

GUILLEVIC, EUGÈNE. *Écrits intimes: carnet, cahier, feuillets 1929–1939*. Éd. Michael Brophy. L'Atelier contemporain, 2019. ISBN 979-10-92444-86-5. Pp. 144.

These archival early diaries, which document Guillevic's progression as a person and poet, add generously to his available works. Known for his daring, precision, honesty, depth, occasional humor, continual evolution, and embrace of poetic song as an ongoing dialogue with beings and things in the here and now, he reveals here aspects of this vision and the myriad doubts that, in the years preceding his initial collections, slow his *élan* even as they prove inseparable from its eventual development. Read alongside his over two dozen Gallimard publications, not least the posthumous volumes *Relier*, *Accorder*, and *Ouvrir*, *Écrits intimes* illuminates the time and patience it took for his poetry to crystallize, as well as his affinities with fellow poets and artists. Complemented by Brophy's preface, photographic reproductions of notebook pages, and a biographical note from Lucie Albertini-Guillevic, its three parts are as follows: the *Carnet du Val-de-Grâce*, kept over a one-year period from Jan. 1929 to Jan. 1930, the *Cahier d'août 1935*, and *Lieux communs*, a dozen undated pages likely from 1935–1938. In addition to the volume's elegant presentation, hallmarks include Guillevic's yearning to better know himself, striving to hone his craft, discussion of influences, interchange with friends and acquaintances, focus on art as a reflection of the outer world's materiality, inner debate regarding poetic lyricism, occasional asides about life itself, constant self-awareness, and growing self-assurance. Also of note are the increased presence of draft poems and refined prose as the volume progresses. The three diaries cohere well and benefit from annotations. Readers attuned to this poet's greatness might take interest in the "tourment" (50) exposed in relation to his desire to excel and be distinctive, as well as the handful of poems and prose pieces that provide a window on, for example, liberating "la matière—lourde, compacte, souffrante" (76), finding comfort "[e]n vous armoires sereines dans les coins d'ombre" (91), and accepting "les dents du crime [...] après l'avoir apprivoisé dans la lumière de la beauté" (120). Those studying verse forms and differences of voice among what he calls Latin and Germanic writers might consider the commentary in the *Carnet* on Rilke, Trakl, and Claudel. Amid the highs and lows, particularly the strong work ethic needed to achieve a "romantisme dompté" (100), we see how Guillevic seeks and sometimes finds a "courant" (27, 32), an energizing current of words—and within words—that appears naturally, gracefully, reassuringly: "le premier vers est né en moi hier soir [et] j'avais le sentiment [...] que la suite viendrait" (29). We open ourselves to characteristics of Guillevic's later style, such as the potential for a seeming suspension of time even as it flows (109–17) and the spatial and spiritual wonder of a "royaume de l'homme [qui] s'étend, s'annexe de nouveaux domaines" (100). Overall, this volume foregrounds his aims, helps bookend his lifework, and highlights his exemplary "humilité" (104).