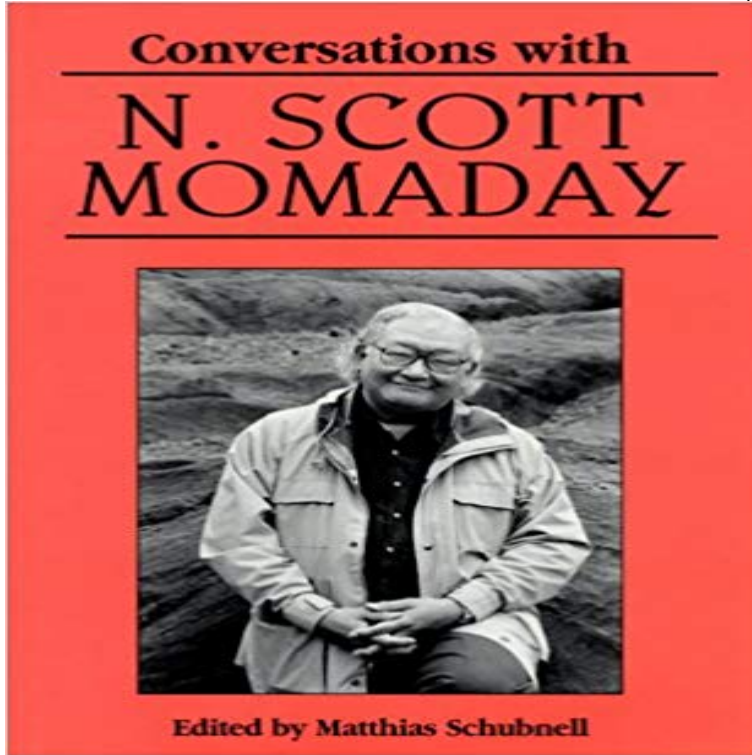


Conversations with N. Scott Momaday (Literary Conversations)



When his first novel *House Made of Dawn* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1969, N. Scott Momaday was virtually unknown. Today he is the most acclaimed Native American writer, working at the peak of his creative power and gaining stature also as an important painter. His first retrospective was held in 1993 at the Wheelwright Museum in Santa Fe. The son of a Kiowa artist and a Cherokee-Anglo mother, Momaday synthesizes multiple cultural influences in his writing and painting. While much of his attention focuses on the difficult task of reconciling ancient traditions with modern reality, his work itself is an example of how the best of the Indian and non-Indian worlds can be arranged into a startling mosaic of seemingly contradictory cultural and artistic elements. Momaday sees his writings as one long, continuous story, a working out of his evolving identity as a modern Kiowa. It is a story grounded in the oral tradition of his ancestors and told in the modes of the traditional storyteller and the modern novelist-poet who is steeped in the best writings of American and European literature. The interviews in this volume span the period from 1970 to 1993. Momaday responds candidly to questions relating to his multicultural background, his views on the place of the Indian in American literature and society, his concern for conservation and an American land ethic, his theory of language and the imagination, the influences on his artistic and academic development, and his comments on specific works he has written. The reader who joins these conversations will meet in N. Scott Momaday a careful listener and an engaging, often humorous speaker whose commentaries provide a deeper vision for those interested in his life and work.

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