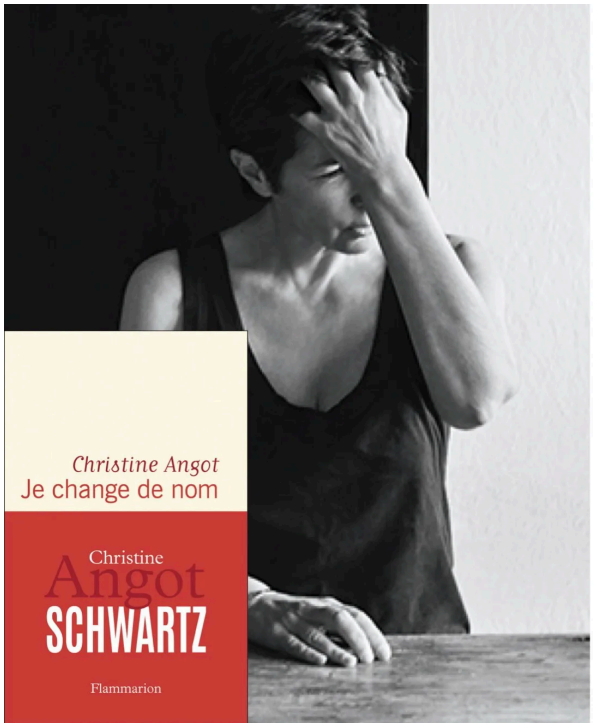
REVIEW

# Je change de nom, by Christine Angot

*by Nicolas Becard*

October 16, 2026 · On *Je change de nom*

*Christine Angot traces the genealogy of the men, and above all the women, of her family: beneath the rules for passing on a surname lie immeasurable acts of violence. A devastating book.*




There is no denying that this new book marks a turning point in Christine Angot's work and heralds some very fine texts to come. A short text, no time to waste. To set the tone, a formidable opening:

> *"You must know your enemy's name,*
> *and perhaps, to know it,*
> *you must bear it."*

Christine Angot traces the genealogy of the men, and above all the women, of her family, and one thing becomes clear. Beneath the rules for assigning and handing down a surname, immeasurable violence often, if not always, lies hidden.

On reflection, the author's family is certainly not a special case, some kind of cursed lineage; if each of us did the archaeological work of digging into our ancestors' past, we would find similar horrors and wounds.

Once the family landscape is painted, Christine retraces her own life, with the founding moment of the publication of *L'Inceste* in 1999, and takes us up to the shock of the film *Une famille*, released in 2024.

It is at this point in the story that the Angot machine starts up: analyses that make your jaw drop. She smashes polite discourse, her thinking swimming against the current of conventional wisdom, kicking aside the chatter of those who know nothing yet hold forth anyway. Right hook, left hook, uppercut. She charges ahead, throws herself into the fire once again; there is no choice.

Finally comes that famous foot in the door, iconic and symbolic, an unplanned gesture, the gesture before the thought. A gesture of exhumation that blows the lid off a tomb of silence and rejection.

A victory quickly wiped out by a deceitful legal counterattack. We fear the worst for Christine; the despondency is terrible.

Then joy bursts out; administrative letters of this kind are rare. The restitution of something stolen at thirteen. This book is devastating.

Bravo, Madame Angot. Delighted to make your acquaintance, Madame Schwartz.

S.C.H.W.A.R.T.Z

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*— Nicolas Becard*

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