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By John Ashbery



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The companion volume to *Collected French Translations: Prose*, this book reflects John Ashbery's lifelong engagement with French poetry. From 1955 Ashbery spent almost a decade in France, working as an art critic, and formed a close relationship with the poet Pierre Martory. His versions of Martory's poems (published by Carcanet as *The Landscapist*), featured here, were a 2008 Poetry Book Society Recommended Translation. This bilingual volume presents translations from twenty-four poets, among them Charles Baudelaire, Stephane Mallarme, Max Jacob, Pierre Reverdy, Paul Eluard and France's greatest living poet, Yves Bonnefoy. It also includes a selection from Ashbery's masterly translation of Arthur Rimbaud's *Illuminations*, published to acclaim in 2011. The development of modern French poetry - through Romanticism, Symbolism, Dada and Surrealism - emerges chronologically through Ashbery's choices; as does the lasting influence of French poetry on Ashbery's own iconoclastic career.



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Editorial Review

Review

'The book invites the reader to poetic gluttony. It serves as a corrective to the monoglot provincialism by which the Anglophone world is still bedevilled.' --Sean O'Brien, Independent

About the Author

John Ashbery is the author of more than twenty books of poetry, most recently *Quick Question* (January 2013). He is the recipient of many honours, including the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and a MacArthur 'genius' award. Born in Rochester, New York, he was educated at Harvard and Columbia. In 1955 he went to France on a Fulbright Scholarship and spent much of the next decade there, including several years as art critic of the *International Herald Tribune* and Paris correspondent of *ArtNews* magazine. Ashbery's research on the life and works of Raymond Roussel (1877-1933) resulted in several groundbreaking articles, as well as the appearance in print of the first unpublished work of the writer to come to light after his death. His translations include works by Roussel, Max Jacob, Pierre Reverdy, Stephane Mallarme, Andre Breton, Paul Eluard and many others. His 2008 translation of Pierre Martory's *The Landscapist* was a Poetry Book Society Recommended Translation. The French government has appointed Ashbery as both Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres and Officier of the Legion d'Honneur.

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