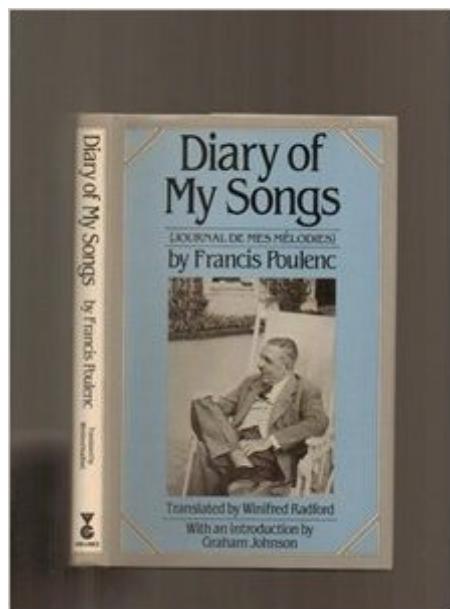


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# Diary Of My Songs: Journal De Mes Melodies



## Synopsis

A unique record of Poulenc (1899-1963) who is considered the greatest composer of melodies of his period, a period that opened with the aftermath of the First World War and closed as recently as 1960. He set to music poetry by all the greatest French twentieth century poets as well as others from earlier times. He wrote this diary of songs as an answer to what he felt were the frequent misinterpretations of his work. It describes the origins of each song, comments on performances he heard and offers guidelines for interpretation. The diary is filled out with explanatory notes, a collection of unfamiliar photographs and the English translation to the text written opposite the French original. It will appeal to singers who include French song in his or her repertoire and also to those who have an interest in music of this period. The translator, Winifred Radford is also the singer who gave the first performance in England of Poulenc's song cycle "Fiancailles pour rire" in 1945. She was coached by Poulenc and Pierre Bernac with whom she later wrote "The Interpretation of French Song" and "Francis Poulenc, The Man and his Songs". --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Poulenc is the premier composer of French art songs of his generation. His relatively small output is characterized by limpid melodic writing and subtleties of musical and literary nuance. His diary, spanning the years 1939-61, is represented here with the original French text facing the English

translation. Poulenc's prose is a fine match for his music: it is dry, urbane, occasionally witty, and reveals a considerable wealth of emotions. Along with some useful advice to performers on tempi, nuance, etc., there is an abundance of gossipy detail that will be of interest only to the most avid aficionados of Poulenc and his circle. Ultimately, readers seeking a greater knowledge of this important oeuvre will be disappointed by this slender volume. A worklist and annotated discography are included. Larry Lipkis, Music Dept., Moravian Coll., Bethlehem, Pa. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Text: English, French

It is such a shame this book is out of print, for it is certainly the most useful book on the market about Poulenc's songs! In it Poulenc comments on every song he wrote, explaining musical ideas, as well as offering a bit of general background -for example; why he wrote the song, how it came to him, how long it took him, who it was dedicated to and why, and which songs he thinks of as his best (and worst!). More well known, and also useful as a guide to Poulenc's songs is Bernac's Introduction to French Song. Although Bernac and Poulenc worked closely together as a singer - pianist duo, there is nothing as valuable as hearing a composer's own words on his music. In fact, perhaps the most valuable aspect of Bernac's Introduction to Poulenc's song is the extent to which he quotes this book. But whereas Bernac's book is written for music students and is inevitably quite an serious work, Poulenc's is a diary - and is a refreshingly personal and often amusing account of his songs. Winifred Radford's translation is sometimes dated, as her translations of the songs are occasionally flawed but generally accepted and used in programmes by performers.

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