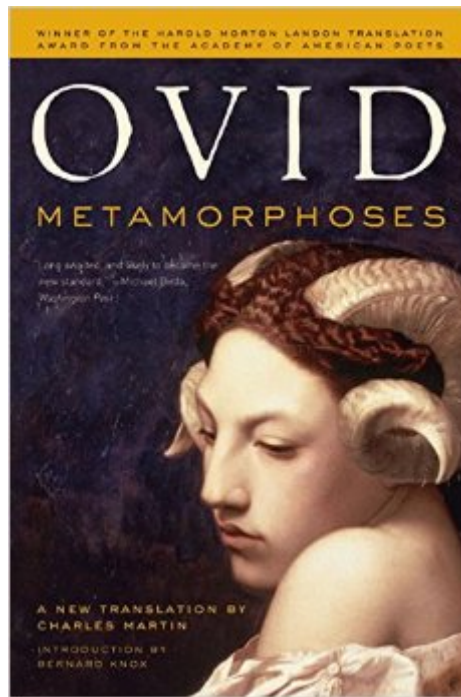


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Metamorphoses: A New Translation



Synopsis

"A version that has been long awaited, and likely to become the new standard." — Michael Dirda, *Washington Post*
Ovid's epic poem whose theme of change has resonated throughout the ages is one of the most important texts of Western imagination, an inspiration from Dante's times to the present day, when writers such as Salman Rushdie and Italo Calvino have found a living source in Ovid's work. Charles Martin combines a close fidelity to Ovid's text with verse that catches the speed and liveliness of the original. Martin's *Metamorphoses* will be the translation of choice for contemporary readers in English. This volume also includes endnotes and a glossary of people, places, and personifications.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ovid, or Publius Ovidius Naso, justly deserves his acclaim as one of the three canonical poets of Latin literature alongside Horace and Virgil. And he knows it and doesn't bother to hide it, as he appends this bit of encomium to himself at the very end: My work is finished now: no wrath of Jovenor sword nor fire nor futurity is capable of laying waste to it....wherever Roman governance extendsover the subject nations of the world,my words will be upon the people's lipsand if there is truth in poets' prophesies [sic, *Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus*, as the Romans would say]then in my fame forever I will live. So he is the worst kind of genius: a genius who knows he is a genius. Witty, elegant, and lively, his *Metamorphoses* is a masterpiece of epic poetry that tells of the myriad odd transformations that mythical (and sometimes historical) figures from Orpheus and Icarus to Romulus and Julius Caesar go through. Throughout, he is delightfully and cuttingly mocking of pretty much the entire epic tradition and every great poet that came before him, including no less

authors than Virgil and Homer themselves. In at least three elaborate scenes, he makes so much fun of epic battles and they are hilariously and eerily reminiscent of Quentin Tarantino's comical massacre scene in his Kill Bill Vol. 1. Hell, Ovid can be tragic, comic, moving, and sarcastic/satirical all at the same time without lacking in elegance. The poem, 15 books of 1,000 lines per book, so seamlessly integrates story after story of wildly differing genres and plots and lengths that it feels like you're reading a single monomyth without getting bored or overwhelmed.

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