

The New Criterion

August 2005

Anthony Hecht & landscape

by [David Yezzi](#)

On the uses of landscape in the poems of Anthony Hecht.

Any number of fine poems memorialize poets—W. H. Auden’s “In Memory of W. B. Yeats,” for example, or, in a less reverent vein, Tom Disch’s “At the Grave of Amy Clampitt,” written, oddly, while Clampitt was still alive. Such poems tend to announce either affinity or difference, friendship or rivalry, as one poet suggests—either critically or cordially—his relationship to the person or work of another. The poet J. D. McClatchy has an exemplary poem in the admiring vein titled “Auden’s O.E.D.,” which fondly recounts McClatchy’s first meeting with Auden. As a student at Yale, McClatchy buttonholed the elder poet after a reading and nervously asked him if Auden would sign his book. Auden took stock of this eager young chap and told him to bend over. Auden, you see, wanted to use McClatchy’s back as a writing desk. McClatchy then reverses the image to suggest, in a wi ...

David Yezzi is the Executive Editor of The New Criterion.

[more from this author](#)

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 23 August 2005, on page 0

Copyright © 2008 The New Criterion | www.newcriterion.com

<http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/anthony-hecht-landscape-1349>