



The Door Gunner and Other Perilous Flights of Fancy: A Michael Bishop Retrospective

Michael Bishop

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In the course of a distinguished career now entering its fifth decade, Michael Bishop has amassed a large body of fiction notable for its intellectual range, narrative sophistication, and sheer stylistic elegance. This massive new retrospective, *The Door Gunner (and Other Perilous Flights of Fancy)*, amply celebrates that career, offering one example after another of Bishop's unique - and characteristic - virtuosity.

This generous volume contains a preface by Bishop scholar Michael H. Hutchins, a shrewd and sympathetic introduction by Jack McDevitt, detailed - and highly readable - story notes, and twenty-five stories and novellas, many never before collected, all of them newly revised for this definitive collection. The contents proceed in chronological order, beginning with Bishop's first professional story sale, 'Piñon Fall,' and ending with 'The City Quiet as Death,' a recent collaboration with Steven Utley. Along the way, readers will rediscover a number of bona fide Bishop classics ('Blooded on Arachne,' the Nebula Award-winning 'The Quickening'), together with a varied assortment of equally memorable tales. These include the wonderfully titled - and mordantly funny - 'The Yukio Mishima Cultural Association of Kudzu Valley, Georgia,' 'Help Me, Rondo,' a moving account of the last days of disfigured character actor Rondo Hatton, 'The Angst, I Kid You Not, of God,' a whimsically serious reflection on violence and the sense of 'divine dread' that permeates the universe, and 'Miriam,' a beautifully concise re-imagining of the central spiritual drama of Western Civilization.

Not one of these stories fails to delight, illuminate, educate, and amuse. Together, they constitute a landmark volume that readers will return to again and again, finding something new to appreciate every time out. *The Door Gunner (and Other Perilous Flights of Fancy)* is that rarest of accomplishments: a book that matters, that speaks clearly and from the heart about significant things. It deserves - and will doubtless achieve - a place on the permanent shelf.

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