

Hailed as 'the indispensable critic' by *The New York Review of Books*, Harold Bloom has for decades been sharing with readers and students his genius and passion for understanding literature and explaining why it matters.

In *The Daemon Knows*, he turns his attention to the writers of his own national literature in a book that is one of his most incisive and profoundly personal to date. Pairing Walt Whitman with Herman Melville, Ralph Waldo Emerson with Emily Dickinson, Nathaniel Hawthorne with Henry James, Mark Twain with Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens with T. S. Eliot, and William Faulkner with Hart Crane, Bloom places these writers' works in conversation with one another, exploring their relationship to the 'daemon'—the spark of genius or Orphic muse—in their creation, and helping us understand their writing with new immediacy and relevance. It is the intensity of their preoccupation with the sublime, Bloom proposes, that distinguishes these American writers from their European predecessors.

A product of five years of writing and a lifetime of reading and scholarship, *The Daemon Knows* may be Bloom's most masterly book yet.