



The Infernal Machine: & Other Plays (New Directions Paperbook)

Jean Cocteau

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Four full-length plays by one of the greatest dramatists Europe has produced.

Among the great figures who pioneered the modern movement in world literature, none showed himself more versatile than France's Jean Cocteau. Poet, novelist, critic, artist, actor, film-maker, Cocteau was also one of the greatest dramatists Europe has produced, with over a dozen plays which are frequently revived, not only in France, but in translation in many other countries. For this collection, fine translations of four full-length plays, one short play, and the "Speaker's Text" for the Cocteau-Stravinsky opera Oedipus Rex have been selected. The longer plays (The Infernal Machine, Orpheus, Bacchus, Knights of the Round Table) are re-creations of classic myth and legend—poetic and highly original interpretations of certain timeless themes which have inspired great drama through the ages. The Eiffel Tower Wedding Party is, by contrast, merely a "curtain-raiser," but remarkable as un jeu d'esprit, revealing the wit and psychological penetration for which Cocteau is famous.

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Jean Cocteau

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Kurt Rose:

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