



## Statues: The Second Book of Foundations

By Michel Serres

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In this first English translation of one of his most important works, Michel Serres presents the statue as more than a static entity: for Serres it is the basis for knowledge, society, the subject and object, the world and experience. Serres demonstrates how sacrificial art founded and still persists in society and reflects on the centrality of death and the statuified dead body to the human condition.

Each section covers a different time period and statuary topic, ranging from four thousand years ago to 1986; from Baal, the paintings of Carpaccio, and the Eiffel Tower, to Rodin's *The Gates of Hell*, the Challenger disaster and the literature of Maupassant, La Fontaine and Jules Verne. Expository, lyrical, fictionalized and hallucinatory, *Statues* plays with time and place, history and story in order to provoke us into thinking in entirely new ways.

Through mythic and poetic meditations on various kinds of descent into the underworld and new insights into the relation of the subject and object and their foundation in death, *Statues* contains great treasures and provocations for philosophers, literary critics, art historians and sociologists.

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#### Review

“It is a great cause for celebration that *Statues* is at last available to English readers ... The book shows Serres at his audacious, restlessly inventive best, while Randolph Burks's translation catches brilliantly the tiptoe lightness of Serres's philosophical hopscotch and the gnarled gravity of his rhythms of thought.” ?*Steven Connor, Professor of English, University of Cambridge, UK*

“Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy as the creation of 'concepts that are always new'. It is difficult to justify this maxim better than Michel Serres does, not the least by the title concept of this book. Serres's 'statues' embody life and death, being and becoming, space and time, and history and present to make us rethink the world, and to make us think. This is 'a general treatise on sculpture' that, Serres tells us, 'the history of philosophy has never produced'-until this book, which brings together art, philosophy, science, and technology, as only Serres's book can. An indispensable work!” ?*Arkady Plotnitsky, Director, Theory and Cultural Studies Program, Purdue University, USA*

#### About the Author

**Michel Serres** is a Professor in the History of Science at Stanford University, USA and a member of the Académie Française. A renowned and popular philosopher, he is a prize-winning author of essays and books, such as *The Five Senses*, *Genesis*, and *Biogea*.

**Randolph Burks** is a philosopher specializing in phenomenology and philosophies of the body and nature. He has translated several works by Michel Serres, included *Biogea*, *Variations on the Body* and *The Hermaphrodite* (forthcoming).

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