

Literature not Flyers

Review

S. Laplage

2017

a review of

Small Beauty by Jia Qing Wilson-Yangas. Metonymy Press, 2016, \$16.95 CAD

During a discussion hosted by Montreal's L'Insoumise anarchist bookstore and DIRA anarchist library, the novelist Lola Lafon was asked how she includes her politics in her novels.

(A review of her 2014 *We Are the Birds of the Coming Storm* appears in the Summer 2015 *Fifth Estate*.)

Lola replied that she writes literature and not political flyers, although her books are very political. This beautifully written novel, set in British Columbia, depicts transpersons, people of Chinese descent, and incidents of violence towards women.

There are also aspects of the main character's life that are equally important, including death, mourning, the need for solitude, friendship, and discovering hidden parts of a dead grandmother's life.

While identities are important in this novel, it is not about identity politics, which limit people. The main character has equally important identities, as we all do, but they don't define themselves by their wardrobe or a Chinese-Canadian who aspires to be a politician or become rich.

Radical feminist politics underlie the novel without it being a tract or propaganda. It is truly literature.

Metonymy Press is based in Tio'tia:ke (Montreal), unceded Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) territory. metonymy-press.com.

S. Laplage is a member of the Montreal International Anarchist Theatre Collective and L'Insoumise anarchist bookstore.

fifth Estate

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