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| Queneau, Raymond (1903–1976) |
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| Raymond Queneau was a French novelist, poet and essayist of very broad interests (leading to his directorship of the prestigious *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade* from 1959), but particularly associated with the formal construction of his works, a linguistic ingenuity aimed at reducing the gulf between colloquial and written language (a project which Queneau referred to as *le néo-français*), and a sense humour drawing on the absurd. Initially connected to the Surrealist group of André Breton (1896–1966), later with the Collège de 'Pataphysique founded in 1948 inspired by the absurdist works of Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), Queneau was in 1960 a founding member of OuLiPo (a contraction of ‘Ouvroir de littérature potentielle’, or ‘Workshop of potential literature’), an association of authors producing works of literature governed by strict formal constraints. Queneau’s *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* (*One hundred million million poems*, 1961), in which the verses of ten sonnets can be combined to form a huge number of poems, is characteristic of OuLiPo, but similar formal preoccupations can be seen in Queneau’s earlier works, such as his *Exercises de style* (1947), in which a single short anecdote is told in ninety-nine different ways. His most popular work, the 1959 novel *Zazie dans le métro*, was made into a film of the same name directed by Louis Malle in 1960. |
| Raymond Queneau was a French novelist, poet and essayist of very broad interests (leading to his directorship of the prestigious *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade* from 1959), but particularly associated with the formal construction of his works, a linguistic ingenuity aimed at reducing the gulf between colloquial and written language (a project which Queneau referred to as *le néo-français*), and a sense humour drawing on the absurd. Initially connected to the Surrealist group of André Breton (1896–1966), later with the Collège de 'Pataphysique founded in 1948 inspired by the absurdist works of Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), Queneau was in 1960 a founding member of OuLiPo (a contraction of ‘Ouvroir de littérature potentielle’, or ‘Workshop of potential literature’), an association of authors producing works of literature governed by strict formal constraints. Queneau’s *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* (*One hundred million million poems*, 1961), in which the verses of ten sonnets can be combined to form a huge number of poems, is characteristic of OuLiPo, but similar formal preoccupations can be seen in Queneau’s earlier works, such as his *Exercises de style* (1947), in which a single short anecdote is told in ninety-nine different ways. His most popular work, the 1959 novel *Zazie dans le métro*, was made into a film of the same name directed by Louis Malle in 1960. List of works Most of the works below are found (in French) in Queneau’s *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Claude Debon, 3 vols (Paris: Gallimard Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1989–2006). Novels *Le Chiendent (The Bark Tree),* 1933  *Les Derniers jours (The Last Days)*, 1936  *Odile*, 1937  *Les Enfants du Limon (Children of Clay)*, 1938  *Un rude hiver (A Hard Winter)*, 1948  *Pierrot mon ami*, 1942  *Loin de Rueil (The Skin of Dreams)*, 1944  *On est toujours trop bon avec les femmes (We Always Treat Women Too Well*, published under the pseudonym of Sally Mara)  *Saint-Glinglin*, 1948  *Le Journal intime de Sally Mara*, 1950  *Le Dimanche de la vie (The Sunday of Life)*, 1952  *Zazie dans le métro*, 1959  *Les Œuvres complètes de Sally Mara* (the collected works of Sally Mara, now published under Queneau’s own name), 1962  *Les Fleurs bleues* (The Blue Flowers), 1965  *Le Vol d’Icare* (The Flight of Icarus), 1968 Poetry Note: relatively few of Queneau’s volumes of poetry have been translated into English, partly owing to the difficulty of translating his punning style and non-standard use of French.  *Chêne et chien*, 1937  *Les Ziaux*, 1943  *Petite Cosmogonie portative* (1950)  *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* (1961)  *Battre la campagne* (Beating the Bushes), 1967  *Courir les rues* (Pounding the Pavements), 1967 Other works *Exercices de style* (Exercises in style), 1947  *Bâtons, chiffres et lettres* (Letters, Numbers, Forms), a collection of essays, 1950  Entretiens avec Georges Charbonnier, interviews with Georges Charbonnier, 1962 |
| Further reading:  (Shorley)  (Thiher)  (Hale)  (Bridgeman) |