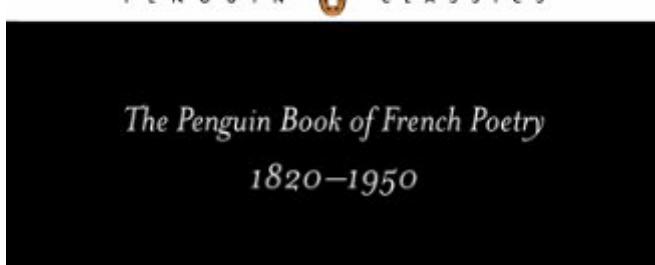


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The Penguin Book Of French Poetry: 1820-1950: With Prose Translations



Synopsis

This collection illuminates the uniquely fascinating era between 1820 and 1950 in French poetry - a time in which diverse aesthetic ideas conflicted and converged as poetic forms evolved at an astonishing pace. It includes generous selections from all the established giants - among them Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud and Breton - as well as works from a wide variety of less well-known poets such as Claudel and Cendrars, whose innovations proved vital to the progress of poetry in France. The significant literary schools of the time are also represented in sections focusing on such movements as Romanticism, Symbolism, Cubism and Surrealism. Eloquent and inspirational, this rich and exhilarating anthology reveals an era of exceptional vitality.

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Customer Reviews

The diverse French poets of the 20th and 19th centuries have more to offer to modern poets and readers of poetry than any other international grouping of poets I can think of. For years now, I've discovered many exciting variations of poetry through the writings of the more widely known French poets such as Lamartine, Hugo, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Verlaine, Laforgue, Cendrars, and Apollinaire. In this collection of some 56 poets writing between 1820 and 1950, William Rees brings

together many other influential and somewhat less widely known poets such as Corbiere, Nouveau, Jammes, Heredia, and Supervielle, together into a developmental chronology of modern poetry. This anthology is perfect for readers unfamiliar with the variety of French poets writing in this 130 year period, and who are open to new possibilities. There are brief biographical essays on each poet represented, as well as on the "movements" they are associated with, if at all. The introduction simply describes Rees's pragmatic intentions in translating often untranslatable verse into prose, and also includes a brief historical explanation of the alexandrine. I've found the anthology to be quite useful when read from beginning to end without dwelling on each poem or poet. In this manner, a reader will gain a general sense of poetry's parallel development with each passing decade or era. Another reason I like this anthology is that it allows one a taste of the bountiful personalities and styles of poetry being read and re-read all the time, and thus, integrated into contemporary poetry whether it be English, American, or African - wherever there are good students. On the whole, and intended or not, it is an instructive and insightful compendium displaying the purpose and essentiality of poetry to civilization.

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