

CHOICE *connect*

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The following review appeared in the April 2016 issue of CHOICE:

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Gibbons, Reginald. **How poems think**. Chicago, 2015. 239p bibl index afp ISBN 9780226277950, \$90.00; ISBN 9780226278001 pbk, \$25.00; ISBN 9780226278148 ebook, contact publisher for price.

This insightful book is not a guide to reading or writing poetry. Rather, Gibbons (arts and humanities, Northwestern Univ.) explores the ways that poetry creates meaning. He refreshes the possibilities of English poetry by discussing two distinctive features of Russian poetics: an exploratory rather than a decorative use of rhyme, and a method of definition through negation, what he calls "apophatic poetics." Gibbons makes use of his relationships with his mentors, Donald Davie and Hélène Cixous, and invokes his own practice (though not in an egotistical way). He is brilliant on the role of allusion and etymology in poetry; his observations on metrics are lively rather than scholastic; and his choices of examples are brilliant. This volume will enrich the experience of poetry for readers and writers of the art. His bibliography is thorough and the index is helpful.

--B. Almon, *University of Alberta*

Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.