# The ART of FICTION

Notes on Craft for Young Writers

## John Gardner



VINTAGE BOOKS A DIVISION *of* RANDOM HOUSE, INC. NEW YORK

### Contents

Preface [ix]

#### PART I

Notes on Literary-Aesthetic Theory 1 Aesthetic Law and Artistic Mystery [3] 2 Basic Skills, Genre, and Fiction as Dream [17] 3 Interest and Truth [39] 4 Metafiction, Deconstruction, and Jazzing Around [82]

#### PART II

#### Notes on the Fictional Process

5 Common Errors [97] 6 Technique [125] 7 Plotting [165]

Exercises [195]

Index [207]