

Review of Aura by Gary Glickman

Review by Alan Bennett Ilagan

Gary Glickman's Aura deals with the disenchantment of growing up and older, and offers an unflinchingly vivid portrait of artists struggling for their search for meaning. It is a story of ambitions ~ blind and otherwise ~ for fame, for love, for artistic merit ~ and how those ambitions prove elusive, even when seemingly met. Glickman perfectly captures the fleeting longing and intrinsic loneliness of these bohemians, writing in bold, abstract strokes and with a surety and deftness of pen. If the world of these artists is a cold one, it is also compelling. The flawed characters are at times hard to love, but even harder to ignore or forget. It is a testament to the author that they never become completely whiny or self-absorbed, but rather precariously straddle the line between right and wrong.

The dark undertone of the book is masked by Glickman's deceptively nonchalant narrative. He captures the boundless expanse of youth in its untarnished idealism, and reigns it in with world-weary insight. Glickman envelops his readers in a kind of ragged beauty. His prose is deliciously dire, drawing the reader subtly in at first, before seering itself in one's memory with characters who linger long after their tale is told. Unrelenting in its honesty and striking in its depth, Aura is a spellbinding work of nuanced darkness and delicately rendered relationships.