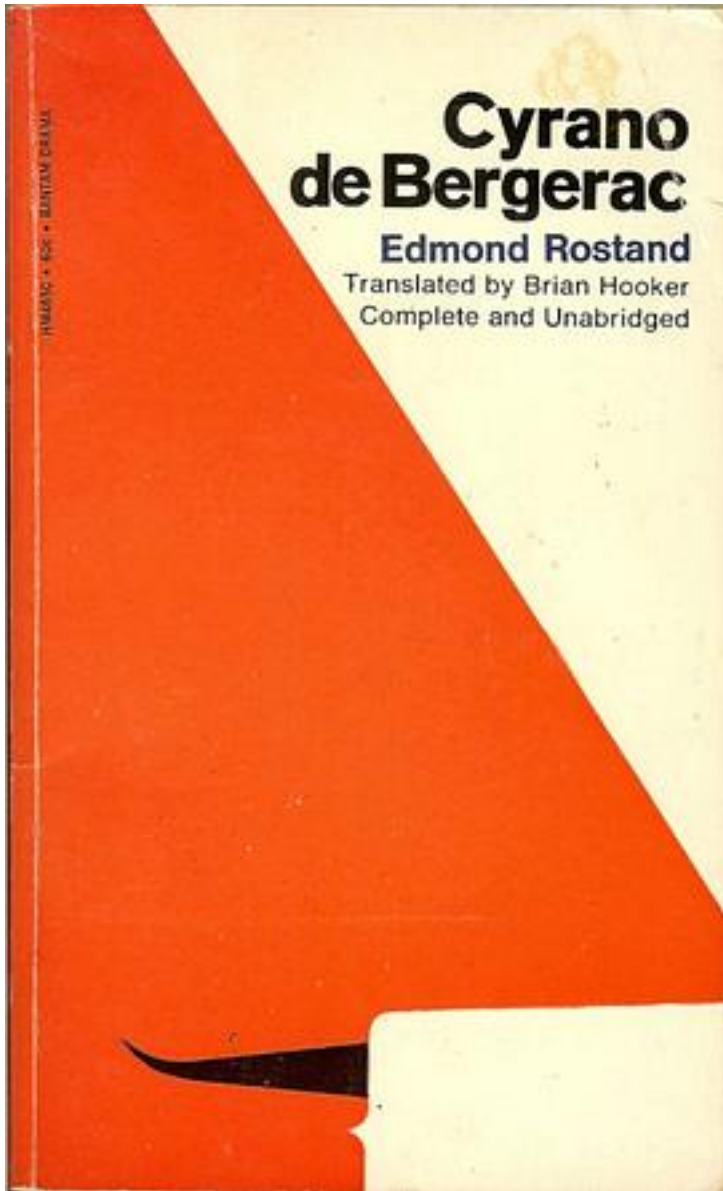


Cyrano De Bergerac



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`Tonight When I make my sweeping bow at heaven's gate, One thing I shall still possess, at any rate, Unscathed, something outlasting mortal flesh, And that is ... My panache.' The first English translation of Cyrano de Bergerac, in 1898, introduced the word panache into the English language. This single word summed up Rostand's rejection of the social realism which dominated late nineteenth-century theatre. He wrote his `heroic comedy', unfashionably, in verse, and set it in the reign of Louis XIII and the Three Musketeers. Based on the life of a little known writer, Rostand's hero has become a figure of theatrical legend: Cyrano, with the nose of a clown and the soul of a poet, is by turns comic and sad, as reckless in love as in war, and never at a loss for words. Audiences immediately took him to their hearts, and since the triumphant opening night in December 1897 - at the height of the Dreyfus Affair - the play has never lost its appeal. The text is accompanied by notes and a full introduction which sets the play in its literary and historical context. Christopher Fry's acclaimed translation into `chiming couplets' represents the homage of one verse dramatist to another. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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