



*Sounds, Feelings,
Thoughts: Seventy
Poems by Wisława*

Szymborska

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Translated from the Polish

This book introduced the Polish poet Wisława Szymborska to the English-speaking world fifteen years before she won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1996. As part of the Lockert Library of Poetry in Translation, the volume typifies Princeton

University Press's commitment to publishing poetry in translation by introducing little-known foreign poets to the English language and to an Anglophone readership.

Szymborska was born in Brin in western Poland in 1923. Her first collection of poems was finished in 1948 but was not published until 1952. Several volumes followed as censorship dissipated toward the end of the decade. By the time *Sounds, Feelings, Thoughts* was translated by Magnus J. Krynski and Robert A. Maguire in 1981, she had become a major literary figure carrying on the rich and ancient art of Polish poetry. When bestowing the Nobel, the Swedish Academy commended Szymborska for "poetry that with ironic precision allows the historical and biological context to come to light in fragments of human reality." They also noted the difficulty of translating her poetry, because of its many stylistic variations. Szymborska remains today one of the few women poets to have received the Nobel Prize.

From "The Joy of Writing"

Is there then such a world
over which I rule sole and absolute?

A time I bind with chains of signs?
An existence perpetuated at my command?

The joy of writing.

The power of preserving.

The revenge of a mortal hand.