



# The Murder Notebook

*Jonathan Santlofer*

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## **The Murder Notebook** Jonathan Santlofer

“Santlofer’s fluid, almost poetic, writing, coupled with his extraordinary artwork, places him at the forefront of cutting-edge crime fiction.”

—*Chicago Tribune*

Jonathan Santlofer has brilliantly reinvented the crime novel, and he returns with his most gripping and astonishing suspense novel to date: *The Murder Notebook*. An acclaimed visual artist whose numerous awards include two National Endowment for the Arts painting grants—and whose work has been reviewed in *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, and *Artforum*, among other publications—Santlofer combines gripping tales of murder and detection with stunning artwork that enhances and is integral to the story. In *The Murder Notebook* he brings back NYPD forensic sketch artist Nate Rodriguez, hero of Santlofer’s critically acclaimed thriller *Anatomy of Fear*, to unravel a gruesomely tangled thread of apparent murder-suicides in New York City.

## **The Murder Notebook Details**

Date : Published June 3rd 2008 by William Morrow (first published May 1st 2008)

ISBN : 9780060882044

Author : Jonathan Santlofer

Format : Hardcover 400 pages

Genre : Mystery, Suspense, Fiction

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# From Reader Review The Murder Notebook for online ebook

## Jodie22 says

The Murder Notebook by Jonathan Santlofer

This is the first book I read by Jonathan Santlofer. The book caught my attention due to the pencil drawings. As a child, I drew a lot and am always a little jealous of people who draw well.

Nick Rodriguez is a forensic sketch artist who has worked with the NYPD in the past. As one of the best forensic sketch artists in the world, Nick is in high demand. So much so that Lt. Bill Guthrie asks Nick to do a reconstruction, and Nick's girlfriend, detective Terri Russo, adds him to her task force.

While the drawings aren't necessary to the plot, they are a fun. I will definitely read another book by Jonathan Santlofer, and I look forward to more of his drawings.

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## Maddy says

RATING: 4.5

Reading The Murder Notebook was a very satisfying experience for me. It's rare that someone does anything truly innovative in writing crime fiction; Jonathan Santlofer has done so by creating something called "a novel of visual suspense". What that means is that he incorporates sketches into the narrative, and it's a device that works extremely well.

Nate Rodriguez is a gifted police forensic artist. He's been trained not only in the techniques of forensic art but also taken multiple courses that enable him to take his skills one step further. For example, he has extensively studied forensic anthropology and the process of reading faces. In some cases, this helps him more than any evidence that might be available. He's had great success in his profession; in the last case that he worked on, the drawing that he created of the villain was perfect to the last detail.

As the book opens, he is assigned a case involving a sculptural reconstruction. He works with the skull of a man who was shot and then burned. As he begins his work, it's almost as if he is being directed from a place outside of himself. For example, he has a sense of the shape and color of the eyes. At times, he lets his subconscious take over and the construction is done almost without thought. Just when he's making progress, he gets pulled from the case and is assigned to another team, one headed by his girlfriend, Terri Russo, a homicide detective. For this investigation, he relies on standard pencil and paper. Where he excels is in his ability to help witnesses recreate what they have forgotten.

In addition to his artistic talents, Nate also has the ability to "connect the dots". There's a strange series of murder-suicides going on, and he determines what the connection is between them. The killers all had some surface things in common, such as being in the military. At first, the assumption is that the killers suffered from post traumatic stress syndrome; the reality is far more horrifying. As the investigation continues, Rodriguez finds himself in danger and his relationship with Terri deteriorating as he chases clues that she sees as far-fetched.

All throughout the narrative, Santlofer includes the sketches that Rodriguez is creating, from the barest outlines to the final piece. These illustrations added a whole new dimension to the book for me, marrying the visual and the verbal together skillfully. The drawings were not just a gimmick; they supported and enhanced the plot. Santlofer is just as skilled at creating believable characters, most particularly the conflicted Nate who struggles with commitment and unresolved issues around his parents.

The sketches included in the book were all drawn by Santlofer, who is a highly respected artist. Given the talent shown in *The Murder Notebook*, I think he'll soon be able to add "highly respected author" to that description.

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## **Ria says**

this book has really good art in it

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## **Melissandre says**

*The Murder Notebook* by Jonathan Santlofer has written a very original story about a not so common murder investigation. When Nate Rodriguez discovers four perpetrators that are also their own victims he knows something out of the box is happening.

The author goes through the story in immense detail. Based on a true story, the life of a forensic artist changes after ex post traumatic stress disorder victims are tested on. The request of the army asks three scientists to remove the gene or part of our mind that distinguishes fear.

