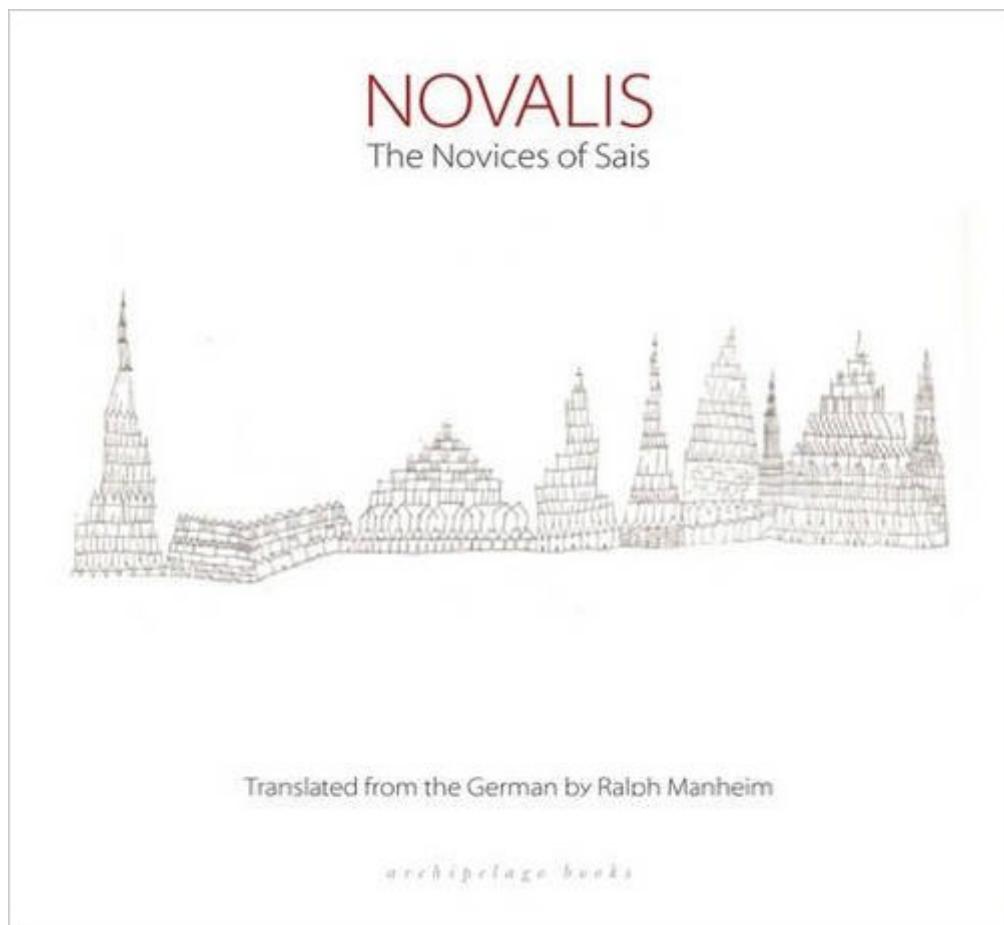


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The Novices Of Sais: With Illustrations By Paul Klee



Synopsis

The Novices of Sais is a Romantic meld of poetry, philosophy, and transcendental journey. Revolutionary yet profoundly simple at once, Novalis' reverence for the natural world pours out of every page. Translated into French in 1925, it was embraced by artists and poets alike and is often quoted by the Surrealists. Paul Klee's drawings were inspired by this visionary exploration of the inner life of modern humankind.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Novices of Sais and Heinrich von Ofterdingen are two works by Novalis that are very important to me. I was aware of "The Novices of Sais" long before it was published in translation by archipelago. I vainly searched for out of print translations. I e-mailed someone at Dedalus, asking them to publish a translation. (Dedalus does much important German lit.) So, as I've liked to claim about other German works that appear in print now in the U.S., I feel I conjured this translation. The work is poetic. It goes into the difficult, antithetical aspect of human reason, and how to deal with that problem. Both naturalism and antinaturalism are embraced. There is a passage that could very well have inspired Wagner's notion of gesamtkunstwerke. "...he heard, saw, touched and thought at once." He is fleshing out Goethe's naturalism. As God mellows with time (and disappears); nature mellows--"...then the sun will lay down her harsh scepter." Caves are important in "The Novices", as they are in "Heinrich von Ofterdingen". They are transformation places; alchemical transformations take place there. (In Hermann Broch's "The Spell"--the mine) Metals were thought to grow

underground through "telluric forces". (Alchemy is about human transformation.) Novalis' mention of the "world soul" reminds us of Fechner, who may have been influenced by Novalis as he developed a conception of the earth that is along the lines of what we now call "gaia". The last admonition is great advice for anyone, especially artists: "...

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