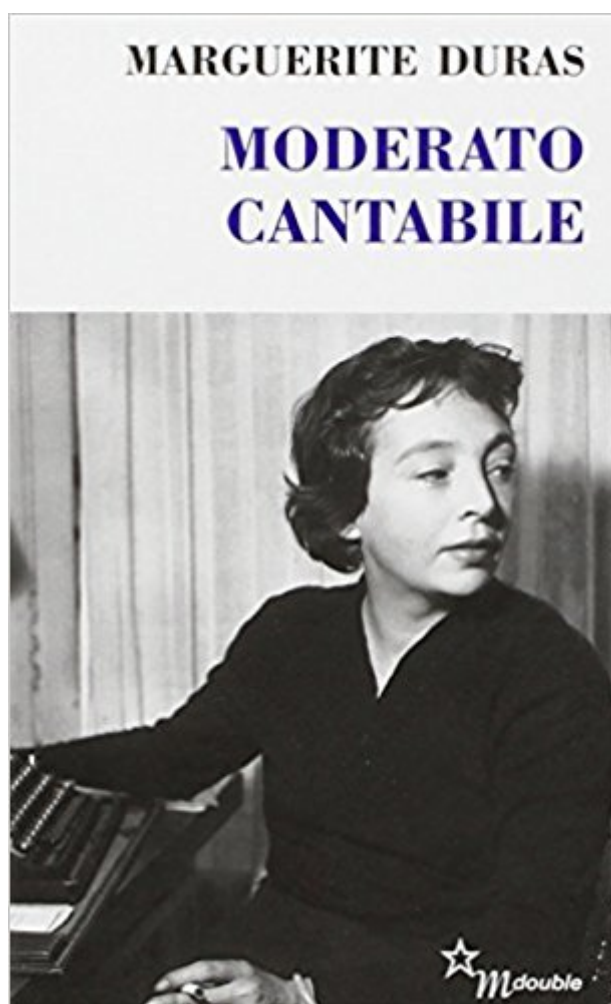


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# Moderato Cantabile (Minuit "Double") (French Edition) (Minuit "Double") (Minuit "Double") (Minuit "Double") (Minuit "Double") (Minuit "Double")





## Synopsis

« Qu'est-ce que *À* ça veut dire, *moderato cantabile* ?- Je ne sais pas. » Une leçon de piano, un enfant obstiné, une mère aimante, pas de plus simple expression de la vie tranquille d'une ville de province. Mais un cri soudain vient déchirer la trame, révélant sous la retenue de ce récit d'apparence classique une tension qui va croissant dans le silence jusqu'au paroxysme final. « Quand même, dit Anne Desbarèdes, tu pourrais t'en souvenir une fois pour toutes. *Moderato*, *À* ça veut dire modéré, et *cantabile*, *À* ça veut dire chantant, c'est facile. » Paru en 1958, ce roman de Marguerite Duras a été traduit dans le monde entier.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Romancière, dramaturge, scénariste, réalisatrice de films et journaliste, Marguerite Duras est l'auteur d'une œuvre d'une grande diversité développée selon quelques thèmes essentiels (la solitude, l'amour, la séparation, l'attente...). Son roman *Un barrage contre le Pacifique* (1950) où elle évoquait son enfance en Indochine la fit connaître du grand public ; elle fut, par la suite, assimilée au « Nouveau Roman » dont elle devint, avec *Moderato cantabile* (1958) paru aux Éditions de Minuit, l'un des auteurs les plus remarquables. C'est cependant grâce au théâtre (Le Square, 1965 ; Des journées entières dans les arbres, 1968) et au cinéma (*India Song*, 1975) que sa notoriété s'amplifia. Le succès fulgurant de *L'Amant* (prix Goncourt en 1984) fit d'elle l'un des écrivains contemporains les plus lus et les plus traduits dans le monde. L'« *vidéographique critique* » de l'œuvre cinématographique de Marguerite Duras a été

réalisée par Jérôme Beaujour et Jean Mascolo (Benoît Jacob Vidéo, 2001).

A great book with some twists and a steady pace.

