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Citizen: An American Lyric



Synopsis

Claudia Rankine's bold new audiobook recounts mounting racial aggressions in ongoing encounters in 21st-century daily life and in the media. Some of these encounters are slights, seeming slips of the tongue, and some are intentional offensives in the classroom, at the supermarket, at home, on the tennis court with Serena Williams and the soccer field with Zinedine Zidane, online, on TV - everywhere, all the time. The cumulative stresses come to bear on a person's ability to speak, perform, and stay alive. Our addressability is tied to the state of our belonging, Rankine argues, as are our assumptions and expectations of citizenship.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 1 hour and 37 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Tantor Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 21, 2015

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00WAFQ1OM

Best Sellers Rank: #15 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Poetry #30 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Literary Collections #33 in Books > Literature & Fiction > African American > Poetry

Customer Reviews

An interesting experience in unrelieved discomfort. I say that as a compliment, Ms. Rankine is essential at producing a variation to the commonplace version of collective images...of viewing, interpreting and valuing images of people. The book is a discourse with a reader who is assumed to have cultural limitations. Although it subtitled *American Lyric*, it doesn't come through a singing voice, rather a low toned keening. It is a difficult and valuable volume reflecting both how America sees race and sees responses. Like many of her contemporaries popular media are her tools to construct a meaning in interpretation.

I'm not so sure that I would consider it a book of poetry--scratch that, it's not poetry at all, but it's really nice prose, really relevant prose, really biting prose that speaks to a lot of the major problems

America is facing with race. Oh, and it's a page-turner.

I did not know what to expect when I got this. I think I had read that the writing was good. That was a gross understatement. The writing is beautiful, lyrical, subtle and lovely. The book is apparently labeled as poetry, but to me it felt more like novellas in a questioning, second-person, voice. What have you learned about labels? Excellent read. I will never look at Serena Williams the same.

Citizen does an excellent job of exposing many subtle and not so subtle acts of racism directed toward black Americans daily within our country. It helped me to identify times in my past life when I was guilty of racism due to something I, unwittingly, said, did or failed to say or do in particular circumstances. The book offers strong evidence that racism still permeates most of American culture and still "enslaves" black Americans today even though it goes unrecognized and unacknowledged by the majority of Americans.

Required reading for anyone who has ever felt human, been made to feel less than, or who hasn't and doesn't think these things can happen, has turned a blind eye to racism in America. Pure emotion contrasted with the rationalization of irrational social organization, Rankine blends poetry with documentary realism with the dramatic re-telling of systemic violence and police brutality. Citizen speaks an unspeakable dread that must not remain unspeakable.

Thanks for this powerful witness to justice. Embracing as it is for a white man it is a calling out of the quiet and loud voices of separation we participate in as Citizens. This is a book I will and have recommended to many! I will read it at least once a year from now on. I was lucky to hear the author a few times at the Dodge Poetry Festival in 2016 and the videos attached to this book. Thank you Bob Ko Shin Hanson

Sincerely written essays and poetry about the current state of race and gender in America.

Not quite poetry in the traditional sense, thoughtful and powerful writing.

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