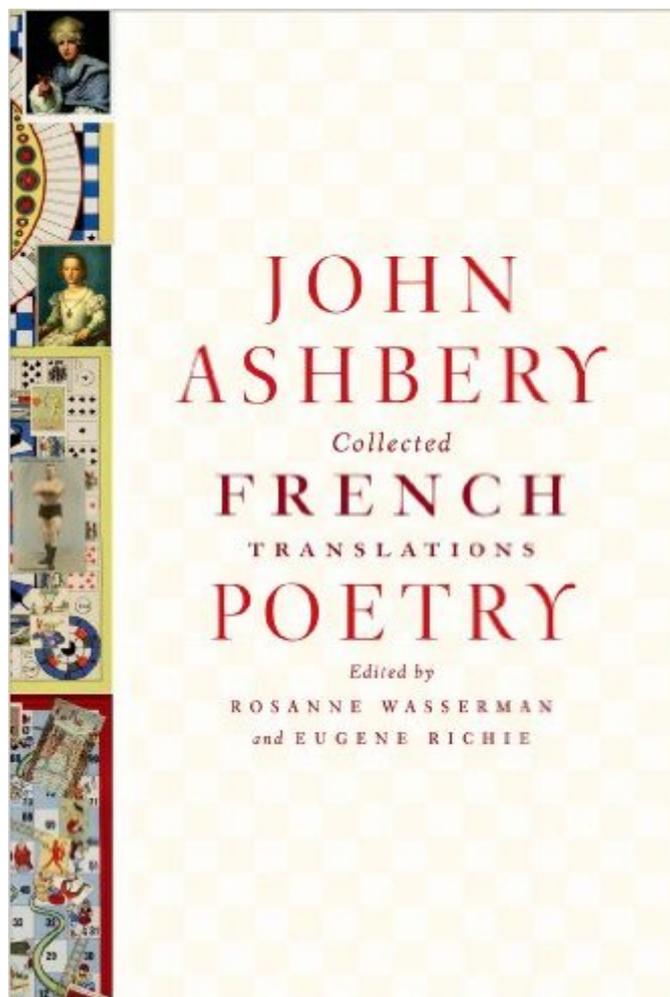


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# Collected French Translations: Poetry



## Synopsis

An essential, vibrant collection of masterful translations by one of the finest poets at work today. Collected French Translations: Poetry, half of a long-awaited two-volume collection of translations by America's foremost living poet, surveys John Ashbery's lifelong love of French poetry. Beginning in 1955, Ashbery spent nearly a decade in France, working as an art critic in Paris and forming a relationship with the poet Pierre Martory. His translations of Martory's poems, featured here, were collected in *The Landscapist*, a Poetry Book Society Recommended Translation in 2008 and a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in poetry. In this volume, Ashbery presents a wide selection of France's finest poets: Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, Arthur Rimbaud, Max Jacob, Pierre Reverdy, Paul Éluard, and its greatest living poet, Yves Bonnefoy. A rich array of 171 poems by twenty-four poets, this bilingual volume also features a selection from Ashbery's masterly translation of Rimbaud's *Illuminations*. The development of modern French poetry emerges through Ashbery's chronology, as does the depth of French influences on his iconoclastic career and the poets of the New York School. Collected together for the first time, Ashbery's translations represent decades of remarkable work from the writer hailed by Harold Bloom as a part of the "American sequence that includes Whitman, Dickinson, Stevens, and Hart Crane."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an essential volume for anyone who wants to be exposed to French poetry but lacks any fluency in French. Ashbery is uniquely qualified for this task, having lived in France for a number of years and being one of our most distinguished poets in his own right. Ashbery's poems can be very

elusive, and so can many of the poems in this volume. Fascinating work expertly and creatively re-crafted in English for those who are willing to be open minded and make some effort. First rate.

Ashbery's translations of Pierre Reverdy are peerless. Reverdy in my opinion is the greatest French poet since Baudelaire. It is a tragedy that so little of his wonderful but complex work remains untranslated. There is a 2 vol Collected Reverdy from Flammarion which I plunge into and wrestle with daily. How I envy John Ashbery's fluency! I wish I'd spent a decade in Paris as he did. BARRY TEBB

I was truly, um, at a loss to have been introduced to this compilation unprepared for its impact. Now that it has impacted I can only wait for dislodgement.

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