



Charles Bukowski (Reaktion Books - Critical Lives)

David Stephen Calonne

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Poet, short-story writer, and novelist Charles Bukowski (1920–94) was once called by *Time* a “laureate of American lowlife.” In this new interpretation of his life and work, David Stephen Calonne examines the creation and originality of Bukowski’s writings through the lens of his colorful life, the literary traditions that influenced him, and his unique place in world literature.

Calonne describes how Bukowski, who was born in Germany and immigrated to the United States at the age of three, was influenced by German literary and intellectual traditions. He shows how the writer’s traumatic childhood—his abusive father, social withdrawal, and early introduction to alcohol—influenced the themes and content of his work. Calonne also explores several unknown pieces of fiction and poetry from the early years of Bukowski’s career, as well as his major works—including *Post Office* and the poetry volumes published by Black Sparrow Press—and biographical films such as *Barfly*. Comprehensive but concise, *Charles Bukowski* will find a wide audience in fans of this prolific, influential figure and provide a valuable introduction to his new admirers.

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