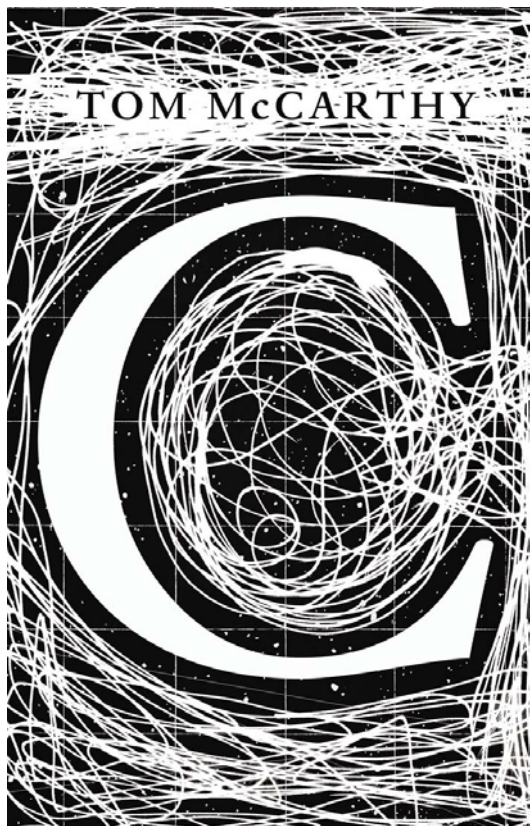




Reader's Guide



Other books by Tom McCarthy

Remainder (2005)
Men in Space (2007)
Tintin and the Secret of Literature (2006)

C Tom McCarthy

Jonathan Cape
Price £16.99

www.themanbookerprize.com



About the author

Tom McCarthy was born in 1969 and grew up in London. His creation, in 1999, of the International Necronautical Society (INS), a 'semi-fictitious organisation' that combines literature, art and philosophy, has led to publications, installations and exhibitions in galleries and museums around the world, from Tate Britain and the ICA in London to Moderna Museet in Stockholm and The Drawing Center in New York. Tom regularly writes on literature and art for publications including *The New York Times*, *The London Review of Books* and *Artforum*.

C

C follows the short, intense life of Serge Carrefax, a man who - as his name suggests - surges into the electric modernity of the early twentieth century, transfixed by the technologies that will obliterate him.

Born to the sound of one of the very earliest experimental wireless stations, Serge finds himself steeped in a weird world of transmissions, whose very air seems filled with cryptic and poetic signals of all kinds. When personal loss strikes him in his adolescence, this world takes on a darker and more morbid aspect. What follows is a stunning tour de force in which the eerily idyllic settings of pre-war Europe give way to the exhilarating flightpaths of the frontline aeroplane radio operator, then the prison camps of Germany, the drug-fuelled London of the roaring twenties and, finally, the ancient tombs of Egypt.

Discussion points

Would you describe *C* as a 'historical fantasy'?

What do you think the "C" in *C* stands for?

Repetition and duplication are recurring themes in Tom McCarthy's work, how are they evident in *C*?

Would you describe Tom McCarthy as an 'avant-garde' writer?

In a recent interview with the *New Statesman* Tom McCarthy said, 'I love the bread and butter of a plot', do you think that *C* has a strong, clearly constructed narrative?

Reviewers have suggested that you'll want to reread *C* because there is so much to 'unpack', will you be reading *C* again?

Themed reading

Thomas Pynchon *Gravity's Rainbow*

Marinetti *The Futurist Manifesto*

Freud 'From the History of an Infantile Neurosis' (*The Wolf Man*)

and *Civilisation and its Discontents*

Thomas Mann *The Magic Mountain*

Laurence Rickels *Aberrations of Mourning*

Useful links

www.themanbookerprize.com

www.randomhouse.co.uk

<http://surplusmatter.com/>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2010/jul/24/>

tom-mccarthy-futurists-novels-technology