



The Sign of the Swan

How French Symbolist Poetry Re-envisions Reality

By William Franke

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Offers a fresh interpretation of French Symbolist poetics, showing how Mallarmé, Baudelaire, and Rimbaud used visionary, transformative language to challenge modern secular perceptions of reality and reveal the enduring power of poetry

This scholarly monograph is an original philosophical reflection on poetics, elucidating the metaphysical and mystical potential of poetic language as quasi-religious revelation. It develops a theory of the symbol based on French Symbolist Poetry as culminating in Stéphane Mallarmé.

Key selling points

Offers original interpretations of several of Mallarmé's most seminal yet enigmatic poems

Makes intelligible and accessible French Symbolist Poetry as one of the great peaks of Western Intellectual Tradition

Focuses the essential aspects of this literary and cultural summit, rendering it pertinent to our own time of intellectual search and uncertainty

Lucidly reads in brief compass French Symbolist Poetry in a wider context of its historical, literary, philosophical, and cultural significance

About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

William Franke is a philosopher of the humanities and a professor of comparative literature at Vanderbilt University. He is the author of over 20 books of speculative philosophy and literary criticism.

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