

EXCERPT FROM

APOCALYPSE WOW!

A Memoir for the End of Time

“Nostradamus: The Man Who Saw Worromot!”



riting about the future without mentioning Nostradamus would be like writing about art without mentioning LeRoy Nieman.

He is the most famous, the most quoted, the most widely analyzed and apparently the most successful prophet in modern history. He foresaw, among other events, the Great London Fire of 1666, the French Revolution, the fall of the Romanovs, World War II (though not World War I), and the atomic bomb. Believers in his prophecies range from Catherine de Medicis and Elizabeth I to Orson Welles and Dudley Moore. He is, according to one commentator, the “Wayne Gretzky of the world of prophecy.”

(Many people don't know that Nostradamus also made an important mark as a cosmetician and chef. His Treatise on Makeup contained many recipes for beauty creams of all sorts, including one for a “rejuvenating pomade” made of coral, leaf gold and lapis lazuli. His specialty as a chef was a “quince jelly, of a sovereign beauty, goodness, taste and excellence proper to be presented to a king.” So, for a true picture of the greatness of the man, imagine combining parts of Sydney Omarr, LaToya Jackson and her psychic hotline, Coco Chanel, and Mrs. Smuckers, plus a little Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman.)

Nostradamus obscured his meanings in several ways—word games, anagrams, puns, symbolic language, and classical allusions among them. He also arranged his poems in random order, so finding actual dates and historical sequences is difficult. A bit of an intellectual show-off, he wrote The Centuries in a mixture of French, Italian, Provencal, Latin and Greek, but only a Homo stultissimus would swallow such jejune legerdemain a bouche ouverte, non? Whether he also wrote in Pig Latin, bebop lingo, or Ubbly Dubby depends on the ingenuity of the interpreter and the credulity of the reader. But that Nostradamus perfectly saw into the future, there can be no doubt....



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