Nice

The book was in very bad shape

At first, you may find yourself a tad confused when you start reading this book. I have to say the blurb does not do the book justice at all, so I started reading it with a completely different idea in mind only to be faced with a much more complex and profound read. As you go on, you will start to notice and understand the symbolism and depth and irony evident in the book, and appreciate the brilliance of its execution. I did not know this when I read the book, but when I did a bit of research afterwards, I came to the understanding that this is considered a "musical novel". Now, I had no idea what that meant, but technically - and as one reviewer had explained - it is a technique that explores the duality of human experience. Therefore, the book starts out by following the form of the first movement of a sonata. The first movement moves in a specific count or meter, which the story follows, this one being "moderato" (in control) and following the four-four meter. As such, Duras begins by introducing us to the character, Anne, whose life is very structured and proper. Almost boring. As she takes her son to piano lessons every Friday, forcing him to learn how to play the instrument even though he has no interest. She soon meets Chauvin, in the same bar that a man had publicly murdered his lover, and their bizarre liaison begins. At meeting Chauvin, Anne is slowly leaving behind her boring existence and replacing it with a more scandalous life. She goes back to see this man every day, at the same time, and same place. Ending with a final note of climax, mimicking the end of a movement. This book is heavy with symbolism and detail that one almost needs several readings for you to understand the story as a whole. I was personally very confused at first, and kept coming up with different conclusions for it, for instance as you start with the murder, and then Anne meets Chauvin, the way the book was ending I almost started to think that they are the couple that were involved in the crime at the beginning of the book and Chauvin was going to publicly murder Anne. You start to learn more about the characters through their strange, and at times inappropriate, conversations. You begin to notice little details, such as when the sirens go off and the men begin to file into the bar and why Anne gets fidgety, or why she has to go home at a certain hour. The finale is so intense, that you end up reading every line twice just to make sure

you're not missing anything. I absolutely loved the final lines of the novel, and Anne's decision at the end. Definitely worth a read. Brilliant in every way, albeit a bit confusing.

This novelette (~58 pages) is one of the most technically perfect pieces of fiction I have ever encountered. The "plot" is fairly conventional (but in many ways is inconsequential to the textual developments). The amount of detail hidden away in the narrative structure is incredible and the construction and crafting are about as perfect as could be desired. The story is interesting on so many levels that repetitive readings continue to illuminate and expand understanding. Consider how Duras plays with objectivity in the first central theme of the novel. After the first reading you'll conclude that a man murdered a woman in a cafe--presumably by shooting her through the heart upon her own request. And yet a closer reading reveals the problems with this assumption: a scream is heard, but no gunshot; blood comes from the victim's mouth, but not her heart; nobody (notably including the primary characters) actually witnessed anything; the man's behavior is unindicative of definitive guilt--perhaps he's simply distraught; the woman was the man's wife (we are told as one of the only "omniscient" acts of the unknown narrator)--but later an acquaintance notes that the woman "was married". In short, even the objective "murder" presented is anything but objective. Instead of reading a story you will end up inventing a plausible reality--just as Anne and Chauvin (the primary characters) invent a plausible reality to explain their unsatisfied (and unsatisfiable) desire. Ever wonder why Anne ignores the closest end-of-work-day siren but pays attention to the farthest-away end-of-work-day siren? Remember that her husband manages a factory. Remember that her husband's factory is the furthest away from the cafe, on the opposite side of town of her house. Remember that she has to beat her husband home from work. Details like this abound, but of course are left to a careful reader to pick them out and assemble them into a larger understanding. Such a beautiful novelette--so well crafted, so enjoyable to read and re-read. Thoroughly recommended. Fiction as it was meant to be.

Considered a "musical novel" and better than Virginia Woolf's "The Waves" (though "The Waves" is quite incredible in its own right and should not be overlooked). If you are not familiar with the genius of a musical novel the idea is incredible. It brings upon an interesting form for exploring the duality of human experience. "Moderato Cantabile", follows the form of the first movement of a sonata, presenting and developing in two contrasting themes in different keys. "Moderato" the word itself indicating a measure of control taken with the time signature of a sonata being a square four-four outlines the meter the book follows. Anne's (the main character) life in the first theme starts out

structured and boring. In the second chapter she begins her strange affair with Chauvin. Chauvin, or the the second theme is Ann's quest for the "cantabile" (the lyrical impulse, or exit from the first theme of boredom). They meet again and again, at the same bar and always at the same time of day, until the eighth chapter. Then, just as the eighth note of a musical scale is the same as the first (but an octave higher) the final resolution comes in the form of a symbolic reenactment of the murder that occurs at the end of the first chapter: Chauvin: "I wish you were dead." Anne: "I already am." --And Anne returns permanently to her boring life. Brilliantly written and a must have in any book collection.

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