The whole story is imagery. The deaths, conversations and action scenes are all through imagery. There aren't much metaphors or similes because this is such a true experience. I tried this book to try to get out of the sci-fi and fantasy genre and wasn't disappointed. Although it is not my favorite plot it was quite enjoyable.

I recommend this book to all who love mystery with a bit of romance, to all those who think outside the box and those who love culture and science blending together. I do not recommend it to those who are scared that the story is true and to small children under the age of twelve.

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## **Π?νος Τουρλ?ς says**

Η αστυνομικ?ς Τ?ρι Ρο?σο, επικεφαλ?ς μιας Μον?δας Ανθρωποκτονι?ν της Αστυνομ?ας της Ν?ας Υ?ρκης στο βορειοκεντρικ? τμ?μα της π?λης και ο Ν?ιθαν Ροντρ?γκεζ, ?νας αστυνομικ?ς που παρ?τησε σ?ντομα την ενεργ? δρ?ση κι ?γινε σκιτσογρ?φος, μισ?ς Εβρα?ος και μισ?ς Πορτορικαν?ς στην καταγωγ?, προσπαθο?ν να εξιχνι?σουν μια ν?α υπ?θεση, ?ου μια σειρ? αντρ?ν, φαινομενικ? ?σχετων μεταξ? τους, δολοφονο?ν ξαφνικ? ?να οποιοδ?ποτε θ?μα και αυτοκτονο?ν. Ποιος ε?ναι ο κοιν?ς συνεκτικ?ς δεσμ?ς τους και τι πραγματικ? συμβα?νει μ?σα στο μυαλ? τους;

Το δεύτερο βιβλίο με έρωτα τον Ροντρίγκεζ ήταν αρκετά κατ'ερώτα απ' το πρώτο. Ήσως φταίει η κεντρική υπόθεση, που είχε πολλή κατ' επάσιν ασύνδετα κομμάτια μεταξύ τους, τα οποία σταδιακά ενθθηκαν σε ένα ανατριχιαστικό μυστικό. Γρήγορη και στακτική δράση μεν, όμως ο ρόλος των σκτσεων πλέον του Ροντρίγκεζ ξφτισε, γιατί εδώ έχουμε μεν σκτσα κποιων δολοφώνων, όμως απ' ένα σημείο και μετ' δεν έχουν λόγο παρήξης, το πολύ πολύ για να οπτικοποιηθε η νταση και η αγωνα.

Στα θετικά είναι οι διαρκείς αιχμές του συγγραφέα για το σστημα υγείας και δαπάνης του κρατικού προπολογισμού των Ηνωμένων Πολιτειών εν η κεντρική ιδέα, η τροποποίηση του εγκεφάλου ορισμένων εθελοντών, στρατιωτών του Στρατού των ΗΠΑ, κάτι που επιφέρει σοβαρές διαταραχές και δε θα αρήσει στο κοινό τσι και μαθευτε, είναι μια πολύ καλή ευκαιρία να δσει ο συγγραφέας στον αναγνώστη την ευκαιρία να μελετήσει και να βρει κι άλλα στοιχεία για τα πειράματα που συνεχίζουν ακμή και στην εποχή μας να υφίστανται σε εθελοντές-φτωχούς ανθρώπους που θα πληρωθούν καλά, χωρίς να σκφτονται τι η ζω τους και οι ζωές των δικών τους ανθρώπων θα αλλάξουν για πάντα.

Αν και καλοδεχομένο, το κλέσιμο της ιστορίας της δολοφονίας του πατέρα του πρωταγωνιστή φνήκε σα στραβή κολλημένο στην λη πλοκή, μιας και ασχοληθήκαμε μαζί του μετ' το κλέσιμο της υπόθεσης του μυθιστορηματος. Δίνεται μια εντελής νέα οπτική στο θέμα, κάτι που ηρεμεί τις τψεις του καλλιτέχνη. Κι εδώ έχουμε αγνά δρμού για το ποιος θα λσει τον γρφο, η Αστυνομία το FBI, κι εδώ έχουμε τον ερωτικό δεσμό Τόρι και Ροντρίγκεζ που δχεται τους πρώτους τριγμούς εν η γιαγί δεν εμφανίζεται τόσο πολύ όσο η μνα, που αποφασίζει να προχωρήσει στη ζωή της, εκοσι χρόνια μετ' τη δολοφονία του ντρα της, κάτι που θα αναστατήσει τον Ροντρίγκεζ. Κι όλα αυτά ξι μλεις μνες μετ' την πρώτη υπόθεση του Ροντρίγκεζ, στην οποία υπάρχουν αναφορές που δεν άλλοι νουν όμως την αγωνα και την κπληξη κποιου που δεν έχει διαβσει το 1ο βιβλίο.

