



Nodin Press

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# Duet in the Little Blue Church

*Sharon Chmielarz*

In this impressive volume poet Sharon Chmielarz had drawn from a lifetime of work—four decades and fourteen books in all—to present a representative selection of her wide-ranging poetic interests and imagination. Early poems draw their imagery from working-class family life—a focus that soon expanded to include the lives of particular women, daughter/father relationships, widowhood, and other more curious and metaphysical themes. Her poems are often related in a wry and enigmatic conversational style that bears comparison to such modern Polish masters as Szymborska and Miłosz. The European element is strong, extending from the streets of Warsaw to the impressions of Nannerl Mozart in Paris, but so is the immigrant experience of the Great Plains—the author was born and raised in South Dakota. In a central section titled “On the Prairie,” Chmielarz has chosen and combined poems from three of her books to evoke both the feel and the sometimes grueling history of those new arrivals who followed the trails west.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sharon Chmielarz was born and raised in Mobridge, South Dakota, but has spent her adult life in Minnesota. Her first two books, *Different Arrangements* and *But I Won't Go Out in a Boat* were awarded Minnesota Voices Prizes. Her book *The Other Mozart*, a biography in poetry, was made into an opera. Various works have been selected as finalists for the Midwest Book Awards, the Next Generation Indie Books Awards, and the Ben Franklin Award. Chmielarz's poems have been nominated several times for a Pushcart Prize. They have been featured on American Life in Poetry, and individual poems have been translated into French and Polish. She's the recipient of a Jane Kenyon Award from *The Water-Stone Review*. Her poems have been published in *The Notre Dame Review*, *The Iowa Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Hudson Review*, *The North American Review*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Commonweal*, *Salmagundi*, *Margie*, *Salmagundi*, *The Seneca Review*, *Louisiana Literature*, *Ontario Review*, *CutBank*, and in Nodin Press's 2015 poetry anthology.

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