

The Voice of the Heart

the working of Mervyn Peake's imagination

The works of Mervyn Peake have fascinated readers for sixty years. His *Gormenghast* sequence of novels – recently serialized to great acclaim by the BBC – stands as one of the great imaginative accomplishments of twentieth-century literature. In *The Voice of the Heart*, G. Peter Winnington sets his subject's fiction in context with the poetry, plays and book illustrations which are less well known. He traces recurrent motifs through Peake's works (islands, animals, and loneliness, for example) and explores in detail Peake's long-neglected play, *The Wit to Woo*. Through close readings of all these elements of Peake's oeuvre, Winnington is ultimately able to offer unparalleled insight into one of British literature's most vibrant imaginations.

'*The Voice of the Heart* is the first study to take in Peake's entire multi-generic work as a whole, and treats it with engagingly new and individual approaches. Peake has at last received the focused and undistracted attention he above all requires.' *Tom Shippey, Professor of Humanities at St Louis University*

G. Peter Winnington teaches modern English literature in the Department of English at the University of Lausanne. He is the world's foremost expert on Mervyn Peake, and his life of Peake, *Vast Alchemies*, was published in 2000. He is also the editor of the journal *Peake Studies*.



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of *Mr Pye* by Mervyn Peake

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