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A Different Kind of Intimacy: The Collected Writings of Karen Finley

Karen Finley

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#444667 in Books 2000-10-20 2000-10-30Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 .93 x 6.01 x 9.03l, #File Name: 1560252936384 pages | File size: 52.Mb

Karen Finley : A Different Kind of Intimacy: The Collected Writings of Karen Finley before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Different Kind of Intimacy: The Collected Writings of Karen Finley:

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Always Challenging, Always Important, Always Amazing.By Chris OhnesorgeKaren Finley's latest book, both a memoir and a collection of her work is a window into the life of

one of the most important artists of the 20th century. Karen Finley has always flown in the face of convention creating work that is both political and personal, challenging and difficult, redemptive and healing. As one of the now famous NEA Four she became Jesse Helms' favorite whipping woman in his plot to further toss American back to the 1950s forever. In her book Karen Finley shares pieces from her acclaimed performances and books as well as insights into her life at the time she was working on them and the events that helped shape her work throughout the years. From friends and loved ones dying of AIDS, to her own battles with censorship, the suicide of her father and the many evolutions her work has gone through the reader is privileged to share intimate details of her life and be even more changed and challenged by her work. This book is a must have for any artist, activist, thinker, woman, man, whoever. To read it is to confront your own fears, demons, privileges, biases and secrets. 8 of 10 people found the following review helpful. *The High Priestess of Confrontation, The Muse of Truth* By Christopher P. Barton forget what you think you know about Karen Finley, because unless you've actually been to one of her performances and/or read her essays, you don't know much. Okay, so let's forget about the yams, the chocolate, the nudity, the naughty words and all of that. Just for the space of this review, humor me. Still with me? Karen Finley is amazing. She is the (unwilling) Joan of Arc of pop culture as we know it. She dared to deconstruct dysfunction, patriarchal power junkies, AIDS hysteria, sexism, homophobia...okay, you get the idea...and she tackled all these things, and so many more subjects, on a human level, on a confrontational level, with compassion and parody combined, with anger and love combined, espousing politically correct ideas in a very unpolitically correct voice during very PC times. While this book is not a "compilation", per se, it is a kind of experimental autobiography, with big chunks of Finley's work interspersed throughout - sort of a show and tell exhibit in a book. It works. It's immensely, addictively readable, and quite user-friendly for such a confrontational artist. The only frustration I had with this work was the ending, which frustrated and disappointed me, though the discouraging ending could easily be yet another performance art prank served Finley style.... 12 of 15 people found the following review helpful. *In your face Senator Helms* By Ricky R. Renn, yag66@webtv.net I saw Karen Finley in Charleston SC years ago. I had no idea what to expect...I had never heard of her before. The tardy Ms. Finley entered the auditorium from the back, totally naked. I knew then that she was like no other person on earth. She yelled and screamed her stories, her anger, her pain....our pain....to the gods above. Through out the performance she gradually clothed herself until she ended the performance fully dressed. I was dumbfounded, changed...and I fully understood how her nudity was necessary to her art...to her connection with her audience. For years I search for information on this woman, hoping to see another performance....to again experience what I felt that night. Catharsis. I was thrilled when an internet search brought me here, to her memoirs. This book did not disappoint. It gave great insight into the life of this very strange, and gifted woman. Though everyone may not agree with her beliefs and politics, they have to admire her intelligence and strength. One suggestion Ms. Finley, get a website so people like myself can let you know how you've made a difference in their lives. R. Renn

A Different Kind of Intimacy will bring together for the first time a collection of performance artist Karen Finley's texts, performances, short stories, essays, op-eds, art and photographs, creating a unique memoir of a woman whose life and career have embodied the urgent cultural conflicts of our time. The writings include text from the infamous performances that brought her to the Supreme Court in *Finley vs. NEA*, a battle that became a mainstay of the culture wars and which has made Finley an icon in the struggle for freedom of speech. Included in this volume will be the never before published, Obie Award-winning *The American Chestnut* for which she received a Guggenheim; such works as *We Keep Our Victims Ready*, *A Certain Level of Denial*, *The Return of the Chocolate Smear Woman*, and an excerpt from her forthcoming film *Shut Up and Love Me*. Also appearing will be previously unpublished short stories, photos, artwork, and an essay on censorship. In 1998 Finley was named Woman of the Year by *MS. Magazine*; she posed for *Playboy* the following year. She has appeared in numerous films including *Philadelphia*, and will soon be directing her own first feature film, *Shut Up and Love Me*, produced by Forensic Films. She has recorded albums including a collaboration with Sinéad O'Connor. Finley is a regular on *Politically Incorrect* and can be seen giving her opinions on *Exhale*, a new show hosted by Candace Bergen on *Oxygen*. She will be hosting *The Naked Players*, a "nude Candid Camera" as well as *Shock Video*, both on HBO. Finley has written four books: *Shock Treatment*, *Enough Is Enough*, *Living It Up*, and *Pooh Unplugged*. "We need Finley: she doesn't duck the bullets, she keeps her eyes peeled on the artillery aimed at women, and she continues to push against her own boundaries as an artist" -- *MS. Magazine*