Librería

Bonilla y Asociados

desde 1950





Título:

Autor: Precio: \$232.00

Editorial: Año: 2004

Tema: Edición: 1ª

Sinopsis ISBN: 9780140445213

Taking the legends surrounding King Arthur and weaving in new psychological elements of personal desire and courtly manner, Chretien de Troyes fashioned a new form of medieval Romance. The Knight of the Cart is the first telling of the adulterous relationship between Lancelot and Arthur's Queen Guinevere, and in The Knight with the Lion Yvain neglects his bride in his quest for greater glory. Erec and Enide explores a knight's conflict between love and honour, Cliges exalts the possibility of pure love outside marriage, while the haunting The Story of the Grail chronicles the legendary quest. Rich in symbolism, these evocative tales combine closely observed detail with fantastic adventure to create a compelling world that profoundly influenced Malory, and are the basis of the Arthurian legends we know today.

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