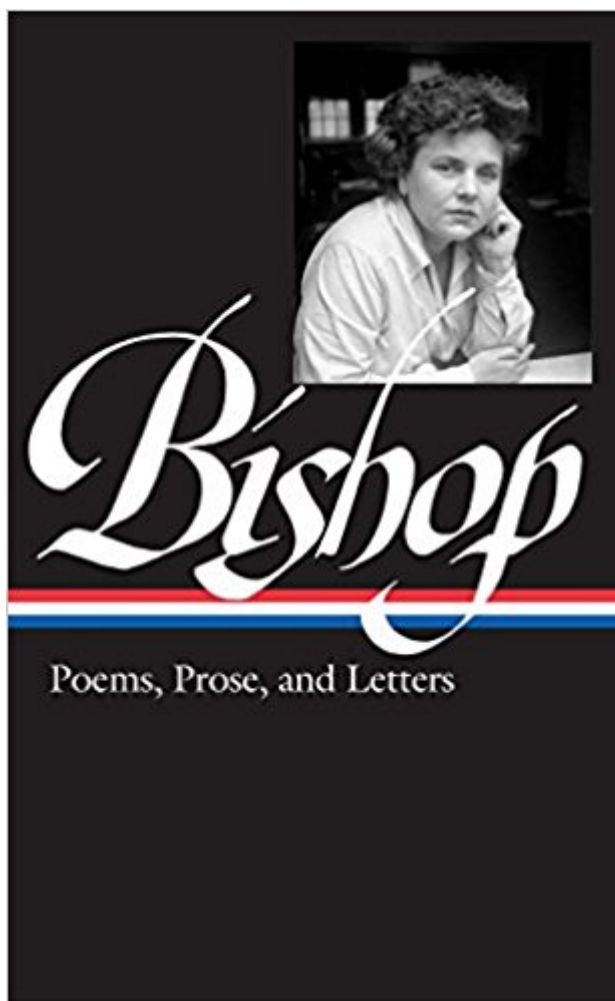


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Elizabeth Bishop: Poems, Prose, And Letters (Library Of America)



Synopsis

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 In addition it contains an extensive selection of unpublished poems and drafts of poems (several not previously collected), as well as all her published poetic translations, ranging from a chorus from Aristophanes' *The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.

Book Information

Series: Library of America (Book 180)

Hardcover: 975 pages

Publisher: Library of America; Reprint edition (February 14, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1598530178

ISBN-13: 978-1598530179

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 1.2 x 8.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #130,592 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 in Books > Literature &

Fiction > History & Criticism > Women Authors #62 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Women's Studies > Women Writers #140 in Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Genres & Styles > Poetry

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. No further proof is necessary to show that Bishop "still not widely known beyond literary circles at the time of her death in 1979" has, posthumously in the last three decades, become one of America's most popular 20th-century poets, but this hefty and handsome volume from the Library of America certainly clinches the deal. Between its covers one can find most of the perfectionist author's oeuvre, more than enough to confirm Bishop as a master at revealing the complexity of simple, often painful things (I said to myself: three days/ and you'll be seven years old./ I was saying it to stop/ the sensation of falling off the round, turning world/ into cold, blue-black space./ But I felt: you are an I, you are an Elizabeth). All the poems gathered in the now-classic *Collected Poems* are here, as are the unpublished drafts released in 2006's controversial *Edgar Allan Poe and the Jukebox*. The memoir and fiction pieces of *Collected Prose* are also reprinted, along with a few other pieces of scattered nonfiction, as well as a generous selection of Bishop's enthralling letters. Bishop's work is deeply compassionate and necessary reading, and now almost all of it can be found in one place. (Feb) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"Bishop was not just a good poet but a great one. She accomplished a magical illumination of the ordinary, forcing us to examine our surroundings with the freshness of a friendly alien." -David Lehman

For my money, this book beats out Bishop's "Collected Poems" (from Farrar Straus & Giroux) or any of the other separate volumes of Bishop's writing (be it letters, prose, etc.). In this volume you not only get all of her collected and uncollected poems, but there's also a very generous selection of her letters and prose. So for all but the most hardcore Bishop fans, this one volume should satisfy most of their Bishop-reading needs. Also, as with all of Library of America's books, this volume is a very handsome edition in hardcover with a very professional binding that will last much longer than any of Bishop's cheaper, soft-cover editions. In addition, I greatly prefer this edition's typography to the above-mentioned "Collected Poems."

Exactly what I needed for a lecture I am going to!

A magnificent voice.

A brilliant compilation of the prose by Bishop we love, along with some fascinating unpublished pieces and other surprises.

Enjoying

Interesting but wish there were more letters.

Seeing the film, "Reaching for the Moon" about the relationship between the American poet Elizabeth Bishop and Brazilian architect Lota De Macedo Soares rekindled my long-dormant interest in Bishop's oeuvre. It's a wonderful collection that bears re-reading often, or reading for the first time, if you happen not to know her work.

I got this book for my sister as a gift and she absolutely loves it. It is a nice compilation of Elizabeth Bishop's work put out as part of a series of great authors by the Library of America.

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