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| **Nin, Anaïs (1903-1977)** |
| Angela Anaïs Juana Antolina Rosa Edelmira Nin y Culmell |
| Anaïs Nin (1903-1977) was a provocative author and socialite known as much for her prose as for her scintillating personal life. Nin’s literary corpus includes lyrical autobiographical novellas as well as non-fictional essays; however, critics most often laud Nin’s literary contributions to the genre of women’s erotica. The author gained cult status in the late 1970s following the publication of her sexually candid diaries. Born in Paris and raised in Europe, Nin spent her adult life commuting between New York and California. The central motifs that recur in Nin’s prose attest to the author’s longstanding interest in surrealism and psychoanalytic theory. |
| **Anaïs Nin**  File: Anais Nin.jpg  Figure 1 Photographed by Brassai, 1932  Source: http://theredlist.com/wiki-2-24-525-770-1074-view-1940s-3-profile-anais-nin.html  Nin was born in the Parisian suburb of Neuilly to musical parents: her father, Joaquín Nin, was a well-known Cuban composer and pianist who encountered Nin’s mother, French-Danish singer Rosa Culmell, whilst touring Cuba. Nin spent much of her early childhood in the care of her mother’s sisters or accompanying her parents on their tours of Europe. In 1914, Joaquín Nin allegedly abandoned his family to pursue the affections of a young heiress; Rosa Culmell relocated to Barcelona before immigrating with her children to New York. The unexpected loss of her father, coupled with the family’s abrupt move to America, would haunt much of Nin’s prose. It was en route to New York that eleven-year-old Nin began journaling her experiences in the hopes of enticing her father to rejoin his family; at her mother’s request, however, Nin did not mail her diary to her father. Instead, Nin’s diaries served as a repository for her innermost thoughts, offering temporary respite from the bewildering conditions of her new life. From 1914 to 1922, Nin’s mother supported her family by renting rooms in a brownstone apartment in Manhattan.  At sixteen, Nin abandoned formal schooling to pursue a career as an artists’ model. After two years modeling, Nin enrolled in English composition and Intermediate French at Columbia University. Later that year, Nin met her first husband, Hugo Parker Guiler (1898–1985): a successful banker who would later produce experimental films under the pseudonym ‘Ian Hugo.’ Nin married Guiler in 1923 and the pair moved to Louveciennes, Paris. It was here that Nin completed her supposedly ‘unprofessional’ appraisal of D.H. Lawrence –a literary study warmly received in 1932. The Parisian lawyer who drew up the contract for the text introduced Nin to Henry Miller in 1931. The pair became lovers as well as literary confidants and, through Miller, Nin met numerous talented writers, notably Antonin Artaud and Lawrence Durrell. In need of money, Nin and Miller composed erotica for an anonymous patron; though initially intended for private consumption, Nin’s erotica was published in two collections shortly before her death: *Delta of Venus* (1977) and *Little Birds* (1979). In 1933, after nearly twenty years of estrangement, Nin had an incestuous liaison with her father - an event she would allude to in her next novel, *House of Incest* (1936).  File: Anais Nin 2.jpg  Figure 2 Photographed by Jose Alemany in Provincetown, 1941.  Source: http://anaisninblog.skybluepress.com/2013/10/mirages-the-unexpurgated-diary-of-anais-nin-released-as-ebook/  Prior to the outbreak of World War II, Nin and Guiler returned to New York where the author struggled to find a publisher for her second novel, *Winter of* *Artifice*. Nin convinced Gotham Book Mart to advance her funds to purchase a foot-powered printing press and type; within months, Nin began to print and publish her prose under the imprint Gemor Press. Between 1939 and 1945, Nin self-published two novellas, *Winter of Artifice* (1942) and *This Hunger* (1945), a second edition of *House of Incest* (1947), and her first collection of short stories, *Under a Glass Bell* (1944). The latterlanded Nin a book contract with E.P. Dutton.  Now a national bestseller, Nin was invited to attend a party hosted by an heir to the Guggenheim fortune; en route Nin encountered Rupert Pole (1919-2006) – a former actor fifteen years her junior. On 17 March 1955 Nin married Pole in Arizona before settling with him in California. For the next decade, Nin performed a ‘bicoastal trapeze’ act, rapidly flitting between New York and San Francisco in an effort to sustain the façade of two marriages. It was during this turbulent period that Nin composed what many have deemed her *magnum opus*: a five-volume novel entitled *Cities of the Interior* (1959), comprised of *Ladders to Fire* (1946), *Children of the Albatross* (1947), *The Four-Chambered Heart* (1950), *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954), and *Solar Barque* (1958) - the latter retitled *Seduction of the Minotaur* (1961). Nin then went on to publish *Collages* (1964) as well as two works of nonfiction: *The Novel of the Future* (1968), and *In Favor of the Sensitive Man and Other Essays* (1976), but the latter failed to garner much critical attention.  