

MOLLY MALONE COOK Literary Agency Inc.

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SWEET BRIAR, VA. 24595

PROVINCETOWN, MASS. 02657

F A X F A X F A X

March 20, 1995

Elizabeth Coleman, President
Office of the President
Bennington College
Bennington, Vermont 05201-6001

Dear President Coleman,

I accept your invitation to join Bennington College as a member of the special faculty. I am greatly honored to learn that, in this position, I will become the recipient of the Catherine (Kit) Foster Chair, a chair endowed by Mrs. Carolyn Rowland, and I thank them.

I am especially happy to be coming to Bennington at this time--in spirit, at least, at the present hour--so that I may be a part of Bennington's present enactment of courage and risk and inquiry on behalf of a finer and more meaningful educational forum. Oh, this is the school for me!

I thank you too, President Coleman.

Sincerely,


Mary Oliver

P.O. Box U
Sweet Briar, VA 24595

cc: Mrs. Carolyn Rowland

*For Liz - the yr starting?
Kink.*

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March 21, 1995

Michael Gorra
Department of English Language and Literature
Smith College
Northampton, MA 01063

Dear Michael Gorra,

I thank you for your letter asking if I would be interested in coming to teach sometime at Smith, as a Grace Hazard Conkling Writer-in-Residence. It isn't possible, but I do appreciate your interest in me. Next fall I will be the William Blackburn Visiting Professor at Duke, and after that I am joining the faculty of Bennington College.

Sincerely,

Mary Oliver
Mary Oliver

C.V. Oliver, Mary
1 of 4

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MARY OLIVER

Poetry

- No Voyage and Other Poems. Houghton Mifflin, 1965.
The River Styx, Ohio, and Other Poems. Harcourt Brace
Jovanovich, 1972.
Twelve Moons. Little, Brown, 1979.
American Primitive. Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1983.
Dream Work. Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986.
House of Light. Beacon Press, 1990.
New and Selected Poems. Beacon Press, 1992.
White Pine. Harcourt Brace, 1994.

Chapbooks

- The Night Traveler. Bits Press, 1978.
Sleeping in the Forest. The Ohio Review, 1979.

Prose

- A Poetry Handbook. Harcourt Brace, 1994.
Blue Pastures. Harcourt Brace, 1995.

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MARY OLIVER

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AWARDS

National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, 1972-1973.
Shelley Memorial Award, 1972.
Alice Fay di Castagnola Award, 1973.
Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, 1980-1981.
American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Achievement
Award, 1983.
Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, 1984.
Christopher Award for 1991, for House of Light.
L.L. Winship Award for 1991, for House of Light.
National Book Award, 1992, for New and Selected Poems.

CURRENT POSITION

Banister Writer-in-Residence, Sweet Briar College,
Sweet Briar, Virginia 24595

FALL SEMESTER, 1995

William Blackburn Visiting Professor in Creative
Writing, Duke University.

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Additional page, Mary Oliver, c.v.

Mary Oliver doesn't have this on her c.v. but perhaps you would like the information:

She has taught at many universities and colleges for short periods of time, workshops etc., and also has been:

Mather Visiting Professor in Creative Writing, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, 1980 and 1982.

Poet-in-Residence, Case Western Reserve University, 1981.

Visiting Poet-in-Residence, Bucknell University, 1986.

Elliston Poet-in-Residence, the University of Cincinnati, 1986.

ADditionally, of course, she gives readings at universities, etc., throughout the country.

Twelve Moons

Oliver might be described as a nature poet, but she is working on a much larger loom than her contemporaries. These spare, superficially pretty lyrics spring from a grand, quasi-mystical view of creation and the seasons of life. Nothing's static in these poems. They pulse with a drama that Oliver's slippery lines persuade us is the necessary ferment of the natural order of things. Oliver is already well published; but this is a breakthrough book. Poem by poem, Twelve Moons is a progressive hammering out and refining of what could become a major vision.

Publishers Weekly

American Primitive

Far beneath the surface-flash of linguistic effect, Mary Oliver works her quiet and mysterious spell. It is a true spell, unlike any other poet's, the enchantment of the true maker.

James Dickey

Mary Oliver's poetry is fine and deep; it reads like a blessing. Her special gift is to connect us with our sources in the natural world, its beauties and terrors and mysteries and consolations. American Primitive enchants me with the purity of its lyric voice, the loving freshness of its perceptions, and the singular glow of a spiritual life brightening the pages.

Stanley Kunitz

Dream Work

Mary Oliver's poems are thoughtful; that is, they go outward from the mind to the world. In this sense all thought is compassionate. And compassion and joy are what we find in her work. Her poems are wonderingly perceptive and strongly written, but beyond that they are a spirited, expressive meditation on the impossibilities of what we call lives, and on the gratifications of change.

Hayden Carruth

New and Selected Poems

Continuing an American tradition from Whitman to James Wright, Oliver's poetry celebrates wildness, that "wild darkness, that long blue body of light" within people, and without them. Oliver's poetic discipline and precise observation, which result in free but tautly controlled verse, expand rather than contract that sense of wildness. In her poetry, and its readers, "there is still deep within... a beast snouting that the earth is exactly what it wanted."

The Boston Globe

...One would have to reach back perhaps to Clare or Smart to safely cite a parallel to Oliver's lyricism of radical purification and her unappeasable mania for signs and wonders.

Poetry

...These poems sustain us rather than divert us. Although few poets have fewer human beings in their poems than Mary Oliver, it is ironic that few poets also go so far to help us forward.

The New York Times

...in general her stance is that of a stoical joyfulness.

The New Yorker

A Poetry Handbook

...Her chapters on those basics, sound and meter, are brief but exact, and she offers an entire chapter on free verse, another on poetic diction. But it is not really the book's contents that make it such a treasure: it is rather the pithiness and perfection of Oliver's expression. She so deeply knows her craft that she can describe it with perfect simplicity and concision.

Booklist