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## Caterina Fava says

First thing: I love receiving the Early reviewer books. Second thing: I am very picky about noir and mystery.[return]So here we have the main character who is a nice guy. A very nice guy. Sure, he had his share of problems, drugs, family matters and so on, but he is still a nice guy. Maybe he's a nice guy because of those problems. Anyways, the author makes sure that we know Rodriguez is a nice guy, like, every other page. It's irritating. Still, the book is not bad, if somewhat slow at the beginning. Around chapter 30, things start to happen. There are homicides followed by suicide of the murderer. Too many to be coincidence. Rodriguez, the nice guy, is a sketcher for the police, his girlfriend is a cop, the work in team, but soon the truth is too hot too handle, and the bad guys are where you least expect them...or maybe not?[return]The author makes his opinion about politics pretty clear, which I like. There are maybe too many leads, including a grandmather dedited to santeria, strange dreams, and a subplot about Rodriguez's father's death.[return]Apparently I missed the first chapter of this saga. It's possible that, reading it, everything would be more clear.[return]As I said the book is not bad, decently written, catchy enough. But still, something is missing.

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## Charles says

Ok...THE MURDER NOTEBOOK seemed to be SO promising, at initial glance, but in the end, it only was so-so, in my opinion. I saw all the glowing blurbs from various sources about this author's novel, "Anatomy of Fear," so I figured...ok...this has drawings along with the prose, but it seemed like the guy was just trying too hard to sound cool a lot of the time, with cliché detective phrases that always rub me the wrong way. PLUS, there was this slightly hokie balokie element with his Hispanic grandmother and Mexican-Catholic "saints" or pseudo voodoo malarkey with her 'guiding his path' and paying [in my mind] bizarre homage to these pagan versions of deity that supposedly "help" the main character--told in 1st person--solve crimes, etc. All in all, I'm not likely to read any more of this author's books; I just couldn't really get into his style.

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### **Terry says**

I picked this book up mainly because of the title. I ran for city council, lost, and wanted something to distract me. On that level it succeeded, but like so many books, it left me bored. Characters were not terribly interesting. What kept me going was that I used to live in NYC's Hell's Kitchen before the realtors got hold of it and turned it into the 'Clinton' neighborhood. I liked the way the author blended realism and fiction. One of the necessities of a good book is that it teaches you something you didn't know before you sat down with it. Psychology, drawing, how to read facial expressions, these were all interesting, but the bad cop good cop melodrama left me yawning.

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### **GreekReaders says**

Αντ'ξιο του πρ?του βιβλ?ου της σειρ?ς, το κλε?νεις και σκ?φτεσαι " θ?λω να διαβ?σω και το επ?μενο. Τ?ρα." Ε?κολο, γρ?γορο, με ρυθμ? χωρ?ς περιττ? λ?για και περιγραφ?ς. Π?ντε αστ?ρια χωρ?ς πολ? σκ?ψη!

M.

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### **Elsa says**

It is very nice and interesting story..

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### **Jen says**

Every week I get a box or two of books for my library, and some of them make me salivate. The review of this novel made me put it high on my list, but it's actually not that good. The premise is interesting--solving murders with the sketch artist for a police department--but it never gets beyond "eh." I'm 100 pages in and it's not grabbing me.

The illustrations are great, and I could see it developed as a TV show, but I've got too many other books on my desk to continue with this one.

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### **Shonna Froebel says**

This suspense novel features detectives from the NYPD, mainly Nate Rodriguez a sketch artist with the police who calls on his own intuition and the Santera religion of his grandmother for assistance. He had training at Quantico with the FBI and is a freelance at the NYPD, not tied to any department. His significant other is also a police officer, Terri Russo, running a task force in Homicide. They still have their own apartments, and their relationship is not generally known in the department.

When the novel starts, Nate is working on identification of a murder victim using the victim's skull as a starting point. He is coopted into Russo's task force who is trying to solve the murder of a college student. Nate works with the victim's girlfriend to provide the first significant lead. When another student is killed, Nate is also drawn into that investigation, making comparisons between the two. The next bodies that show up are the killers bodies, and Nate is convinced there is something bigger going on.

Santlofer uses drawing throughout the book to add to the story, an interesting touch. He also provides a useful bibliography at the back of the book regarding the issues contained therein.

I really liked the Nate character and how he is still struggling with his issues and his identity.

The plot was engrossing and scary, and I was gripped throughout.

