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## The Cambridge Companion to Baudelaire

Charles Baudelaire's place among the great poets of the Western world is undisputed, and his influence on the development of poetry since his lifetime has been enormous. In this Companion, essays by outstanding scholars illuminate Baudelaire's writing both for the lay reader and for specialists. In addition to a survey of his life and a study of his social context, the volume includes essays on his verse and prose, analysing the extraordinary power and effectiveness of his language and style, his exploration of intoxicants like wine and opium, and his art and literary criticism. The volume also discusses the difficulties, successes and failures of translating his poetry and his continuing power to move his readers. Featuring a guide to further reading and a chronology, this Companion provides students and scholars of Baudelaire and of nineteenth-century French and European literature with a comprehensive and stimulating overview of this extraordinary poet.

ROSEMARY LLOYD is Rudy Professor of French and Professor of Gender Studies at Indiana University. She is the author of *Baudelaire's World* and *Mallarmé: The Poet and his Circle*.

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Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

*In memoriam* Claude Pichois

CONTENTS

	<i>Notes on contributors</i>	<i>page</i> ix
	<i>Preface</i>	xiii
	<i>Chronology</i>	xv
	<i>Abbreviations, references and translations</i>	xviii
I	Charles Baudelaire, a life in writing JOHN E. JACKSON	I
2	Baudelaire’s politics DOLF OEHLER	14
3	Baudelaire’s poetic journey in <i>Les Fleurs du Mal</i> BARBARA WRIGHT	31
4	Baudelaire’s versification: conservative or radical? RACHEL KILLICK	51
5	The prose poems SONYA STEPHENS	69
6	Baudelairean ethics EDWARD K. KAPLAN	87
7	Baudelaire’s Paris ROSS CHAMBERS	101
8	Baudelaire and intoxicants E. S. BURT	117

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0521537827 - The Cambridge Companion to Baudelaire  
Edited by Rosemary Lloyd  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

CONTENTS

9	Art and its representation J. A. HIDDLESTON	130
10	Music and theatre MARGARET MINER	145
11	Baudelaire’s literary criticism ROSEMARY LLOYD	164
12	Baudelaire’s place in literary and cultural history BERYL SCHLOSSMAN	175
13	A woman reading Baudelaire MARY ANN CAWS	186
14	Translating Baudelaire CLIVE SCOTT	193
15	The stroll and preparation for departure JUDITH VOLLMER	206
	Afterword CLAUDE PICHOS	213
	<i>Appendix: Titles of individual poems and prose poems referred to in the text</i>	221
	<i>Guide to further reading</i>	225
	<i>Index</i>	228
	<i>Index to Baudelaire’s works</i>	232

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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MARGARET MINER is Associate Professor of French at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She specialises in the interrelationship of music, literature and society in nineteenth-century France. In addition to her monograph, *Resonant Gaps: Between Baudelaire and Wagner* and a variety of feminist readings of Baudelaire, she has published articles on Jules Janin and Paris, and on Mallarmé, Rimbaud and music. She also has a particular interest in the fantastic and is currently working on a book devoted to music, women and the fantastic in nineteenth-century France.

DOLF OEHLER teaches in the Comparative Literature department at the University of Bonn, Germany, where he specialises in questions of European identity, the relationships between French and German literature and culture and the interplay of history and literature. He is the author of numerous articles on nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature as well as two major



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 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

studies of Baudelaire and the political context of his time: *Pariser Bilder* and *Le Spleen contre l'oubli, juin 1848: Baudelaire, Flaubert, Heine*.

CLAUDE PICHOS was known, among many other achievements, as the editor of the Pléiade edition of Baudelaire's *Œuvres complètes*, his *Correspondance*, an edition of letters written to the poet and a diplomatic edition of *Mon cœur mis à nu*. He also wrote biographies of Baudelaire, his editor, Auguste Poulet-Malassis, Nerval and Colette. Until his retirement, Claude Pichos directed the Baudelaire centre at Vanderbilt University.

