



William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams. His stories are about North Mississippi, the lives of the Indians who lived there, rich and poor, who were people who worked for

works, the influence of Mississippi folklore is what stresses Faulkner's nature, and the sins of the past, Faulkner wrote of his own errors. Because of his 1950 Nobel Prize for

Natchez in 1908. His mother suffered a stroke from relative to Texas and finally came to live in Natchez. Welty entered Central High School in Chicago, and finally he

In his autobiography, *Black Boy*, he told of his Mississippi childhood. And in *Native Son*, he wrote about a young black man in the slums of Chicago. His works captured the lives and feelings of black Americans and are still very popular.

"Many Ways of Seeing a Place"

Eudora Welty was born in 1909 in Jackson, her home ever since. She attended Mississippi University for Women and the University of Wisconsin. Then she did something very rare for young ladies of that day: she entered the Columbia University School of Business in New York City.

When she graduated in 1931, the Depression was in full force. She returned to Mississippi, where, as she put it, she was "among the many who found their first full-time jobs with the Works Progress Administration." As publicity agent for the WPA, she traveled all 82 counties of the state, taking pictures and talking with people.

Her love and knowledge of Mississippi grew, and she began to write novels and short stories about Mississippians and their history. In "First Love," for example, a young deaf-mute meets Aaron Burr in Natchez in 1807. "A Still Moment" tells of an encounter between the artist John J. Audubon, a minister, and a Natchez Trace outlaw in the midst of a Mississippi forest. *The Robber Bridegroom* contains tall tales of Indians, frontiersmen, and bandits along the Natchez Trace.

Welty has written about isolation and loneliness in "A Worn Path" and about the never-ending talk in small-town life in "Why I Live at the P.O."



Eudora Welty.

and *The Ponder Heart*. "Where Is the Voice Coming From?" and "The Demonstrators" concern the racial strife in Mississippi in the 1960s.

Her novels and short stories cover all sections of the state. There are stories of Mississippi river towns, like "The Wide Net," and of the truck farms in the southern Loess Hills, such as "The Whistle." *Losing Battles* takes place in the hill country of Northeast Mississippi in the 1930s; *Delta Wedding* and "The Hitch-Hikers" are set in the Delta.

She has made a conscious decision to stay and write about Mississippi. "Writers must always write best of what they know," she says, "and sometimes they do it by staying where they know it." Yet she does not feel that writing of one place—Mississippi—limits her. "There must surely be as many ways of seeing a place as there are pairs of eyes to see it."

Although the situations she describes are local, her themes of suffering and humor and triumph are not. That is why her books have been translated into other languages and read around the world. It is also why in 1973 she received the Pulitzer Prize.

Tennessee Williams

Tennessee Williams, from Columbus, Mississippi, has been called America's greatest living playwright. Many of his plays are set in small Mississippi towns; others are set in Europe or Mexico. He received a Pulitzer Prize in 1948 for *A Streetcar Named Desire* and again in 1955 for *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

Mississippi Literature and the Past

Perhaps because of the state's folklore tradition, most Mississippi writers have located their work in a definite place and time. Usually the place is Mississippi. And in most novels and short stories by Mississippi authors, history is important. The effects of the past linger on, and they affect the present and future lives of the characters.

The following paragraph ends the novel *So Red the Rose*, by Stark Young. In it, a Civil War battle is remembered. The past can be felt so intensely that it has almost replaced the present.

Agnes only glanced at the child, seeing what was in his face, and stirred by it more than she knew. At the same moment memory was stronger—she returned to her thoughts. She was at Shiloh; but now she heard nothing, only the silence; then, inside her body, she heard her heart beating. Edward was among them somewhere but the others too were hers. She stood there looking out across the darkness and the field where the dead lay, as if they were all sleeping.

Map 29,
page 294,
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