



The Activist

By Renee Gladman

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Fiction. African American Studies. Straddling fiction and poetry, Renee Gladman's writing operates on the level of the sentence, constructing surprise and oblique meanings at every turn, and somehow managing the supremely difficult trick of both engaging and pushing the reader. "THE ACTIVIST begins in the middle of a revolution....There is a bridge that may or may not have been bombed. People speak in nonsense and cannot stop themselves. In the mids of all this, the language of news reports mixes with the language of confession. The art of this beautifully written book is in how it touchingly illustrates that relations between humans and cities are linked in a more complex interface than most realize"--Juliana Spahr.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Following up on her 2000 debut *Juice* (Kelsey Street), Gladman here pushes West Coast "new narrative" further into Kafka- and Poindexter-esque territory. A form of elliptical prose taken up in the '90s by writers like Dodie Bellamy, Mary Burger, Laura Moriarty and Camille Roy (and adapted by Gladman's peers Pamela Lu and Lytle Shaw), new narrative allows the basic elements of novels (plot, character, dialogue, specificity of setting) to run through the text without being sketched all the way in. By turns noirish first-person memoir and journalistic satire, *The Activist* depicts the goings on of a cell or affinity group that may or may not have blown up a bridge that may or may not have existed. Descriptions are inflected such that the names of characters (Lomarlo, Monique), their relations to each other (often same sex) and the way they talk ("This our downtown"; the title itself may be in the plural) put pressure on categories of race, gender and sexual orientation. The group may also have developed technology for emptying the memories of subjects, and controlling them Matrix-style, and their prevarications have a Godardian intellectualized haplessness. Yet the memory technology sets up the most powerful of the book's 10 sections, "The State," where it is unclear if the first-person narrator is being held by the government or by the activists, for what reason and to what purpose. The book works best as one of the first full-length mirrors held to the post 9/11 U.S.; in its targeting and rhetoric; it is something less than allegorical, more than a little chilling, and often very beautiful.

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About the Author

Renee Gladman lives in Boston, Massachusetts, where she publishes Leon Works, a press for experimental fiction and cross-genre writing. Her books include *NEWCOMER CAN'T SWIM* (Kelsey Street Press, 2007), *A PICTURE-FEELING* (Roof Books, 2005), *THE ACTIVIST* (Krupskaya, 2003), *JUICE* (Kelsey Street Press, 2000), *NOT RIGHT NOW* (Second Story Books, 1998), and *Arlem* (Idiom Books, 1996). A novella *Event Factory* is forthcoming from Dorothy, a publishing project in fall 2010. She teaches at Brown University in the Program for Literary Arts.

Users Review

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John Casale:

The Activist can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that could increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The article writer giving his/her effort that will put every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing *The Activist* however doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource information that maybe you can be among it. This great information can certainly drawn you into brand new stage of crucial considering.

Gary Lafountain:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray you, why because this *The Activist* reserve written by well-known writer who knows well how to make book which might be understand by anyone who else read the book.

Written with good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and writing skill only for eliminate your own hunger then you still doubt The Activist as good book not simply by the cover but also with the content. This is one book that can break don't judge book by its deal with, so do you still needing a different sixth sense to pick this particular!? Oh come on your looking at sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to an additional sixth sense.

Salvador Swain:

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Randy Mosley:

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