

My Own Places



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But I should paint my own places best. Painting is but another word for feeling. I associate my careless boyhood to all that lies on the banks of the Stour. They made me a painter...- October 23, 1821, John Constable to John Fisher My Own Places is a collection of poems inspired by the works of British landscape painter John Constable (1776-1837). Constable's well-known reluctance to travel far from his home gave his paintings a distinctly regional character that is reflected in the nostalgic and pastoral qualities of his work. Poet Don Kerr is also best known as a regionalist, who throughout his career has written on the history and culture of the prairie west. The selections included here range from short, imagistic lyric poems to extended narratives, and act

both as a biography of the artist and an exploration of his character and his work. Kerr includes references to Constable's influences, such as Gainsborough and the seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painters, as well as his patrons, friends, and contemporaries. Yet Kerr comes full circle, back to his own places, the western cities and plains that he knows so well. In Kerr's words, this is "one regionalist discovering another" -- two different kinds of artists, two kindred spirits, who discovered their inspiration outside their own back doors.

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目录:

[My Own Places_ 下载链接1](#)

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[My Own Places_ 下载链接1](#)

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