

W.B Yeats

W.B Yeats (1865-1939) is one of the predominant poets and playwrights of the 20th century. He played an instrumental role in Irish literary revival. He staunchly affirmed his Irish-ness in his poems and plays. W. H. Auden assigned Yeats the high praise of having written “some of the most beautiful poetry” of modern times. Yeats received Nobel prize for literature in 1923.

Yeats was a symbolist poet, made extensive use of allusions and symbolic structures throughout his poetry. His use of symbols is usually something physical that is both itself and suggestion of other, perhaps immaterial, timeless qualities. As an Irish nationalist Yeats made extensive use of Irish folklore and legends. Yeats believed that poems and plays would engender a national unity capable of transfiguring the Irish nation. He founded Irish Literary Theatre along with Lady Gregory and others which gave its first performance in Dublin in 1899 with Yeats' play *The Countess Cathleen*.

Yeats wanted poetry to engage the full complexity of life, but only insofar as the individual poet's imagination had direct access to experience or thought and those materials were transformed by the energy of artistic articulation. His brilliant rhetorical accomplishments have earned wide praise from readers and especially, from fellow poets such as W.H.Auden, Stephen Spender and Philip Larkin.

Some of his important works are *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems* (1889), *The Wild Swans at Coole*, *The Tower* (1928), *The Winding Stair* (1929), *A Vision* (1926) and many others.