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### **Linda Branham Greenwell says**

Loved it! This is the 2nd book in the Nate Rodriguez series - and it was written in 2008. I want to read more - but yet, I don't know if there will be another one :(

Anyway, Nate Rodriguez is a forensics sketch artist who works freelance. He is still dealing with the death of his father a few years ago. In this book, Bronx Lieutenant Bill Guthrie wants him to do a facial reconstruction of a skull with bullet holes that was also burned in a fire. Chief Perry Denton wants his help on the case of a murdered student. Nate interviews the dead student's girlfriend who describes a man who picked a fight with her boyfriend for no apparent reason. The sketch evidently leads the police to the killer who ends up committing suicide. More murder-suicide crimes occurred and Nate convinces his peers they are linked, but no one knows how; besides the FBI takes charge. But even though NYPD is off the case and the FBI has now taken over, Nate still has questions - he continues following his leads trying to find answers. I love how you see the sketches of the suspects and victims - and the book tells you how to recreate a skull. The book is very interesting and keeps you turning the pages.

Please Mr. Santlofer... another one please

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### **Estefânia Botelho says**

Razões da escolha do livro: Livro oferecido pela Editorial Presença! É um policial e, como tal, tenho sempre vontade de ler!!!

Proveniência: Editorial Presença/ a minha biblioteca.

A minha Opinião:

Nate Rodriguez é um artista forense. Logo aqui fiquei muito curiosa: o que é um artista forense? Ora bem basicamente, e não querendo entrar em grandes pormenores sobre a história, um artista forense é um polícia

que tem como actividade principal desenhar criminosos ou suspeitos através da descrição feita pelas vítimas ou testemunhas do crime. Muito mas muito interessante de facto, sobretudo porque nunca li nenhum livro policial cuja personagem principal tivesse essa profissão.

Neste livro é muito interessante ver o trabalho elaborado por Rodriguez sobretudo quando está em causa uma série de crimes e suicídios que, aparentemente nada têm de comum entre eles.

Contudo, à medida que avançamos na leitura, concluimos afinal que é precisamente o contrário e Nate e a sua namorada também inspectora tentam desvendar estes mistérios.

Esta tarefa torna-se complicada quando o trabalho destas personagens se vê confrontado com a implicação de forças governamentais como o FBI ou o exército americano.

Pelo meio vemos a grande carga psicológica que caracteriza esta história e a vida de Nate que não consegue esquecer a morte do pai e o sentimento de culpa que o persegue.

É um livro interessante mas cujas descrições das etapas de reconstrução facial adensam a trama e tornam-na um pouco parada e aborrecida.

Não foi daqueles livros que me tivesse marcado profundamente mas acho que quem tiver lido os livros anteriores do autor (apesar dos factos do passado descritos neste livro poderem ser menosprezados caso não o tenham feito e pouco ou nada contribuem para percebermos a história em si) poderá gostar bastante deste novo livro.

O melhor: A capacidade de Nate recriar a fisionomia do assassino através das características descritas pelas vítimas ou testemunhas dos crimes de que é acusado.

A surpresa que temos mais no final do livro, relacionada com o passado do Nate e da morte do seu pai.

A relação Nate/Terri.

As ilustrações do livro.

O Pior: As referências ao passado de Nate Rodriguez, incluídas no livro anterior do autor. Essas referências, uma vez que não li o livro, passaram-me um pouco ao lado e fiquei curiosa por saber o que realmente aconteceu.

A autora/autor:

Jonathan Santlofer, americano, formado em Pintura e História da Arte, é um artista respeitado, cuja obra figura em diversas colecções públicas e privadas nos Estados Unidos e merece a atenção de meios tão reputados como o New York Times, Art in América, Artforum e Arts. Começou a dedicar-se à escrita em 1989 quando um incêndio numa galeria de arte de Chicago destruiu uma boa parte da sua obra. Este é o quarto livro que escreve e ilustra. Para o autor «escrever é um desafio» enquanto que «desenhar é mais natural para mim, mas não há dúvida de que ambas se influenciam no meu trabalho».

A minha Classificação: 4 - Interessante

Período de Leitura: De 2 a 14 de Novembro de 2011.

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## Sfdreams says

I picked this book up from the library shelf, not knowing anything about it, but intrigued by the cover/title. (I find lots of great new books this way!) I really liked this book, although I believe it is the second in a series-- I will have to go back and read the first. (I believe *Anatomy of Fear* is the first.)

The protagonist is a police sketch artist, and the book is filled with all sorts of "his" sketches. I found that creative point of view truly interesting and found myself not wanting to stop reading. I whizzed through the book in a day and a half, even working 13 of those hours.

Highly recommend it.

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