



Lancelot: The Knight of the Cart (Chretien de Troyes Romances)

By Chretien de Troyes

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The romantic poems of 12th-century French poet Chretien de Troyes were of immense influence across Europe - widely imitated, translated, and adapted. Giving rise to a tradition of story-telling that continues to this day, the poems established the shape of the nascent Arthurian legend. In this translation of "Lancelot", Burton Raffel brings to English language readers the fourth of Chretien's five surviving romantic Arthurian poems. This poem was the first to introduce Lancelot as an important figure in the King Arthur legend. "Lancelot" tells of the adulterous relationship between the knight and his mistress, Guinevere, the wife of King Arthur. Thematically this poem differs from Chretien's other romances - Lancelot and Guinevere's love is a serious crime against their king, Lancelot casts aside his knightly ideals and reputation for the sake of his beloved, and Arthur is endowed with a weaker personality. Raffel has created a three-stress metric verse form that captures Chretien's narrative and old French.

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Editorial Review

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About the Author

Burton Raffel is distinguished professor of humanities at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. He has published extensively, including six books and chapbooks of poetry, three texts on the translation process, and award-winning translations of Zola, Cervantes, and Rabelais. He is currently working on the translation of Chr,tiens fifth and final romantic poem, Perceval.

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