A Note on Conventions

For the sake of consistency, all translations from the French are my own, except where clearly stated. Roussel’s poetry is quoted in French and followed by a literal translation. His prose is, for the most part, given in English only. Citations are from the recent Pauvert/Fayard edition for works up to Les Noces (i.e., volume VI of the Œuvres); references to later works are to the Jean-Jacques Pauvert edition that began appearing in 1963, except for Locus Solus, which is keyed to the 1963 Gallimard edition.

For quotations from works of Roussel that have been translated into English, source notes refer to both the page number of the French text and the page on which the passage cited appears in the English translation: for example, ‘IA, p. 240/EIA, p. 245’ indicates that the passage quoted is to be found on page 240 of the Pauvert edition of Impressions d’Afrique and page 245 of Foord and Heppenstall’s translation, Impressions of Africa.

References to material in the Fonds Roussel include the archive category number and the folio page number (f). Recto and verso of pages are indicated, when used, by r and v. A list of the archive’s contents is to be found in Appendix I. References to material in the Fonds Rondel are cited by archive category number only, since the pagination of these albums of cuttings is too erratic to be worth giving. Details of this archive’s contents are also given in Appendix I.

Titles and the names of characters are throughout left in the original. Since there seem to be no fixed rules governing capitalization within French titles, I have used what seemed to me to be the most common forms of the titles cited. English

* The exceptions are quotations from texts readily available in English translation by authors such as Jules Verne, Georges Perec and Jean Cocteau.
versions of the titles of all Roussel texts to which I refer are given in the Index.

I would like here to express my debt to previous translators of Roussel, and in particular to John Ashbery, Rupert Copeland Cunningham, Lindy Foord and Rayner Heppenstall, Kenneth Koch, Harry Mathews, Antony Melville, Ron Padgett, Martin Sorrell and Trevor Winkfield.