



Hoofprints: Horse Poems

By Jessie Haas

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A VOYA Poetry Pick: Award-winning author Jessie Haas takes readers on a ride back in time to celebrate the special bond between horses and humans

“We have all been changed by the horse, for better and worse.” —Jessie Haas

Jessie Haas travels back sixty-five million years—from 5000 BCE to the present day—in 104 poems about our equine friends.

Horses have shared some of the most significant moments in human history. In these lyrical and poignant pieces—some written from the horse’s point of view—readers will meet chariot racers, knights’ steeds, horse whisperers, even Pegasus, the winged horse. In one moving poem, a compassionate colt befriends a lonely man; in another, a starving soldier shares a meal with his mount. Whether it’s the thundering herd of Genghis Khan or a Dutch farmer shielding his horse from the Nazis, these transportive free-verse poems reveal how horses have influenced and enriched our lives. *Hoofprints* is an awe-inspiring journey through history as we gallop alongside horse and rider and experience “the mid-air moment” when “everything may yet / turn out all right.”

This ebook includes a bibliography and a glossary of equine terminology.

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Hoofprints: Horse Poems By Jessie Haas Bibliography

- Rank: #2037718 in eBooks
- Published on: 2014-09-02
- Released on: 2014-09-02
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up--Haas's considerable knowledge, love of, and respect for horses is clearly evident in this collection of 104 poems. Her introduction credits the animal with affecting the lives of Eurasians, North Africans, and Americans ("We have all been changed by the horse, for better and worse"). A nine-page afterword reiterates its history and usefulness. Arranged somewhat chronologically, the poems present, often in abstract terms, a quite thorough view of the horse and its ancestors dating back 65 million years; the character of each evolutionary animal; and the uses of the horse by humans over the centuries. Haas's poetic talent is apparent in her deft use of rhymes and rhythms, descriptive narrative verse, occasional touches of humor, and subtle inferences. Her poems display cleverness and, often, spare, vividly descriptive, well-turned phrases. Understanding them requires some knowledge of world history and familiarity with mythology. A few, like "Dappled Things," are quite adult. ("What's less free than a mare on the urine line/perpetually peeing into a tube,/giving her hormones for women's menopause,/her foals for supper in Paris?") A bibliography is appended, as is a glossary that includes equine terminology, historical empires, places, and people. The collection's major caveat may be that it requires a reader whose fascination with horses equals that of the author's.--*Susan Scheps, Shaker Heights Public Library, OH*
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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 8-12. Haas' latest celebration of horses is a departure from her novels and picture books. In sophisticated poetry, she explores horse history, imagining scenes of prehistoric ancestors, the first pairing of horse and rider, and onward through time and across continents. The diverse, intelligent selections, some told from a horse's viewpoint, range from simple, sensory impressions to less accessible, abstract poems that wear their research heavily. A dateline following each poem, a glossary, and an author's note offer more context. Whether or not readers understand the meaning in every line, they will find the stories and facts fascinating, particularly the intricate links between human and equine history: "We never had pants, before horses. / Never needed them." Best, though, are beautiful scenes that show a rider's gratitude for a horse ("You cancel these distances / You make the way level / You abolish loneliness") and the timeless thrill of galloping and leaping obstacles, "the mid-air moment" when "everything may yet / turn out all right." A unique, memorable collection. *Gillian Engberg*
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Review

"Haas's considerable knowledge, love of, and respect for horses is clearly evident in this collection of 104 poems." —*School Library Journal*

"In sophisticated poetry, [Haas] explores horse history, imagining scenes of prehistoric ancestors, the first pairing of horse and rider, and onward through time and across continents. . . . A unique, memorable collection." —*Booklist*

"The language is precise, careful, and true; the history multifaceted as history should be. . . . Ambitious, accomplished, adventuresome." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"This book of free verse poems takes on the challenging task of telling the story of the history of horse and man and succeeds beautifully. . . . The structure of each short poem is spare but lyrical, with a wonderful

rhythm reminiscent of the rocking motion of a rider on horseback.” —*Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)*

“Sure to appeal to the horse lover, this collection of poems will also be appreciated for its historical content. . . . No matter what the subject, Haas’ poems paint vivid pictures and contain musical rhythms. A horse lover will gallop through this book, while a poetry lover may take the landscape of these poems at a gentle canter.”
—*Children’s Literature*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sheila Rocha:

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Mary May:

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Billy Doyle:

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