

La Fanfarlo

Charles Baudelaire

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La Fanfarlo Details

Date : Published May 1st 1986 by Creative Arts Book Company (first published January 1847)

ISBN : 9780887390036

Author : Charles Baudelaire

Format : 126 pages

Genre : Fiction, Literature, Classics, Cultural, France, Novella, European Literature, French Literature

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From Reader Review *La Fanfarlo* for online ebook

Sean says

La Fanfarlo follows themes of curiosity, love beauty and cynicism. It is well-known and quite obvious that the poetic dandy of a protagonist, Samuel Cramer, is, at the very least, modeled after Baudelaire and possibly an autobiographical roman-a-clef character. The novella itself faithfully follows the prosaic footsteps of Honoré de Balzac while splicing Baudelairean ideas on aesthetics and loyalties to the virtue of beauty.

The novella begins by describing the young, complex and compelling Samuel Cramer. Monsuier Cramer was both lazy and enterprising with the moxie of fine geniuses with naive effrontery. Yet, he had the arrogance to identify with or claim the works of good writers he admired! Still, he was good-hearted, gentle, dapper, romantic, faithful turned atheist, learned, curious and, perhaps, bi-curious. Near Lyon, Cramer meets and befriends a distraught reader and wife named Mme. de Cosmelly. She bemoans her husband's affair with a dancer known as *La Fanfarlo* ("The Braggart" or "The Flaunter"). Cramer vows to act as a sort of beard and romantic usurper by luring away *La Fanfarlo* from de Cosmelly's husband despite his lack of authentic feelings for the mistress. Not surprisingly, the romantic and sensitive poet falls for the beautiful dancer who performed as columbine in a vast pantomime and bonded with Samuel Cramer through truffles, conversing and making love. But for how long can Cramer feed his appetite for beauty by seeing *La Fanfarlo*? Will the ploy behind this concubinage work and rekindle de Cosmelly's relationship? How will the spirited *La Fanfarlo* react to this union's basis on a scandalous scheme?

This is a riveting, extravagant and energetic tale of a poetic man with noble genius, idleness, meretriciousness and a quixotic reality as he faces a near-tragic end. Cramer is met with bitter poetic justice; his status becomes a mirror to his sins. It is easy to use *La Fanfarlo* as a study on Baudelaire's life with Mme de Cosmelly as analogous to his sister-in-law Félicité and *La Fanfarlo* to Jeanne Duval. It is Samuel Cramer as a sosie of Baudelaire himself, however, that provides the most intrigue for readers. Using a good dose of gentle self-parody throughout the novella, Samuel Cramer not only holds Baudelaire's flaws and vices but also demonstrates the near cursed ill-fate for the paradoxical man. The 1986 translation and introduction by Greg Boyd are excellent and accessible for reader. Occasional footnotes define terms that may be obscure or out-of-reach for English language readers. While this is not Baudelaire's finest work nor a milestone in the Romantic tradition, this novella is a gem for readers.

Fernando says

La única novela escrita por Baudelaire a sus jóvenes 25 años que involucra amor, sensualidad y romanticismo.

Frances says

I freely admit that this book was pulled off my shelf today in hopes of hitting my 2015 Goodreads goal.

It appears to be the shortest of the Melville House "Art of the Novella" books that I have. However, this

is exactly why I have loved that series, especially when the books arrived as part of a subscription. It was a random opportunity to try something new. A perfect final book of 2015.

Eric says

On “Black Friday” I hardly stirred from bed – but if I did not stamp on an old lady’s face to reach that big TV, I did manage to prop myself on the pillows and drowsily order *La Fanfarlo*, once alerted to the 50% discount Melville House was offering. The slim pamphlet-like paperback arrived this Monday morning, just as I was stepping off into the snowfall of the weekend blizzard and a 10-degree wind. I backed into the living room, ground and brewed more coffee, and sat out the day among my books.

Baudelaire the prose fictionist has a winning, Pushkin-like way of lampooning Romantic types and tropes even as he deploys them. Don’t scorn the template of your times. Note your brothers, your semblances; the humus of your conceit – “One of Samuel’s most natural failings was too deem himself the equal of those he could admire...”

La Fanfarlo is less a story than a gallery of Baudelaire’s fetishes, an "eternal situation" (Calasso) rather than a developing narrative: one of the dandies (“the indecisive, intellectual sex” said Barbey d’Aurevilly) falls in love with, or is at least prompted to comprehensive reverie by, an Amazon of muscular grace, the athletic star of burlesques and pantomimes, a strenuous epitome of the feminine – hard gymnastic thighs tied up in fishnet. I think it was Manet who noted the abnormally developed pectorals of Jeanne Duval, Baudelaire’s Haitian mulatto mistress of two decades. Baudelaire’s own drawings of her look like me in drag.

