

Elodie Lauten

Sex and pre-anti-post-modernism
from the poetry of Michael Andre
for Contrabass and spoken voice

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Not too many people know about pre-anti-post-modernism. It has been described as "anti-intellectual intellectualism." Pre-anti-post-modernist thugs would like to beat up post-modernists. "Dull!" they would scream, with each blow. "Dull!"

The late twentieth century was at times modernist, at other times post-modernist. Upon these two bodies of literature has descended a multitude, a swarm of maggots. Corruption tingles the noses of the critics, of the maggot-watchers. They idle in daydreams of deconstruction.

"Wake up!" shouts the thug. The thug is sensual and prophetic and righteous. He bops a critic of the post-modern on the head. The maggots are disturbed; they arise. The thug shouts: "The end was then! New is tomorrow!"

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e-mailed 10 July 2002

SEX AND PRE-ANTI-POST-MODERNISM By Michael Andre

Sex is to the period entre les deux guerres as suicide is to the period apres les deux guerres. One could summarize both periods by asking: are the ghosts of D. H. Lawrence and Henry Miller doing a thing with the ghosts of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton?

The work apres les deux guerres is known as post-modernism, and, in subtle counterpoint, pre-anti-post-modernism. Not too many people know about pre-anti-post-modernism. It has been described as "anti-intellectual intellectualism." Pre-anti-post-modernist thugs would like to beat up post-modernists. "Dull!" they would scream, with each blow. "Dull!"

Certain works entre les deux guerres might better be thought of as not modernist but pre-post-modernist. Such writers have eyes in the backs of their head with which they can look ahead. Prescient? You betcha; but very traditional as well. Hart Crane: he looked ahead to the war, and lived (i.e. died) as if he had glimpsed the frightening post-war knowledge that the enemy had been in fact evil. Crane might aptly be redeemed in an afterworld by Anais Nin, who was certainly not a post-modernist.

The Victorians might well be considered post-modernist. Tennyson's *In Memoriam* has that characteristic grey sadness. Byron, on the other hand, were he alive today, would get press as a popular pre-anti-post-modernist. Byron was just out of synch with his time, in this regard; as of course also were Tennyson, Crane, Nin. Indeed it is in the nature of pre-anti-post-modernism that it go, for the most part, unrecognized. That, then, is the exceptional purpose of this paper: to analyze a movement that by its very nature can best only be seen retrospectively by future historians, those to whom the label

anti-post-modernist will be as common as toupees, rice, hats, cars, etc.

The main difference between the post-modernist and the anti-post-modernist can be inferred already. The post-modernist takes a vital movement and squeezes it to death. The anti-post-modernist removes the corpse and cleans up a bit; people get mad because, in so doing, he disrupts the most popular entertainment of the day, maggot-watching.

It is not our purpose here, in this non-retrospective heyday of the maggot-watchers, to name or comment on the most prominent post-modernists. The anti-post-modernists, on the other hand, since there aren't any yet, can be properly criticized as righteous, sensual and prophetic.

They will seem righteous in their opinions, that is, they will express them with zest. Their sensuality will contravene numerous biblical injunctions, and they will doubtless, therefore, especially the atheists, know guilt. But they will seem to have lost the ability to enjoy anxiety, and will avoid it most curiously—to our eyes—by transforming it into action. This action, carrying symbolic and admonitory overtones, will be their prophecy.

I hesitate to identify any pre-anti-post-modernists, lest that identification arouse the maggot-watchers. The pre-anti-post-modernists are keeping as quiet as they can, which isn't all that quiet, given their characters, but they know it isn't yet their time. The maggot-watchers will presently fall asleep. Precisely at the periphery of your field of vision there can be detected with concentration, yes, right now, look, it's happening again—there!

PLAYFUL ROMETER

ff Sex! and pre-anti-post modernism

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mf Bra

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pizz

[make fencing moves with bow]

Bra Soft and Sweet

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