

Dan Gunn, Editor, Various Authors: The Cahiers Series.
(Sylph Editions, ea. £10.00)
Center for Writers & Translators at the American University
in Paris (aup.fr)

There are seven of these Cahiers to date, and the eighth, by Paul Muldoon, proves no less compelling. Immaculate editing, production of high quality, and an original subject matter – translation in all senses of the word – make for short books that are beautiful to look at and stimulating to read. Editor Gunn and designer Ornan Rotem have produced a series of great interest to all literate readers.

Several of the Cahiers have been outstanding. *Translating Music*, by Richard Pevear, deals with the ‘music’ of Pushkin’s ‘Tale of the Preacher and His Man Bumpkin’, and gives us both Pevear’s translation, the original Russian text and a literate account of the problems facing his wife and himself in translating Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*. Muriel Sparks’ *Walking on Air* contains several fragments, of stories and translations, that reveal Spark’s special form of intelligence; they look turned out with ease, but are rich in perception. TLS Deputy Editor and poet, Alan Jenkins, wrestles with Rimbaud’s *Bateau Ivre*. Having wrestled with it myself, I can only say that Jenkins scores high overall, and that there are very few lines in which he might be faulted. Isabella Ducrot’s *Text on Textiles* is richly suggestive about the language of weaving. To my mind, however, the find of the lot is Rachel Shihor’s *Days Bygone*. Exquisitely translated by Ornan Rotem and illustrated with verve by David Hendler, it introduces an Israeli writer, so far untranslated, of remarkable quality and languorous style, as well as telling us a lot about the ambiguities of the Hebrew language.

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The Cahiers
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