

ROBERT LOWELL IN CONTEXT

Robert Lowell was one of the most influential American poets of the twentieth century. In the 1960s and '70s, he was an emblematic poet of his time, but a more nuanced appreciation is now necessary. This volume explores the various contexts of Lowell's life and work and evaluates his oeuvre from new perspectives. Individual chapters address his relation to the South, his religious evolution, aspects of his marriages and private life, his bipolar disorder seen through new theories of mental illness, and his work as a letter writer and as a connoisseur of art and photography. The book also introduces new parameters for a contemporary study of Lowell, commenting on current debates about race and privilege, feminism, eco-consciousness, his engagement with the natural environment, as well as his friendships with Randall Jarrell and Robert Penn Warren.

THOMAS AUSTENFELD is the author of *American Women Writers and the Nazis: Ethics and Politics in Boyle, Porter, Stafford, and Hellman* (2001). He is the editor of *Kay Boyle for the Twenty-First Century* (2008), *Critical Insights: Barbara Kingsolver* (2010), *Katherine Anne Porter's Ship of Fools: New Interpretations and Transatlantic Contexts* (2015), and *Robert Lowell in a New Century* (2019).

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ROBERT LOWELL
IN CONTEXT

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In memory of Saskia Hamilton, 1967–2023

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Abbreviations

Works frequently cited have been identified in the text and references by the following abbreviations:

- CP* Robert Lowell, *Collected Poems*, ed. Frank Bidart and David Gewanter (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).
- CPr* Robert Lowell, *Collected Prose*, ed. Robert Giroux (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1987).
- DL* Elizabeth Hardwick and Robert Lowell, *The Dolphin Letters, 1970–1979: Elizabeth Hardwick, Robert Lowell, and Their Circle*, ed. Saskia Hamilton (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019).
- L* Robert Lowell, *The Letters of Robert Lowell*, ed. Saskia Hamilton (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005).
- M* Robert Lowell, *Memoirs*, ed. Steven Gould Axelrod and Grzegorz Kość (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2022).
- WIA* Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell, *Words in Air: The Complete Correspondence between Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell*, ed. Thomas Travisano with Saskia Hamilton (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008).