

AMERICAN MASTERS



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***American Masters* Honors Pulitzer-Winning Poet Mary Oliver with Documentary Premiering on PBS**

***Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World* reveals the life and career of the best-selling poet and the inspiration behind her renowned works**

NEW YORK – Mary Oliver, known for her insightful writing on nature, beauty and love, inspired many creative minds with more than 30 collections of poems and essays. Shaped by a solitary childhood, her love of nature, and a passion for writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman, Oliver solidified her place in the American poetry canon with notable poems like “Wild Geese” and “The Journey.” Follow her life and career in ***American Masters – Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World***, premiering nationwide Tuesday, August 25 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS (check local listings), pbs.org/americanmasters, the [American Masters YouTube channel](#), and the [PBS App](#).

The film made its world premiere at the 2026 True/False Film Festival and was shown at the Berkshire International Film Festival and DOC NYC Spring Selects. It is currently showing in over 50 theater markets across the country. “In an era when arts and humanities are on the back foot, ***Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World*** shows the power of literature and nature to save our souls, one grasshopper, one great love, one poem at a time,” writes Thelma Adams in [a five-star review for AARP](#).

Featuring archival footage, never-before-seen personal photos, notebook pages and original interviews, ***Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World*** explores Oliver’s early days as a writer, the people and places that inspired her poetry, and the award-winning works that

launched her to broad acclaim. New interviews from **Maria Shriver**, **John Waters**, and former US Poet Laureate **Ada Limón**, as well as poetry recitations from **Helena Bonham Carter**, **Stephen Colbert**, **Lucy Dacus**, **Steve Buscemi**, and **Oprah Winfrey** illuminate Oliver's legacy as a beloved poet.

Born in Maple Heights, Ohio on September 10, 1935, Oliver's quiet, pastoral childhood informed her interest and love for the natural world, and at the age of 14 she began writing poetry. As a young adult, she visited the home of late poet Edna St. Vincent Millay and befriended her sister Norma. For the next few years, Oliver worked at Steepletop, Millay's estate, as a secretary to Norma.

Oliver briefly studied at The Ohio State University and Vassar College before moving to Provincetown, Massachusetts, where she resided for many years with her long-term partner Molly Malone Cook as her writing career flourished. While she lived a very private life and seldom discussed her relationships, her writing reflected her own observations on humanity, love and the natural world, which resonated with readers and garnered her a dedicated following, particularly within the LGBTQ+ community. In 1984, she won the Pulitzer Prize for her poetry collection *American Primitive* and subsequently received the National Book Award for the 1992 collection *New and Selected Poems*.

After Cook's passing in 2005, Oliver moved to Florida where she resided until her death in 2019. Oliver's introspective, vivid poetry continues to inspire the next generation of poets, including Ada Limón, Major Jackson, and Gabrielle Calvocoressi. She is considered one of the bestselling poets of the United States and will forever be remembered as an icon of American poetry.

The filmmaker of ***Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World*** is Sasha Waters, whose previous work includes directing, writing and editing the ***American Masters*** documentary *Garry Winogrand: All Things are Photographable*, which won the Special Jury Prize at the 2018 South By Southwest Film Festival.

Now in its 40th season on PBS, ***American Masters*** illuminates the lives and creative journeys of our nation's most enduring artistic giants — those who have left an indelible impression on our cultural landscape — through compelling, unvarnished stories. Setting the standard for documentary film profiles, the series has earned widespread critical acclaim: 28 Emmy Awards — including 10 for Outstanding Nonfiction Series and five for Outstanding Nonfiction Special— two News & Documentary Emmys, 14 Peabodys, three Grammys, two Producers Guild Awards, an Oscar, and many other honors. To further explore the lives and works of more than 300 masters past and present, the [American Masters website](#) offers full episodes, film outtakes,

filmmaker interviews, the podcast “American Masters: Creative Spark,” educational resources, digital original series and more. The series is a production of The WNET Group.

Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World is a production of Pieshake Pictures and American Masters Pictures. Directed and produced by Sasha Waters. Michael Kantor and John Keith are Executive Producers. Edited by Meghan Sims and Sasha Waters. Original music by Clare Manchon and Olivier Manchon.

Support for ***Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World*** is provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Better Angel Society’s member The Fullerton Family Charitable Trust.

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Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World will be available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the [PBS app](#), available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. PBS station members can view many series, documentaries and specials via [PBS Passport](#). For more information about PBS Passport, visit the [PBS Passport FAQ](#) website.

American Masters’ commitment to accessible programming is a continuation of PBS’s mission to provide more resources and availability of audio-described content streaming on PBS.org. In addition to audio description (AD), ***American Masters*** programming with extended audio descriptions (EAD), large open captions, on-screen ASL interpretation (ASL), combined descriptive transcription and more can be found [here](#).

Websites:

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[The WNET Group](#) creates inspiring media content and meaningful experiences for diverse audiences nationwide. It is the community-supported home of New York's [THIRTEEN](#) – America's flagship PBS station – [WLIW](#), THIRTEEN PBS KIDS, THIRTEEN WORLD and WLIW Create; Long Island's only NPR station WLIW-FM; [ALL ARTS](#), the arts and culture media provider; newsroom [NJ Spotlight News](#); and FAST channel PBS Nature. Through these channels and streaming platforms, The WNET Group brings arts, culture, education, news, documentary, entertainment, and DIY programming to more than five million viewers each month. The WNET Group's award-winning productions include signature PBS series ***Nature***, ***Great Performances***, ***American Masters***, and ***Amanpour and Company*** and trusted local news programs like ***NJ Spotlight News with Briana Vannozzi***. Inspiring curiosity and nurturing dreams, The WNET Group's award-winning Kids' Media and Education team produces the PBS KIDS series ***Cyberchase***, interactive ***Mission US*** history games, and resources for families, teachers and caregivers. A leading nonprofit public media producer for more than 60 years, The WNET Group presents and distributes content that fosters lifelong learning, including initiatives addressing poverty, jobs, economic opportunity, social justice, understanding, and the environment. Through Passport, station members can stream new and archival programming anytime, anywhere. The WNET Group represents the best in public media. Join us.