



The Singularity of Literature

Derek Attridge

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Winner of the ESSE (European Society for the Study of English) Book Award for Literature 2006

Literature and the literary have proved singularly resistant to definition. Derek Attridge argues that such resistance represents not a dead end, but a crucial starting point from which to explore anew the power and practices of Western art.

In this lively, original volume, the author:

- considers the implications of regarding the literary work as an innovative cultural event, both in its time and for later generations;
- provides a rich new vocabulary for discussions of literature, rethinking such terms as *invention*, *singularity*, *otherness*, *alterity*, *performance* and *form*;
- returns literature to the realm of ethics, and argues the ethical importance of the literary institution to a culture;
- demonstrates how a new understanding of the literary might be put to work in a 'responsible,' creative mode of reading.
- *The Singularity of Literature* is not only a major contribution to the theory of literature, but also a celebration of the extraordinary pleasure of the literary, for reader, writer, student or critic.

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