

Aseroë

François Dominique

Richard Sieburth, Translator

Howard Limoli, Translator

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In François Dominique's esoteric novel *Aseroë*, a man ponders life, death, and the in between.

Mushrooms are an ancient, inexplicable life form. Their boundary-defying nature inspires François to undertake a study of the limit and power of language, of what makes reality, and of existence itself. He wanders Europe in search of answers, meeting people and viewing objects that further fuel his imagination and his drive for answers.

The world through François's eyes is a mysterious, almost magical place that's rich with symbolism. He is swept away by the process and implications of his work, forever questioning his surroundings and the new emotions stirred in him by his discoveries. Learning opportunities are everywhere, and while François doesn't chase them all, those he does pursue are irresistible—so much so that they inspire real-world research to better understand the subjects of his fascination, to see what he sees and feel what he feels.

Something as simple as light streaming through a bistro window or as complex as a fungus can send him spiraling down a new road of inquiry. The results are inconclusive, cryptic, and spellbinding. He examines important paintings and texts, exploring the ephemerality of nature through them. An encounter with a stranger sparks meditation on man's interactions with man. Sometimes, he finds that he can't turn his brain off, which distresses him until he releases his new knowledge to see what it does.

Surreal imagery further displays François's unique way of perceiving and interacting with the world. Flowing prose illuminates the beauty in unlikely or unlooked-for places, even the most repulsive of mushrooms. The story that springs from these images is a bizarre one, but full of wonder and unexpected outcomes.

Aseroë is a lyrical contemplation of how words affect reality and vice versa.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (September / October 2020)

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