

Gripping New Novel Transcends 'Identity'

Author Leonce Gaiter provides a unique look at race, sex, and redemption

PARADISE, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, August 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The film

"American Fiction" lampooned the reductive distortions mainstream tastes can impose on the presentation of African American characters and themes. To win book contracts and readers, the film's black authors skewed black characters to conform to historical white stereotypes.

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The film struck a nerve because it hit on largely unspoken truths. While there is black fiction that centers all-black milieu, mainstream attention often falls on “black books” about slavery, the civil rights movement, their attendant

racism, and white folks’ intersection with black characters navigating them.

This is what mainstream agents, editors, and publishers feel comfortable with and promote. It fits comfortably within their historical view of themselves and black Americans. Since it is promoted and touted, it sells. Since it sells, it’s what agents and editors seek. The result is a virtuous circle of limited opportunity for mainstream acceptance of the breadth of black stories.

Author [Leonce Gaiter](#) attacks this problem head-on with his new novel, [“A Memory of Fictions \(or\) Just Tiddy-Boom.”](#) The book’s protagonist is black, but it is not a “black book,” by industry standards. In fact, the book centers on the main character’s intellectual and psychological growth, not his race or struggles with racism. Both can play a part, but the character’s inner life remains central.

This is also a novel about a gay character that is not a ‘coming out story,’ nor is it centered on the character’s sexuality or others’ reactions to it.

“A Memory of Fictions (or) Just Tiddy-Boom” also depicts childhood abuse. However, it is not a chronicle of that abuse.

“People are multi-faceted creatures,” insists author Leonce Gaiter. “We do not exist in societal boxes into which industries place us to sell us stuff. Our various identities, and most of us have more than one, inform us, but don’t define us. The insistence that if you’re gay or black or Native

American or anything else your story must stay handcuffed to that identify is reductive. The ultimate effect is dehumanization because you're not allowed to present the full scope of an individuals' humanity."

The novel has garnered excellent reviews and was named an "[Editor's Pick](#)" by PW's Booklife. Kirkus Reviews said, "Gaiter's lively prose presses against the confines of every sentence... A distinctive story of an artist's painful coming of age." IndieReader stated "...a bold novel. Sometimes beautiful, sometimes brutal, the prose is always thoroughly engrossing."

Gaiter hopes "A Memory of Fictions (or) Just Tiddy-Boom" can prove the viability of books by minority authors that explode the narrow lens of mainstream stereotypes and preconceptions. "To define us solely by the ways in which we are different from the majority, be that in gender, sexuality, color, or culture," he stated, "only serves to cement the legitimacy of our 'othering.' We have to demand presentation as fully human and that starts with telling our fully human stories."

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