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| Gascoyne, David (1916-2001) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| David Gascoyne was a British poet and novelist active in English SURREALISM and post-Surrealism. His novel *Opening Day* (1933) was one of the earliest prose surrealist works in English, and he actively translated the Parisian surrealists across the 1930s, partnering with and then replacing Samuel Beckett in this capacity. Gascoyne’s *A Short Introduction to Surrealism* (1935) is one of the pivotal introductions of Surrealism to English literature. He joined the Communist Party in 1936 and went to Spain that year during the Spanish Civil War but was disillusioned. He grew closer to Lawrence Durrell and Henry Miller in Paris, adopted much of Miller’s anarchist revision to Surrealism, and identified deeply with Durrell’s *The Black Book* (1938). His poetry from this point moved increasingly to religious and existential materials immediately prior to World War II, and with Herbert Read, he was among the first English writers to respond to Existentialism. He suffered a breakdown in 1964 and largely stopped writing. He later resumed friendships with Durrell and Robert Duncan, visiting both in the 1980s. Gascoyne’s homosexuality also left him alienated, having brief relationships while attached to female literary influences, including Antonia White, Anais Nin, and Kathleen Raine. In 1975 he married Judy Lewis, whom he met in Whitecroft Hospital. |
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| Further reading:  (Benford)  (Fraser) |