CLIVE SCOTT is Professor of European Literature in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of East Anglia, and a Fellow of the British Academy. His recent publications include *The Poetics of French Verse: Studies in Reading, Translating Baudelaire* and *Channel Crossings: French and English Poetry in Dialogue 1550–2000*, for which he was awarded the R. H. Gapper Book Prize. His most recent book is *Translating Rimbaud's 'Illuminations'*.

BERYL SCHLOSSMAN is the author of several books of literary criticism – *Joyce's Catholic Comedy of Language*, *The Orient of Style: Modernist Allegories of Conversion* (a work that explores the impact of Baudelaire on Proust) and *Objects of Desire: The Madonnas of Modernism* – as well as *Angelus Novus*, a collection of poems published by *Editions Virgile*. She teaches literature, cinema and the arts in society at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh. Her poetry and short fiction are published in France as well as in the USA, and she has published some stories related to Baudelaire in the *Bulletin Baudelairien* and in *L'Exterritorialité de la littérature allemande*. She is currently working on a book about Baudelaire's poetics.

SONYA STEPHENS is Reader in French at the University of London. She has published extensively on Baudelaire's prose poems, including a study entitled *Baudelaire's Prose Poems. The Practice and Politics of Irony*. She also edited *A History of Women's Writing in France*. Her current research projects include an edited volume of essays on Baudelaire's discursive practice across the range of his works and a book investigating the *non finito* as a cultural phenomenon in nineteenth-century France, *The Art of the Unfinished*. She is editor of *XIX The Journal of the Society of Dix-Neuviémistes*.

JUDITH VOLLMER is the author of three full-length collections of poetry, including *Reactor*, *The Door Open to the Fire* and *Level Green*; and the limited edition collection *Black Butterfly*. She is the recipient of the Brittingham and Cleveland State poetry prizes, the Centre for Book Arts prize, finalist honours for the Paterson Prize and poetry fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. She has

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[More information](#)

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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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BARBARA WRIGHT is Professor of French Literature at Trinity College, Dublin, having taught previously at the Universities of Manchester and Exeter. She is a member of the Royal Irish Academy and of the Academia Europaea. She specialises in nineteenth-century French studies, with particular reference to the interconnection between literature and painting, and has published books and articles on the works of Baudelaire, Fromentin, Gustave Moreau and Edgar Quinet. Her recent publications include *Eugène Fromentin: A Life in Art and Letters* and an edition of Fromentin's *Correspondance*. She is currently preparing a new edition of Narcisse Berchère's *Le Désert de Suez: cinq mois dans l'Isthme*.

## PREFACE

Charles Baudelaire's place among the great poets not just of France, but also of the world, is undisputed. He figures prominently in canons of European and world literature, and his influence on poets worldwide has been enormous. In addition, he is considered one of the greatest art critics, a writer whose ability to convey colour, shape and texture in language, and to infuse his analysis with passionate intensity, has had a profound effect on the development of art criticism. As a translator and critic, he played a crucial role in presenting to a French audience both the American poet and short-story writer, Edgar Allan Poe, and Thomas de Quincey, the English Romantic writer, whose study of the influence of opium on the mind reveals so much about the workings of the imagination. Baudelaire's thinking about the strengths and limitations of the short story, revealed in his introductions to Poe's work, and his evocation of the powerful nature of addiction, especially to substances seen as enhancing the artistic imagination, in his adaptation of De Quincey's *Confessions*, continue to command attention. While he was not the first French writer to recognise the innovative genius of Richard Wagner, his study of *Tannhäuser* is still held to be a masterpiece both of insight and of descriptive power, the power to transform one artistic experience (music) into the modalities of another (critical writing). His literary criticism, devoted primarily to his contemporaries, is rich in insights not merely into the ambitions, restrictions and possibilities of the age, but also more particularly into his own aesthetic convictions and practice. The instigator of two poetic revolutions, as Barbara Johnson has argued, Baudelaire not only vastly extended the range of subjects and emotions available for verse-poetic treatment, increased the poetic lexicon and, especially through his manipulation of such fixed forms as the sonnet, expanded the possibilities of verse, but he also established the genre of prose poetry as we know it today, transforming it from the vehicle for the picturesque that it had become in the hands of an Aloysius Bertrand, and moulding it into the ideal expression for urban modernity. His great verse poem 'Le Cygne' is often

