

The Prophecies of Nostradamus

In 1555, the predictions of the French physician and astrologer Michel de Nostredame (1503-66), whose name was latinized to Nostradamus, were published in collections of quatrains known as the *Centuries*. The following year, Nostradamus became the court astrologer of Caterina de Medici. Asked to predict the future of the queen's three sons, Nostradamus declared that all three of them would ascend the throne. The prophecy came true in dramatic fashion: Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III all sat on the throne of France within a short space of time, one after the death of the other. It is said that Nostradamus had also predicted the death of Caterina's husband, Henry II. Though it went unheeded, the prediction came true in 1599 during a tournament.