E.E. Cummings: Complete Poems, 1904-1962

I am a lover of many things. I love Thai food, I love wine, I love documentaries…but one thing I love the most is poetry. I know I'm not joined by many in this love, or at least judging by my teaching career, I'm not. Still, I think everyone should take the time to find at least one poet or one poem that he or she finds moving. Especially in today's fast-paced life. While many might not have the time to read entire novels in a timely fashion, picking up a poetry book and perusing a few poems in one sitting is doable — and pleasurable. Trust me on this one.
My favorite poet in the whole wide world and the author of the book I'm reviewing today, is e. e. cummings. He's not everyone's cup of tea. His poems are whimsical, strange and confusing – which is why I adore him so. E. E. Cummings: Complete Poems, 1904-1962 is the most comprehensive book of his poetry that I've found. What I enjoy about his writing is the "artsiness" her incorporates into his poetry. Some poems appear absolutely magical on the page, as he is as much a visual artist as he is a poet. His poems jump and dance to a staccato rhythm one moment and then flow and fall into a ballad the next. He is famous for ending one line in the middle of a thought and beginning the next line picking up where the unfinished thought left off. In other words, his poems make you think. (If you're opposed to such side effects, stop reading immediately and watch a reality TV show.)
Cummings' poetry is also highly passionate, even shall I say, erotic at times? The lovely thing is, he doesn't display this feature too obviously most of the time. There is a bit of reading between the lines since logic and syntax are abandoned by the poet, with passion and emotion taking up residency in each piece of writing instead. He is esoteric, sure, but his poems are also incredibly moving (I used him throughout our wedding process – printed on the invitations, programs, and read at the ceremony) as he often talks about the ins and outs and the hows and whys of love.
I'm a big fan of coffee table books, and this is one that will have anyone intrigued who happens to flip through. If you like unconventional, though-provoking writers with some spunk, then check this out. Happy reading.

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