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## PREFACE

considered to be the work that instigated Modernism, forging the disparate bric-a-brac of apparently chaotic contemporary existence into a means of setting the individual within both a cultural past and a physical present. Indeed, his influence on international Modernism was so far-reaching that we cannot fully understand that vital movement unless we are familiar with Baudelaire. Rimbaud saw him as a god, albeit one with feet of clay; Mallarmé and T. S. Eliot recognised him for the great genius he was; and his impact on twentieth-century poetry is both well documented and inescapable. Inspired by art, he in turn inspired artists as diverse as Gauguin, Matisse, Picasso and Nolan. His poetry has been set to music by a range of composers, and continues to challenge translators as varied and gifted as Richard Wilbur, Robert Fitzgerald, Seamus Heaney, Ciaran Carson, Richard Howard and Norman Shapiro. Infamously portrayed by the contemporary critic Sainte-Beuve as occupying a kiosk on Russia's remote Kamschatka peninsula, his work has been subjected to a huge range of critical analyses including those of Walter Benjamin, T. S. Eliot, Georg Lukács, Jean-Paul Sartre, Georges Poulet, Jean-Pierre Richard, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan and many more. Baudelaire's own cultural roots go well back into the past, drawing sustenance from the great writers of antiquity, especially Ovid and Virgil, from Dante, Rabelais and Montaigne, from thinkers such as Vauvenargues and Sade, and from artists such as Rembrandt, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and above all Delacroix. Thus, while his voice is unique and instantly recognisable, his work draws together many disparate strands of thought and of aesthetics.

One of the goals of this volume has been to take full advantage of the challenging variety of Baudelaire's work. In general, it does not adopt a text-by-text response, the different chapters being organised instead around themes and techniques, those of painting or the use of the sonnet, for example. Such an approach both highlights the great variety of Baudelaire's corpus, and allows for a pertinent and flexible analysis of his modernity, the interdisciplinary nature of his work and thought and the complexity of his approach to ethical questions.

Like others in the series, the present volume includes a chronology and a bibliography, as well as a list of translations of his work.

I am deeply grateful to all my contributors, whose enthusiasm for, and commitment to, this volume have made it a truly collaborative production. I would also like to thank both Rachel de Wachter, who oversaw its early stages and Linda Bree, whose assistance over the past year has been exemplary.

