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Pataphysics: A Useless Guide

By Andrew Hugill

MIT Press Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Pataphysics: A Useless Guide, Andrew Hugill, Of all the French cultural exports over the last 150 years or so, 'pataphysics -- the science of imaginary solutions and the laws governing exceptions -- has proven to be one of the most durable. Originating in the wild imagination of French poet and playwright Alfred Jarry and his schoolmates, resisting clear definition, purposefully useless, and almost impossible to understand, 'pataphysics nevertheless lies around the roots of Absurdism, Dada, futurism, surrealism, situationism, and other key cultural developments of the twentieth century. In this account of the evolution and influence of 'pataphysics, Andrew Hugill offers an informed exposition of a rich and difficult territory, staying aloft on a tightrope stretched between the twin dangers of oversimplifying a serious subject and taking a joke too seriously. Drawing on more than twenty-five years' research, Hugill maps the 'pataphysical presence (partly conscious and acknowledged but largely unconscious and unacknowledged) in literature, theater, music, the visual arts, and the culture at large, and even detects 'pataphysical influence in the social sciences and the sciences. He offers many substantial excerpts (in English translation) from primary sources, intercalated with a thorough explication...



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