No matter the form Baudelaire is a richness of aperçus:

You celebrate the beauty of mothers in a style that might deprive you of their daughters’ approval.

...an easygoing philosophy is able to find consolations in apparently the most unworthy objects.

...the soul is more tender and open to divine hope, the more it finds reason to love others, as stained as they may be...

...that absolute materialism was not far from the purest idealism.

...that mystical language, spangled with enormous impurities and coarseness.

Samuel had the habit of saying that a glass of real wine should be like a bunch of grapes, that it provided as much to eat in it as to drink.

Maria Thomarey says

3,5

Hosho says

Fanfarlo began as a book full of promise for me: a novella, Baudelaire, "obsessive love affairs with a burlesque dancer," "amid wine" -- I figured what's not to love? And the middle of the book is fantastic...by the time we hit the midpoint, and the sublimely terrific line: "-Only poets are innocent enough to invent such monstrosities," everything seems possible! But the book sputtered and farted it's way to the end, and it's the first time in a long time that I wished a novella had more words.

Still, Melville House puts out a beautiful little edition, and I'm still glad to put the book on my shelf.

Manuel Fontana says

Un cuento largo o novela breve. Refleja los condicionantes de la época y el lugar. Se deja ver el pensamiento que el autor va a llevar a cabo en toda su obra. Si hubiese escrito esto solo, Baudelaire no sería ni por asomo Baudelaire.

Luzbeth De Lenfent says

La historia, como no podía ser de otra manera, pareciera que llevase escrito el nombre de Charles Baudelaire por todas partes. Obviamente no lo conocí personalmente, pero habiendo leído tanto de él y sobre él puedo decir que más allá que lo presentado guste o no al lector, es algo que podría ser típico de alguien como este autor lo que se narra. Y la manera en que lo narra, a mi personalmente me deleita hasta casi el éxtasis. Como buen poeta negro, pareciera que el grado de delicadeza casi mágica fuera proporcional al de decadencia y abandono. Y entre esas fuerzas, se entreteje la bellísima obra de Baudelaire.

Austin says

A fine and instructive prelude to Baudelaire's poetic work. In each of the scenes I detect the thought processes that would later re-articulate themselves in his poetry; the main character's deepening relationship with Fanfarlo prefigures the Invitation to the Voyage, for instance, and the tone of voice in each chapter wouldn't be out of place in his later prose poems. To a new Baudelaire reader, however, the Flowers of Evil and the prose poems remain the best entry point I can think of.

Kevin O'Donnell says

Odd, apparently highly biographical little story that does an admirable job of keeping the reader at a distance. There are simply too many devices, too many allusions, too many asides, however, to make things compelling.

Baudelaire is adept foremost at self-deprecation, ceaselessly mocking his fictional stand-in, the excessively romantic, "hypocritical" poet/actor Samuel Cramer who nevertheless gets plenty of time to talk and act ridiculous.

The translation is odd, too, occasionally opting, particularly with the narrator's voice, for a very loose modern tone which contrasts severely the effusive, purple nonsense of Cramer and even the straightforward seriousness of Madame de Cosmelly. The shifting diction and voices initially made it hard to understand exactly how to read what I was reading: who was serious, what was a joke, etc. By the time I felt I understood, there was no longer really any stakes to the action, and yet still, there was Cramer being silly, now with his prize, Fanfarlo.

The witty reflections on love and life are the highlight—more striking, perceptive, honest, almost sardonic throwaway lines than it is possible to list here

Illuminations: <http://www.mhpbooks.com/ baudelaire854/>

(MHP cover now omits the "La.")

Incidentally, this edition contains an appendix of references, literary and historical, but manages to skip a couple; they have asterisks but no corresponding entries.

I also admit to being minor-ly disappointed with the "HybridBook" deal, described as a "union of print and electronic media" which actually just means you can download a PDF of additional context material if you choose. I appreciate the effort as well as the bonus readings and illustrations, but it seems a bit much to describe and advertise (back cover and last page of the book) in the way it currently is. Moreover, please do away with the QR code.

°°°.°..°-°. _· ????? Ροζουλ? Εωσφ?ρος · _·°-°·.° ·.°°° ★·. ^·.·★ ?????? ?????????
???????? Ταμετο?ρο Αμ says

Η Φανφαρλ? ε?ναι μια αυτοβιογραφικ? νουβ?λα και αποτελε? το μοναδικ? πεζογρ?φημα που
?γραψε ποτ? ο Μπωντλα?ρ.