Rosemary Lloyd

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1759 Birth at La Neuville-au-Pont of Joseph-François Baudelaire, father of Charles.
- 1793 Birth in London of Caroline Archenbault Defayis, poet's mother.
- 1819 Marriage of Joseph-François Baudelaire and Caroline Defayis.
- 1821 9 April: birth of Charles-Pierre Baudelaire.
- 1827 Death of Baudelaire's father.
- 1828 Caroline Baudelaire marries Lieutenant-Colonel Jacques Aupick.
- 1832 Baudelaire and his mother go to Lyon, where Aupick is stationed.
- 1836 Return to Paris. Baudelaire attends the collège Louis-le-Grand.
- 1837 Expulsion from the collège Louis-le-Grand.
- 1841 Baudelaire sets out on a sea voyage, meant to take him to Calcutta. Stops at Réunion and Mauritius, refusing to go any further. He returns to France, arriving 15 February 1842.
- 1842 Inherits 100,000 francs from his father's estate. Becomes involved with Jeanne Duval, with whom he will live, off and on, for the rest of his life.
- 1844 Baudelaire's extravagant spending leads his family to create a *conseil de famille* which appoints Narcisse Ancelle trustee of his fortune.
- 1845 Publication of his review of the Salon, and of a poem, 'To a Creole Lady' ['A une dame créole']. First translations of the works of Poe begin to appear in the French press. 30 June: Baudelaire attempts suicide by stabbing himself.
- 1846 Publication of his *Salon of 1846*.
- 1847 Publication of his short story, *La Fanfarlo*.
- 1848 February Revolution and uprisings of the July Days. Baudelaire collaborates on a newspaper, *La Salut public*, of which only two numbers appear. 15 July: publication of Baudelaire's first translation of Poe, the tale *Magnetic Revelation*.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1851 Publication of his first study of wine and hashish, which contains a prose version of verse poems on wine to appear in *Les Fleurs du Mal*. 2 December: *coup d'état* in which Louis-Napoléon declares himself emperor.
- 1852 March and April: publication in *La Revue de Paris* of Baudelaire's first study of Poe.
- 1855 June: *La Revue des deux mondes* publishes eighteen poems under the title *Les Fleurs du Mal*. June: publication of the first of Baudelaire's prose poems, 'Le Crépuscule' and 'Solitude'.
- 1856 March: publication of Baudelaire's translations of Poe called *Histoires extraordinaires*.
- 1857 January–February: trial of Flaubert's novel, *Madame Bovary*. 8 March: publication of Baudelaire's second volume of translations of Poe short stories. 27 April: Death of General Aupick. 25 June: publication of *Les Fleurs du Mal*. 7 July: *Les Fleurs du Mal* accused of being an outrage to public decency. 20 August: Baudelaire condemned to pay a fine of 300 francs and suppress six of the poems. (The sentence would be quashed in 1949.)
- 1858 13 May: publication of Baudelaire's translation of Poe's novel, *Arthur Gordon Pym*.
- 1859 First notes for *Mon Cœur mis à nu*.
- 1860 1 January: Baudelaire sells Poulet-Malassis and de Broise the second edition of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, his study of the artificial paradises and his articles of literary and art criticism. 13 January: suffers first attack of illness. May: publication of *Les Paradis artificiels*. 11 December: Baudelaire presents his candidacy for the Academy.
- 1861 February: second edition of *Les Fleurs du Mal*. 15 June – 15 August: *La Revue fantaisiste* publishes nine of the ten prose articles that make up the *Réflexions sur quelques-uns de mes contemporains*.
- 1863 13 January: Baudelaire gives Hetzel for the sum of 1,200 francs the exclusive rights to publish his *Petits Poèmes en prose* and *Les Fleurs du Mal* previously sold to Poulet-Malassis.
- 1864 24 April: Baudelaire arrives in Brussels. 2 May: lecture on Delacroix. 11 May: lecture on Gautier. 12, 23 May and 3 June: lectures on artificial stimulants. 13 June: Baudelaire reads from his works. 25 December: under the title 'Le Spleen de Paris' *La Revue de Paris* publishes six prose poems.
- 1865 16 March: publication of Baudelaire's translation of Poe, *Histoires grotesques et sérieuses* (*Tales, Grotesque And Serious*).
- 1866 Around 15 March, Baudelaire visits Namur and falls on to the ground in the church. 22–3 March: his condition worsens.

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[More information](#)

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## CHRONOLOGY

- 30 March: paralysis of the right side. 31 March: *Le Parnasse contemporain* publishes *Nouvelles Fleurs du Mal*. 2 July: Baudelaire's mother brings him back to Paris.
- 1867 31 August: death of Baudelaire. 2 September: burial in the Montparnasse cemetery.
- 1868 December: Michel Lévy begins publishing Baudelaire's complete works.

## ABBREVIATIONS, REFERENCES AND TRANSLATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this volume to refer to works by Baudelaire:

- OC *Œuvres complètes*, 2 vols. Ed. Claude Pichois (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1975–6).  
 C *Correspondance*. 2 vols. Ed. Claude Pichois and Jean Ziegler (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1973).  
 FM *Les Fleurs du Mal*. Trans. James McGowan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).  
 PP *Les Petits Poèmes en prose*. Trans. Rosemary Lloyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

References to these works will be given in the form (OC 175), (OC II 140), (C 1122), etc. References to other bibliographical items will be provided in full in a note on first mention, and in abbreviated form thereafter.

All quotations are accompanied by a translation into English. The translation usually precedes the original, but the order is from time to time reversed for the sake of clarity or precision. The translations used for *Les Fleurs du Mal* are those of James McGowan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); those for *Les Petits Poèmes en prose* those of Rosemary Lloyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). Where these have been adapted acknowledgment is made in the notes. For other works, the translations are those of the authors unless otherwise specified. Titles are in French in the text: an appendix gives the English version of each title.