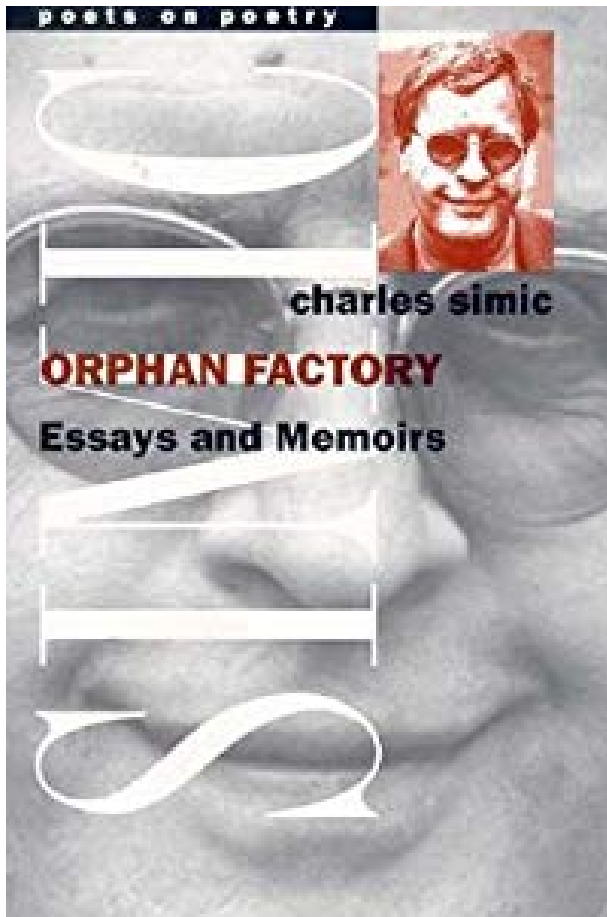


Orphan Factory: Essays and Memoirs



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Orphan Factory collects writing by Charles Simic, hailed as one of our finest contemporary poets. A native of Yugoslavia who emigrated to America in his teens, Simic believes that tragedy, comedy, and paradox are the commonplace experiences of an exile's life. In this delightful collection of journal entries, autobiographical essays, criticism, and prose poetry, the poet reveals once again his fondness for odd juxtapositions that reveal hidden and unexpected connections. In the title essay, Simic--whom critic Helen Vendler has called "the best political poet on the American scene"--reflects on his family's experiences of their war-torn homeland during World War II and the frightening familiarity of the recent tragic events in the region. The collection has many hilarious moments, such as Simic's memoir of his first days in New York City as a young poet and painter, impressions from his poet's notebook, and first lines from his unwritten books. The book also contains reflections on dreams, insomnia, and the night sky, and considers the work of poets Jane Kenyon and Ingeborg Bachmann, and of visual artists Saul Steinberg and Holly Wright.

Charles Simic's most recent poetry collections are *Walking the Black Cat* (1996), nominated for the National Book Award, and *Hotel Insomnia*. He has won numerous prizes, including the Pulitzer Prize, Guggenheim and MacArthur Fellowships, and a P.E.N. Translation Prize.