



The Flexible Lyric (The Life of Poetry: Poets on Their Art and Craft Ser.)

Ellen Voigt

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These nine eloquent and skillfully crafted essays by a distinguished poet examine the art of lyric poetry in all aspects of its design and structure. Through attentive readings of a variety of artists, including her contemporaries, Ellen Bryant Voigt celebrates the structure and elasticity of lyric poems. She argues for reading as a writer reads?with equal parts passion and analysis. Her analyses of the effects of tone, image, voice, and structure connect brilliant theory with tangible examples.

Intimate as well as informative, the collection begins with a discussion of the creative process and Voigt's fascination with the writing of Flannery O'Connor and Elizabeth Bishop. Readings of lyric poems by Shakespeare, Sidney, Poe, Stevens, Williams, Larkin, Bogan, Roethke, Plath, Levertov, Berryman, and others demonstrate the roles of gender, point of view, image, and music in poetry. An experienced teacher, Voigt focuses on the lyric but encourages, in any study of poetry, original thinking, attention to structure, and, above all, close reading of the work itself. An intelligent and thought-provoking marriage of art and scholarship, *The Flexible Lyric* exemplifies, with fierceness, dedication, and precision, how the making of poems is not just a trade but a calling.

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