

Wisława Szymborska

Poet and essayist. A laureate of the Nobel Prize in Literature for 1996. She was born on July 2, 1923 in Bnin near Poznań - according to the birth certificate, because family messages indicate Kórnik - she was connected with Krakow all her life. She died there on February 1, 2012.



Her closest surroundings remembered her as a modest person who appreciated peace. She did not consider questions interfering with anyone's privacy, nor did she find it appropriate to talk about herself. She did not endure any ostentation or celebrations, hence the announcement of her a Nobel laureate in literature, when she had to give more interviews in a month than in her entire previous life, is a turning point in her life, which her friends call the *Stockholm tragedy*. The first-class sense of humor emanating from

Szymborska's texts accompanied her on a daily basis. It was manifested, for example, in gifting friends and acquaintances with cards with witty home-made collages or lotteries, in which the fantas were small gifts, usually deliciously kitsch.

The first volume of poetry, *Therefore we live*, was published by the poet in 1952 and in the same year became a member of the Polish Writers' Union. The poems written in the spirit of the epoch from this, or from the next collection *Questions asked to myself* (1954), the author never included in later selections or anthologies. Jerzy Illg in his book *On Nobel Prize winners, cabarets, friendships, books, women* (2009) quotes the author's response to the accusations of people reproaching her leftist connections.



Erasmus+

Zmienia życie, otwiera umysły

In the years 1953-1966, Szymborska was the head of the poetry department in *Życie Literackie*, co-edited the column *Poczta literacka* with Włodzimierz Maciąg, and wrote columns *Lektury nadobowiązkowe* (1967-1981), which she later published also in other periodicals. From 1983 she collaborated with *Tygodnik Powszechny*, and soon also with the spoken *NaGłos*. From 1988 she was a member of the Pen Club, and from 2001 - an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.



In the United States, where volumes of poetry are sold generally in 2,000 copies, the first choice after the Nobel Prize in *View with a Grain of Sand* translated by Stanisław Barańczak and Clare Cavanagh has reached a circulation of 120,000 copies. In Germany, the 60,000th edition translated by Karl Dedecius broke records, as well as in Sweden the several,000th edition translated by Anders Bodegård.

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