



The Paris Diary & The New York Diary 1951-1961

By Ned Rorem

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When *The Paris Diary* exploded on the scene in 1966 there had never been a book in English quite like it: Its intimate combination of personal, literary, and social insights was unprecedented. Rorem's self-portrait of the artist as a young man, written between 1951 and 1955, was also a mirror of the times, depicting the now vanished milieu of Cocteau, Eluard, Gide, Landowska, Boulez, the Vicomtesse de Noailles, and others whose paths crossed with Rorem's in such settings as Paris, Morocco, and Italy. *The New York Diary*, published the following year, pictured the period between 1956 and 1960, when Rorem had returned to America. The diaries marked the beginnings of Gay Liberation, not because Rorem made a special issue of his sexuality, but because he did not; rather, he wrote of his affairs frankly and unashamedly. A casualness informs each sensual entry, and the overall tone is at once bratty and brilliant, insecure and vain, loving and cultured, but, above all, honest and entertaining.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Composer Ned Rorem has an exquisite way with a song, distilling musical essences to provide miniature masterpieces that linger in listeners' minds. He is also, as these diaries prove, a facile, if somewhat undisciplined, writer. And someone mired in self-absorption. At the time Rorem wrote his diaries, he was distinctly callow and obsessed with being "pretty"; yet the picture that emerges of him in his youth is not entirely attractive. The book will be of interest to those who are curious about the lives of significant composers, both for the small insights that he shares about his composition process and for the details of his life and the circumstances under which he wrote his music. His vividly sketched picture of gay life more than a generation ago widens the audience of this book. --*Sarah Bryan Miller*

About the Author

Ned Rorem has created a body of work that includes four symphonies, four piano concertos, nine operas, and fourteen books. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1976 for his orchestral suite *Air Music*. He divides his time between New York City and Nantucket.

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