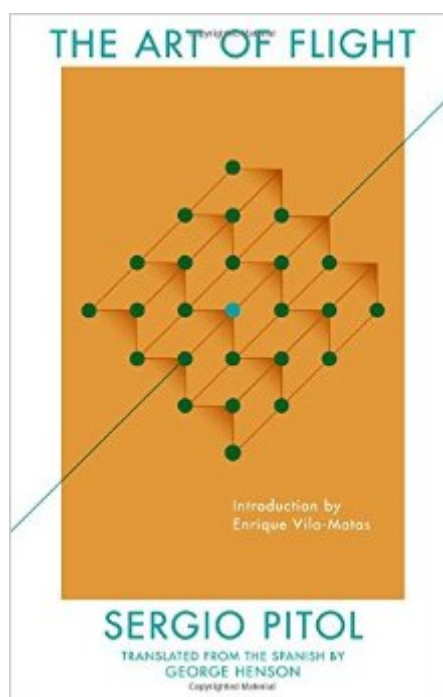


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The Art Of Flight



Synopsis

"Pitol is unfathomable; it could almost be said that he is a literature entire of himself." — Daniel Saldaña París, author of *Among Strange Victims* The debut work in English by Mexico's greatest and most influential living author and winner of the Cervantes Prize ("the Spanish language Nobel"), *The Art of Flight* takes the reader on a whirlwind tour of the world's cultural capitals as Sergio Pitol looks back on his well-traveled life as a legendary author, translator, scholar, and diplomat. The first work in Pitol's "Trilogy of Memory," *The Art of Flight* imaginatively blends the genres of fiction and memoir in a Borgesian swirl of contemplation and mystery, expanding our understanding and appreciation of what literature can be and what it can do. Sergio Pitol Demeneghi (b. 1933 in Puebla), one of Mexico's most acclaimed writers and literary translators, studied law and philosophy in Mexico City, and served for over thirty years as a cultural attaché in Mexican embassies and consulates across the globe, which is reflected in his diverse and universal writing. In recognition of the importance of his entire canon of literary work, Pitol was awarded the Juan Rulfo Prize in 1999 (now known as the FIL Literary Award in Romance Languages), and in 2005 the Cervantes Prize, the most prestigious literary prize in the Spanish language world. George Henson is currently completing a PhD in humanities (with an emphasis on literary and translation studies) at the University of Texas at Dallas. He received his BA from University of Oklahoma, and his MA from Middlebury College. His most recent published translations have included new works by Elena Poniatowska and Andrés Neuman.

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Customer Reviews

Sergio Pitol, one of Mexico's most important writers and winner of the 2005 Cervantes Prize, is now available to English-speaking audiences in this masterful translation from George Henson and Deep Vellum. The first volume of Pitol's The Art of Memory trilogy, The Art of Flight defies classification. Part memoir, part travelogue, part meditation on art and literature--Pitol takes the reader on a journey through episodes in his life as an author, diplomat, and artist. As a member of the Mexican foreign service during the Cold War, Pitol spent time on assignment in Warsaw, Vienna, and Prague. His observations of that contentious time are both wry and insightful. His literary influences are many (Faulkner, Verne, Thomas Mann), and it is this love of literature (and life) that comes through in The Art of Flight. George Henson's translation preserves Pitol's love of wordplay--as a bilingual reader, I appreciate efforts that do not domesticate or clutter a text. Henson's translation is unobtrusive and provides the English-speaking audiences with an excellent introduction to one of literature's greatest luminaries. Deep Vellum should be commended for bring Pitol to a wider and much-deserved audience. I look forward to the rest of this trilogy.

'The Art of Flight' is a wonderful book to dip into, a series of reflections and reviews by a writer whose fiction has (sadly) not made it into English thus far. While the casual reader may be put off at times by the unknown names scattered throughout the pieces, there's something here for most to enjoy, whether it's Pitol's wanders through Venice, the insights the author gives into his writing style or the analysis of some of the classics of world literature. Deep Vellum will be publishing ther other two books in this trilogy of non-fiction works, and I'm sure there'll more to enjoy in those :) For a more in-depth review, please refer to my Wordpress site Tony's Reading List.

An earlier reviewer captured the positioning of Pitol's important work available for the first time to the English speaking audience. George Henson's brilliant translation captures with linguistic precision and defensible interpretation the beginning of this important trilogy. This is a must-read for anyone developing their own perspective of contemporary Latin American literature, or for any 'student' of the world. This may well be the first time you read not only the author's narrative, but also the translator's notes.

Great translation of a fundamental book in Mexican literature

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