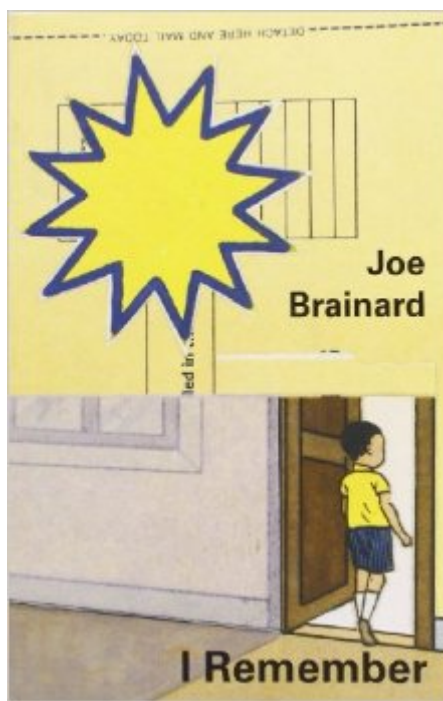


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# Joe Brainard: I Remember



## Synopsis

Joe Brainard's *I Remember* is a literary and artistic cult classic, praised and admired by writers from Paul Auster to John Ashbery and Edmund White. As autobiography, Brainard's method was brilliantly simple: to set down specific memories as they rose to the surface of his consciousness, each prefaced by the refrain "I remember": "I remember when I thought that if you did anything bad, policemen would put you in jail." Brainard's enduring gem of a book has been issued in various forms over the past thirty years. In 1970, Angel Hair books published the first edition of *I Remember*, which quickly sold out; he wrote two subsequent volumes for Angel Hair, *More I Remember* (1972) and *More I Remember More* (1973), both of which proved as popular as the original. In 1973, the Museum of Modern Art in New York published Brainard's *I Remember Christmas*, a new text for which he also contributed a cover design and four drawings. Excerpts from the Angel Hair editions appeared in *Interview*, *Gay Sunshine*, *The World* and the *New York Herald*. Then in 1975, Full Court Press issued a revised version collecting all three of the Angel Hair volumes and added new material, using the original title *I Remember*. This complete edition is prefaced by poet and translator Ron Padgett.

## Book Information

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One of the challenges facing us in the 21st century is that we have too many reading choices; each year (yes each year) around 320,000 books hit UK and USA bookstores alone. And the pace of this is increasing with smaller and smaller print runs meaning more and more specialised segmented reader markets. Don't know about you, but over my allotted 70-80 years I may manage 1001 books

to read before you die; meaning that over my life tsunami of published books, I will read a passing sip of around 0.1% only. Think about all those great books that you are going to miss because of the noise from the ones with the best marketing budgets. Or from reading, what you always read. I Remember by Joe Brainard is one of those books that was buried with the fishes a long time ago yet deserving of a wider readership. Ok let us get to the killer; its poetry linked to the New York School of the 1950-60's, which had a massive influence on contemporary music, art, dance, prose, and poetry. The 'movements' approach was observational, physical, using contrasting vivid imagery to shock the observer, listener, or participant into an emotional response that enables a revitalised experience of the world. The poetry of the 'movement' was a reaction to the confessional styles of poets such as Sylvia Plath who tended to write about their inner struggles. Before you think, I sip Earl Grey tea in some fancy café jabbering on about the prevenient nature of the stanza or the catachrestical no-no, of the imagery let me tell you otherwise. My last experience of any poetry was 1975 when I did English Lit O level and although I enjoyed T.S.Elliot and Sylvia Plath, poems on seeing daffodils or Nightingales croaking did zilch for me-and rhymed couplets, please give a guy a break.

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