



Elizabeth Bishop: Poems, Prose and Letters (Library of America)

Elizabeth Bishop

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Robert Giroux and Lloyd Schwartz, editors

James Merrill described Elizabeth Bishop's poems as "more wryly radiant, more touching, more unaffectedly intelligent than any written in our lifetime" and called her "our greatest national treasure." Robert Lowell said, "I enjoy her poems more than anybody else's." Long before a wider public was aware of Bishop's work, her fellow poets expressed astonished admiration of her formal rigor, fiercely observant eye, emotional intimacy, and sometimes eccentric flights of imagination. Today she is recognized as one of America's great poets of the 20th century. This unprecedented collection offers a full-scale presentation of a writer of startling originality, at once passionate and reticent, adventurous and perfectionist. It presents all the poetry that Bishop published in her lifetime, in such classic volumes as *North & South*, *A Cold Spring*, *Questions of Travel*, and *Geography III*. In addition it contains an extensive selection of unpublished poems and drafts of poems (several not previously collected), as well as all her published poetic translations, ranging from a chorus from Aristophanes' *The Birds* to versions of Brazilian sambas.

Poems, Prose, and Letters brings together as well most of her published prose writings, including stories; reminiscences; travel writing about the places (Nova Scotia, Florida, Brazil) that so profoundly marked her poetry; and literary essays and statements, including a number of pieces published here for the first time. The book is rounded out with a selection of Bishop's irresistibly engaging and self-revelatory letters. Of the 53 letters included here, written between 1933 and 1979, a considerable number are printed for the first time, and all are presented in their entirety. Their recipients include Robert Lowell, Marianne Moore, Randall Jarrell, Anne Stevenson, May Swenson, and Carlos Drummond de Andrade.

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