



Stories “so extraordinary, so marvellous”...

Baudelaire and animal magnetism

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Abstract: This article examines Baudelaire’s links with the theories of animal magnetism. In spite of his contempt for the ‘chimeras’ of his time, the poet was under the spell of mesmerism from his youth. The interest shown by writers such as Balzac, Gautier and especially Poe was decisive. Initially in search of a doctrine that would allow him to interpret reality in a unitary manner, Baudelaire then used mesmerism as a metaphor for the suggestive power of art and the spell that the true artist submits to in order to subdue his audience.

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