

ADVANCE INFORMATION



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Fiction

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A novelist, playwright, literary critic, and theorist, CHRISTINE MONTALBETTI is also a professor of French literature at the University of Paris VIII. She has written five novels.

BETSY WING is a writer and translator whose book of short stories and novella, *Look Out for Hydrophobia*, appeared in 1991. Her recent translations include works by Assia Djebar and Paule Constant.

Western by Christine Montalbetti

A pioneering French woman turns her eye toward the most classically male American genre . . .

Setting out to tell the story of a mysterious cowboy—a stranger in town with a terrible secret—Christine Montalbetti is continually sidetracked by the details that occur to her along the way, her CinemaScope camera focusing not on the gunslinger's grim and determined eyes, but on the insects crawling in the dust by his boots. A collection of the moments usually discarded in order to tell even the simplest and most familiar story, *Western* presents us with the world behind the clichés, where the much-anticipated violence of the plot is continually, maddeningly delayed, and no moment is too insignificant not to be valued. Montalbetti's daring theft of movie technique and subversion of a genre where women are usually relegated to secondary roles—victims, prostitutes, widows, schoolmarms—makes *Western* a remarkable wake for the most basic of American mythologies.

praise for Montalbetti and *Western*:

"This novel is a true western adventure—including a duel under the sun—written a la Perec or Claude Simon."—Baptiste Liger, *Technikart*

"With flashbacks and multiple narratives, the author is a master of innumerable tricks that destabilize the narrative and turn the very possibility of its ever concluding itself into the novel's true adventure."
—Alain Nicolas, *L'Humanité*

"Montalbetti's books are innovative, compelling, and slyly enticing constructions which provide some of the finest readerly experiences that French fiction currently has to offer."—Warren Motte

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