



# Constellations of Miro, Breton

*Paul Hammond*

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During the early days of the Second World War, the Catalán painter, Joan Miró, created a startling series of twenty-three gouaches, his *Constellations*, works redolent with the nightmare of contemporary events. In 1958 the French poet André Breton composed his own "Constellations," a set of hermetic prose poems meant to "illustrate"—that is, not simply to shed light on, but to lend luster to—Miró's paintings, and to resume a peripatetic dialogue about exile. In *Constellations of Miró, Breton* Paul Hammond unravels some of the mysteries of the call-and-response of these two surrealists by reading the pictures against the poetry, the poetry against the pictures, and both against the madness of a history that none of us has left that far behind.

Featured in this edition are reproductions of the complete series of Joan Miró's *Constellations* and a translation of André Breton's "proses parallèles." Also included is André Breton's essay, "Constellations of Joan Miró," as well as documentary illustrations and photographs.

**Paul Hammond** is the author of *Marvellous Méliès*, *French Undressing*, *Upon the Pun: Dual Meaning in Words and Pictures* (with Patrick Hughes), and a monograph on Luis Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or*. He is the editor and translator of *The Shadow and Its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema* (a new edition published by City Lights Books in Fall 2000), and the coeditor, with Ian Breakwell, of *Seeing in the Dark: A Compendium of Cinemagoing* and *Brought to Book: The Balance of Books and Life*. His translations include *Whatever* by Michel Houellebecq and *The Virgin of the Hitmen* by Fernando Vallejo.

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