



## **Francis Poulenc: 'Echo and Source' : Selected Correspondence 1915-1963**

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Few composers have been such revealing letter writers as Francis Poulenc. From his early youth until his death in 1963 he maintained a lively correspondence with a wide circle of friends, writing - as he spoke - with a compelling need to confide and to share. This collection of letters to and from Poulenc brings new understanding of Poulenc's creative processes and of Poulenc the man, the quality of his friendships, his wit and humour, and the nature of the depressions to which he fell prey in his later years. 350 letters are included, most published in English for the first time; and over 100 have never appeared even in French. These contain moving interchanges between Poulenc and the baritone Pierre Bernac, letters which reveal the true extent of Poulenc's reliance on Bernac not only for advice on matters of composition but also for support and counsel during times of emotional turmoil. Other fascinating, newly-discovered items include Poulenc's early communications with Diaghilev, illustrated letters from Cocteau, Stravinsky's last postcard to Poulenc, a eulogy from Edward Sackville-West on "The Carmelites" at Covent Garden, a plea from Rostropovitch for a cello sonata, several letters to Benjamin Britten, and touching exchanges with Manuel de Falla and Paul Eluard. Supplemented by Sidney Buckland's notes, the letters provide an insight not only into Poulenc's life and work, but also into the brilliant world of music, art and literature in France in the first half of this century.

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