



Poems

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Marianne Boruch's first poetry collection *View from the Gazebo* was published in 1985. It was well-received and she was commended for her precise and thought-provoking poems. With each subsequent volume of poetry, Boruch has established herself as one of the leading American poets of her generation. *Poems: New & Selected* includes twenty-four poems from her 1985 collection, twenty-six poems from her 1989 collection *Descendant*, thirty-three poems from her 1993 collection *Moss Burning*, and thirty-six poems from her 1997 collection *A Stick That Breaks and Breaks*. Boruch opens this collection with a fascinating selection of new poems. One of the most intriguing new poems included is "The History of *The*," which appropriately is the first poem in the volume. This poem is made up of twelve parts. In part four, Boruch mentions that "the linguist" says "*the*" "began grandly/ as *that*." The final part takes on the issue of memory and states "I remember only the same things/ over and over, the way a song remembers,/ coming back like that."

Always a poet who can amuse as well as challenge her readers by the titles that she has employed in her previous collections—including "Distant Knowledge That Spits and Flashes," "I Put on My Jonathan Edwards This Apple Season," "A Chair in Raw Hope," "Interior with a Violin," "Argument, with Migration," and "The Book of Hand Shadows"—Boruch has continued this tradition with some of the titles of her new poems. In addition to the intriguing "The History of *The*," the poet has come up with some marvelous titles, including "The Way the Dying Hear Things," "Bad Cello," "Bones Not of This Puny World," and "I Imagine the Mortician." The titles may invite the reader in, but it is the poems themselves where Boruch truly shines. The poems more than live up to their titles. Boruch is an extraordinary poet, and *Poems: New & Selected* can only serve as a fine introduction to how accomplished she is in her craft.

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