



# The Complete Poems of Anna Akhmatova

By Anna Akhmatova

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Initially published in 1990, when the *New York Times Book Review* named it one of fourteen "Best Books of the Year," Judith Hemschemeyer's translation of *The Complete Poems of Anna Akhmatova* is the definitive edition, and has sold over 13,000 copies, making it one of the most successful poetry titles of recent years.

This reissued and revised printing features a new biographical essay as well as expanded notes to the poems, both by Roberta Reeder, project editor and author of *Anna Akhmatova: Poet and Prophet* (St. Martin's Press, 1994). Encyclopedic in scope, with more than 800 poems, 100 photographs, a historical chronology, index of first lines, and bibliography. *The Complete Poems* will be the definitive English language collection of Akhmatova for many years to come.

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## **The Complete Poems of Anna Akhmatova** By Anna Akhmatova Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This comprehensive English-only edition of the great Russian poet's works has been expanded to include 80 newly discovered poems. Illustrated.

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From Library Journal

These two fat volumes, a 100th-anniversary tribute to the great Russian poet Akhmatova (1889-1966), are clearly a labor of love. Editor Reeder's book-length introduction is a meticulous, well-documented account of the poet's life and poetry through the ebullience of modernist Petersburg, the grim deprivation of two world wars and the 1917 revolutions, the poverty and repression (including the repeated imprisonment of her son) of the interwar years and the vicious official attacks after World War II, and the last years of international honors. This life has made Akhmatova emblematic both of the unbowed intelligentsia and of the unsung heroism of millions of Russian women. The second volume begins with two impressionistic essays by Akhmatova's disciple, the Soviet poet Anatoly Naiman, and distinguished expatriate writer Sir Isaiah Berlin's account of his two meetings with her (Leningrad, 1945, and Oxford, 1965). The edition is lavishly illustrated with the known iconography of Akhmatova herself, her contemporaries, and the Petersburg-Leningrad settings that were her spiritual home. These rich secondary materials make a worthy frame for Akhmatova's glorious poetry, presented side by side in Russian and English and arranged, in exemplary fashion, with respect for choices the poet made in lifetime editions. American poet Hemschemeyer devoted well over ten years to the translations, learning Russian for that purpose; her equally exemplary translator's preface explains her working methods and the inevitable compromises involved in the valiant effort to create English equivalents for Akhmatova's spare and musical verse. This book will be a treasure for poetry lovers everywhere.

- Mary F. Zirin, Altadena, Cal.

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Review

\* We needn't worry again about how to read Akhmatova in translation... the translations are remarkable. Reading this enormous, impeccable book, we watch her work achieve the supreme goal of lyric poetry: to transfigure loss without belittling it, commemorate love without cooling it, and embody the truth of disparate lives in a single self. -- Andrew Motion The Observer \* Hemschemeyer's versions are the best I have ever seen. This great lilac brick of a book is a stupendous bargain. -- Michael Hoffman The Times \* This edition is an enormous achievement ... usefully annotated and well illustrated. The text is the definitive English-language edition of Akhmatova ... a ground-breaking work. -- Elizabeth Burns The Scotsman \* A fitting tribute to one of the greatest poets of the century... this is a volume to be treasured. The Good Book Guide \* This is one of the most important publications of the year, if not the decade. -- Adam Thorpe Literary Review

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