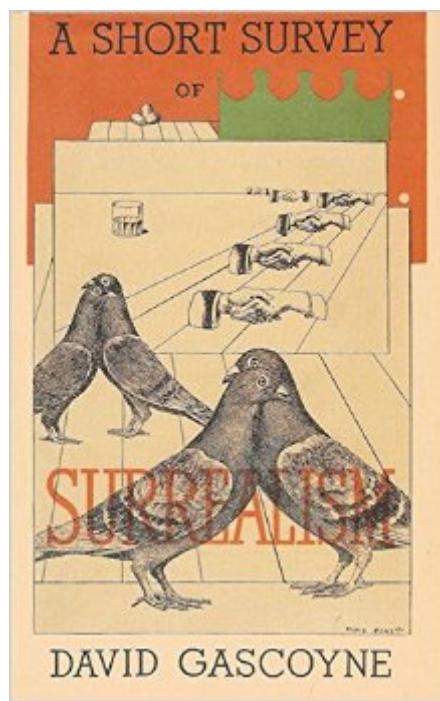


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A Short Survey Of Surrealism



Synopsis

David Gascoyne's classic text of 1935 was the first comprehensive work on Surrealism to be published in English. Gascoyne's membership of the Surrealist movement and his association with its leading members - among them André Breton, Paul Eluard, Max Ernst and Salvador Dalí - placed him in an ideal position to witness and record the development and significance of its foremost artists and writers. A Short Survey of Surrealism is not merely a history of the birth and growth of the movement but also a thorough analysis of the main ideas associated with it.

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Customer Reviews

This book, along with Desnos' "Liberty or Love" and Soupault's "The Last Nights of Paris", is probably one of the most important texts on the Surrealist movement of the 1930's from the perspective of not only a member, but a president of the club--Gascoyne would later, with his "Journals" and a handful of interviews he gave, be one of the only impartial critics of the movement as it existed during a period of legendary poetic discovery. On the other hand, for enthusiasts of David Gascoyne's work itself apart from the Surrealist influence, this may be a bit disappointing. Gascoyne was young when he wrote this and was still a little naive about the red tape he would encounter later with Breton and the gang, being a Christian-Muslim-mystic and having some strength of personality. I was actually surprised that in this text he backed up Breton's Second Manifesto, which ultimately destroyed the movement by ejecting its most valuable members. Later on he would say of Breton: "He was a Trotskyist and you didn't argue with him for long. All the

same, Breton was to Surrealism what Freud was to Psychoanalysis."The youthful naivete notwithstanding, Gascoyne's feverish passion for all things rebellious and surreal makes you feel as though you are there with him in the streets of Paris when the spirit of Rimbaud and Lautreamont were resurrected by a few men who got sick of war, drudgery, and society's determination to make everything banal.

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