Διαδραματ?ζονται δυο παρ?λληλες μεταξ? τους ιστορ?ες. Η ιστορ?α της απατημ?νης και τρυφερ?
πληγωμ?νης κυρ?ας ντε Κοσμελ? και η ερωτικ? ιστορ?α του Σ?μουελ Κρ?μερ (Σαρλ Μπωντλα?ρ)
-ποιητ? των Αρπακτικ?ν Πτην?ν- με τη Φανφαρλ?. Μια ?μορφη, προκλητικ? και χαρισματικ?
χορε?τρια.

Σε αυτ? το πεζογρ?φημα ο Μπωντλα?ρ μιλ?ει με απλ?τητα και αμεσ?τητα για τον εαυτ? του, την
πο?ηση του, τη ζω? του. Οι προσωπικ?ς του σκ?ψεις, οι δι?λογοι, η δομ? και η εξ?λιξη της

ιστορίας αποτελούν άμεση αναφορά στον Ήδιο.

Ωστόσο οι χαρακτήρες και η ανάλυση του ψυχογραφικού των ηρώων είναι επιφανειακή και επιτεδευμένα οριακή.

Άλλο η ιστορία, παρά την ισχυρή ερωτική φαντασία του συγγραφέα, είναι πανομοιότυπη με την ιστορία των Επικύδωνων σχέσεων, αυτό το επιστολικό αριστοποίηση του Λακλ.

Οι δολοπλοκές και οι μηχανορραφίες μιας αξιολύπητης και άντιμης γυναίκας, της πονεμένης κυρίας ντε Κοσμελ, η οποία πασχίζει να ξανακερδίσει το σύζυγο της. Ήτσι, αποφασίζει να ρίξει στην αγκαλιά της ερωμένης του συζύγου της τον δικό της επόδοξο εραστή.

Αυτό η ιστορία μας παραπμπει αδιαμφισβήτητα στις σατανικές δολοπλοκές της κακήβουλης και μοχθηρές κυρίας ντε Μαρτίγ, ηρώδας των Επικύδωνων σχέσεων.

Ήσως γι αυτό δεν εντυπωσιστήκα ιδιότερα απο την πρώτη πεζογραφική δημιουργία του Μπωντλάρ.

Καλή ανήγνωση.

Πολλοές ασπασμοές.

Jonfaith says

Only poets are innocent enough to invent such monstrosities.

Perhaps I should have enjoyed this more. It appeared jerky, fissured with jump cuts and unsettling twitches. I realized early that this reminded me of Balzac , who handles this theme better. It has been a strange 10 days and this may have bled into my reading.

A misfit man of letters encounters a childhood flame and helps to fix a man doing his lady wrong. This is achieved by wooing the wrong. This won't dissuade me from my Baudelaire fascination, though I may be making more room for Brecht, Beckett and Genet in coming days.

Postscript: Sometimes sleeping after a review will forge an additional vantage. Not this time. I would like to read Sartre's book on Baudelaire.

Esteban says

Cuando escribió La Fanfarlo, Baudelaire tenía ventiseis años y creía que lo peor que podía pasarle era convertirse en un ciudadano prolijamente indecente, con una esposa bien conectada, un cargo político y responsabilidades.

Nicola Mansfield says

This was the second selection from Melville House's Novella Book Club this month. I don't generally get on well with French literature or historical books about France so even though I was game to give this short read my best effort I wasn't too impressed. Very verbose with flowery and excessive language. Paragraphs could have been written in a sentence or omitted altogether. Divided mainly into 3 parts, one on the poet, one on the poet's friend, a spurned wife, and the last on the poet and an actress, Fanfarlo, and their love affair. I really had not much of a clue what was going on until the end of the spurned wife's story where finally they get to the point and a small plot develops. Baudelaire was a poet and this is supposed to be his only work of prose, which is good as I have no inclination to read him again. But at least I feel I've broadened my horizons a bit with this read and become a tad more [sic] edjificated :-) More of a 2.5/5.

Nathaniel says

Firstly, this is a 50 page short story; this edition of the book looks more meaty because it also contains the entire text in French.

Generally, I like Baudelaire and there are moments when the prose of "La Fanfarlo" shows some of his wit and poetic sensibility. But much of the story suffers from his pretension and his need to drop unnecessary and distracting literary references all over the place. It's a young man's book; these are not surprising errors. The book is very much in dialogue with the French authors that Baudelaire wished to dethrone and it prevents his authentic and individual voice from emerging.

It's got a few interesting thoughts on jealousy, attraction and relationships.

Some good parts:

"Men caught in the snare of their own mistakes do not like to make an offering of their remorse on the altar of clemency."

". . . sitting on the edge of the bed with the insouciance, the triumphant serenity of the adored woman . . . "

"What aura of such magical charm does vice cast around certain creatures? What crooked, repulsive aspect does their virtue impart to certain others?"
