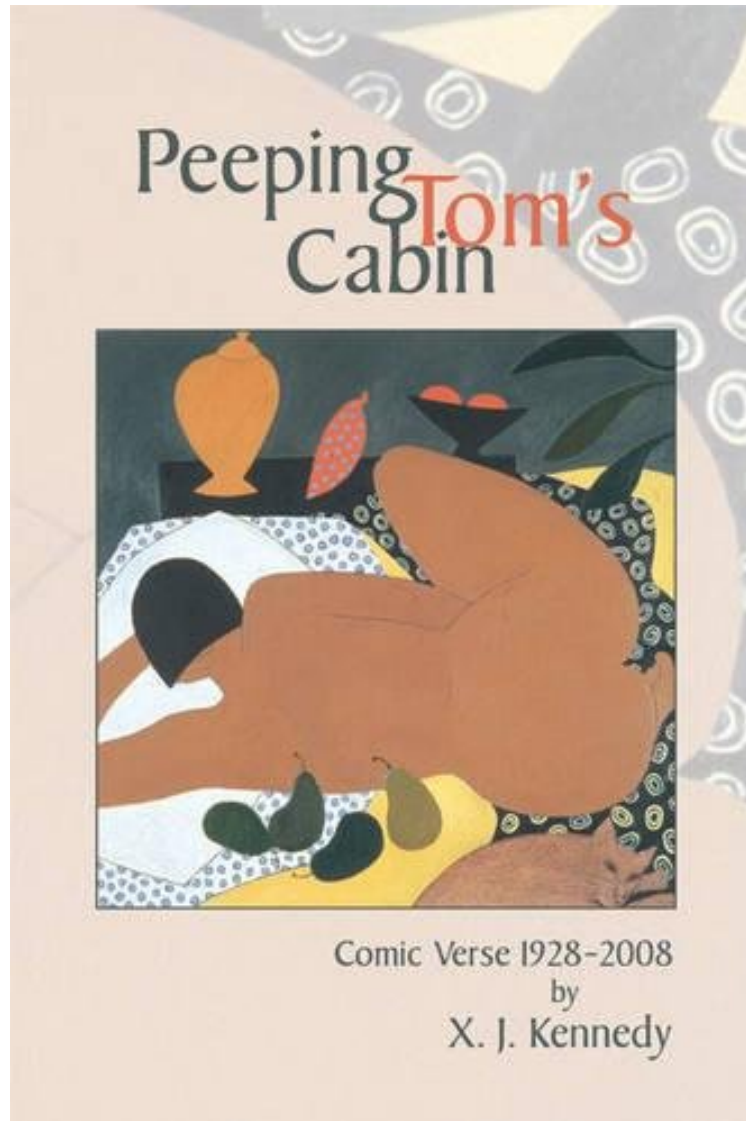


(Online library) Peeping Tom's Cabin: Comic Verse 1928-2008 (American Poets Continuum)

Peeping Tom's Cabin: Comic Verse 1928-2008 (American Poets Continuum)

X.J. Kennedy

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X.J. Kennedy : Peeping Tom's Cabin: Comic Verse 1928-2008 (American Poets Continuum) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Peeping Tom's Cabin: Comic Verse 1928-2008 (American Poets Continuum):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent traditional comic verseBy Jon CorelisX. J. Kennedy is well known as a formalist poet, that is, one who writes in traditional strong metrical or stanzaic forms. His comic verse

is traditionalist not only in form, but also in mood and content: it is part of tradition of what you might call, paradoxically, "serious comic verse" which goes back through Swift to Martial and Juvenal in ancient Rome. Such verse is essentially satire, but not in the recent sense of the term, which has come to mean mocking some other form of literature. This older type of satire, though it aims to be funny, also makes an implicit social or moral criticism. It's characterized by a particular sort of intellectual humor which used to be called "wit," often makes use of learned allusions, and is frequently suggestive and occasionally outright obscene. The poems in this book are excellent examples of this sort of verse, and will please anyone who is interested in the genre. But don't be misled by the phrase "comic verse" into thinking these are the sort of "pop" light, wry verses you might occasionally find in a newspaper or non-literary magazine. They are serious literature in the sense I've described, and (although the author also has a reputation as a children's writer) certainly not for children. 1 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Trashy By K. Burley I heard this reviewed on NPR and got it for my 80 year old mother who likes funny poetry. I obviously didn't investigate it enough and will never go on public radio alone for a reference. I never gave it to my mom, not what I was looking for.

X. J. Kennedy's well-known travels between the realms of the comic and the serious qualify him for dual citizenship in the world of poetry. Here, the playful is on full display in verse not just light but bright and delightful. Billy Collins' *Peeping Toms Cabin* is the first full-length collection of light verse for adults composed by one of America's most celebrated poets. An uncompromising formalist, Kennedy uses a broad range of longstanding poetic forms, including limerick, nursery rhyme, ballad, rhymed epitaph, and clerihew. This collection includes many poems previously published in poetry and popular journals, including *The Sewanee Review*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Yorker*, and *Poetry*. These poems honor and skewer all classes of citizen, regardless of their revered place in society. Parents, lovers, poetry critics, students, and especially notable literary figures receive Kennedy's astute comic attention. To Someone Who Insisted I Look Up Someone I rang them up while touring Timbuktu, Those bosom chums to whom you're known as Who? X. J. Kennedy has published six collections of verse, including *Nude Descending a Staircase*, which received the Lamont Award from the Academy of American Poets. His newest collection, *The Lords of Misrule*, received the 2004 Poets Prize. Kennedy has also authored eighteen children's books and several textbooks on fiction and poetry. Other recognitions include the Los Angeles Book Award for Poetry, the Aiken-Taylor Award, and Guggenheim and National Arts Council fellowships. Kennedy was also given the first Michael Braude Award for light verse by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

From Publishers Weekly Accompanying Kennedy's forthcoming selected (serious) poems, this agreeably cantankerous, occasionally laugh-out-loud-funny volume gathers brief parodies, barbed rhymes, naughty couplets and other assorted not-so-serious verse, dating (despite the title) from 1956 to the present. Kennedy serves up, among other poems, 46 limericks, 19 clerihews, assorted off-color jokes, rewritten popular songs from the pre-rock era (Suburban lawns with moles,/ Things full of holes/ Remind me of you) and *Mary Had a Little Lamb* rewritten in the style of Sylvia Plath. Kennedy (*The Lords of Misrule*) also offers ghastly brats (poems too grisly for, but otherwise suited to, his three collections of children's verse) and a portrait of Sigmund Freud as Santa Claus. The volume seems less substantial than most collections of light verse (perhaps because Kennedy's greatest wits have been relegated to a companion volume); some of the jokes about sex and drink sound dated. Yet this lighter side of Kennedy should please fans of John Updike's verse or of the line of mid-century upscale rhyming from Cole Porter to the New Yorker to which most of these poems belong. (Sept.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

About the Author X. J. Kennedy has published eight previous collections of poetry; nineteen children's books, including *Brats and Exploding Gravy*; and one novel, *The Owlstone Crown*. His textbooks have been taught to more than four million students. He was the first recipient of the Michael Braude award for light verse by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.