



The Journals: Volume II: 1966-1990 (Journals (Alfred A. Knopf))

John Fowles

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In 1963, John Fowles won international recognition with *The Collector*, his first published novel. In the years following—with the publication of *The Magus*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *The Ebony Tower*, and his other critically acclaimed works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry—Fowles took his place among the most innovative and important English novelists of our time. Now, with this first volume of his journals, which covers the years from 1949 to 1965, we see revealed not only the creative development of a great writer but also the deep connection between Fowles's autobiographical experience and his literary inspiration.

Commencing in Fowles's final year at Oxford, the journals in this volume chronicle the years he spent as a university lecturer in France; his experiences teaching school on the Greek island of Spetsai (which would inspire *The Magus*) and his love affair there with the married woman who would later become his first wife; and his return to England and his ongoing struggle to achieve literary success. It is an account of a life lived in total engagement with the world; although Fowles the novelist takes center stage, we see as well Fowles the nascent poet and critic, ornithologist and gardener, passionate naturalist and traveler, cinephile and collector of old books.

Soon after he fell in love with his first wife, Elizabeth, Fowles wrote in his journal, "She has asked me not to write about her in here. But I could not not write, loving her as I do. . . . What else I betrayed, I could not betray this diary." It is that determined, unsparing honesty and forthrightness that imbues these journals with all the emotional power and narrative complexity of his novels. They are a revelation of both the man and the artist.

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