



Poems Under Saturn: Poemes saturniens (Lockert Library of Poetry in Translation)

Paul Verlaine

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Poems Under Saturn is the first complete English translation of the collection that announced Paul Verlaine (1844-1896) as a poet of promise and originality, one who would come to be regarded as one of the greatest of nineteenth-century writers. This new translation, by respected contemporary poet Karl Kirchwey, faithfully renders the collection's heady mix of classical learning and earthy sensuality in poems whose rhythm and rhyme represent one of the supreme accomplishments of French verse. Restoring frequently anthologized poems to the context in which they originally appeared, *Poems Under Saturn* testifies to the blazing talents for which Verlaine is celebrated.

The poems display precocious virtuosity, mingling the attractions of the flesh with the longings of the spirit. Greek and Hindu myth give way to intimate erotic meditations and wickedly satirical society portraits, mythological landscapes alternate with gritty narratives of mid-nineteenth century Paris, visions of happiness yield to nightmarish glimpses of deep alienation, and real and imaginary characters--including Achilles, Valmiki, Charlemagne, and Spain's baleful King Philip II--all figure as the subject matter of a supremely ambitious young poet.

Poems Under Saturn presents the extraordinary devotion and intense musicality of an artist for whom poetry remained the one true passion.

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