File: Anais Nin 3.jpg  Figure 3 Photographed by Carl Van Vechten  Source: http://theredlist.com/wiki-2-24-525-770-1074-view-1940s-3-profile-anais-nin.html  In 1966, Nin annulled her marriage to Pole in anticipation of the legal issues that would ensue if both men claimed Nin as their dependent on their federal tax returns; however, Nin and Pole continued to live together in California until the author’s death in 1977. Although Nin had long entertained the idea of converting her 35,000-page diary into a single novel, the first volume did not appear in print until 1966. The publication of Nin’s controversial tell-all coincided with the rise of American second-wave feminism; numerous feminist scholars lauded the sexual and creative freedom espoused in Nin’s diaries – praise that provoked renewed interest in her earlier work. Nin toured the lecturing circuit and recorded excerpts of her diaries:  [Sound recording of Nin reading excerpts of her diary for the ‘Spoken Arts’ label.](http://archive.org/details/pra-BB1923)    In 1973, Nin was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Philadelphia College of Art. The following year Robert Snyder’s film *Anaïs Nin Observed* (1974) further documented Nin’s achievements. The next few years also saw Nin elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters and named ‘Woman of the Year’ by the *LA Times*. On 14 January 1977, Nin died from cancer. Pole scattered Nin’s ashes in Santa Monica Bay. Following Guiler’s death in 1985, Pole released unexpurgated versions of Nin diaries, which were published in five volumes: *Henry and June* (1986), *Incest* (1992), *Fire* (1995), *Nearer the Moon* (1996), and *Mirages* (2013). These uncensored editions brought to light Nin’s incestuous relationship with her father as well as her bigamy – revelations that continue to provoke acutely polarized reactions from feminist critics.  File: Anais Nin 5.jpg  Figure 4 Photographed by Peter and Alice Gowland.  Source: http://moniquespassions.com/the-melody-of-art/anais-nin-on-music/    List of Works:  *Waste of Timelessness and Other Early Stories* (1932)  *D.H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study* (1932)  *House of Incest* (1936)  *Winter of Artifice* (1939)  *Delta of Venus: Erotica* (c.1940; 1977)  *Little Birds: Erotica* (c.1940; 1979)  *Ladders to Fire* (1939; 1942)  *Under a Glass Bell* (1944; 1948)  *Children of the Albatross* (1947)  *The Four-Chambered Heart* (1950)  *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954)  *Cities of the Interior* (1959)  *Seduction of the Minotaur* (1958; 1961)  *Collages* (1964)  *Linotte: The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1914-1920* (1978)  *The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1920-1923* (1982)  *The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1923-1927* (1983)  *The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1927-1931* (1985)  *The Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1931-1934* (1966)  *The Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1934-1939* (1967)  *The Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1939-1944* (1971)  *The Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1944-1947* (1972)  *The Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1947-1955* (1975)  *The Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1955-1966* (1976)  *The Diary of Anaïs Nin:* *1966-1974* (1980)  *The Novel of the Future* (1968)  *In Favor of the Sensitive Man and Other Essays* (1976)  *A Literate Passion: Letters of Anaïs Nin & Henry Miller: 1932-1953* (1987)  *Henry and June: “A Journal of Love” – The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin: 1931-1932* (1986)  *Incest: “A Journal of Love” – The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin: 1932-1934* (1992)  *Fire: “A Journal of Love” – The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin: 1934-1937* (1995)  *Nearer the Moon: “A Journal of Love” – The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin: 1937-1939* (1996)  *Mirages: “A Journal of Love” – The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin: 1939-1947* (2013).    Journals Devoted to Nin’s Writing:  (Anaïs: An International Journal)  (Under the Sign of Pisces: Anaïs Nin and Her Circle )  (A Café in Space)  Film Inspired by Nin’s Writing:  (Kaufman and Kaufman) |
| Further reading:  (Arenander)  (Bair)  (Booth)  (Cutting)  (Evans)  (Fitch)  (Franklin)  (Herron and Stuhnlmann)  (Hinz)  (Knapp)  (Kowaleski-Wallace)  (Kraft)  (Nalbantian)  (Raphael)  (Franklin, Recollections of Anaïs Nin by her Contemporaries)  (Spencer) |
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