

Book Review - Call Me By Your Name

Post by "Joshua" of July 10, 2019 at 7:52 PM

Call Me By Your Name

André Aciman, 2007

I wasn't sure whether to do this here, but the novel is too beautiful and heart-breaking to put out of my mind, and too pleasant and relevant not to share.

Call Me By Your Name is a more-than-bi-curious coming-of-age tale set in a lovely Italian villa on the coast of the Mediterranean. A precocious and literary 17-year-old boy named Elio spends his summer days in the back garden, transcribing Bach as he strums the guitar or fingers the piano; or else dips in the pool in the noonday sun, or in the sea just beyond. Or on the tennis court, with friends and cousins. By evenings he dines *alfresco* with his cultivated and scholarly family--the conversation sliding between English, French, and Italian as it suits--while the sun sets, the wine flows and the apricots ripen in the garden orchard.

His father, a professor, hosts one American graduate student each year in a summer residency at the villa. The student this summer, a 24-year old named Oliver, is working on a manuscript for a book he's writing on Heraclitus and the Pre-Socratics. Over his six-week residency, the two young men forge a difficult, sensual and poignant friendship that will change both their lives forever.

Aciman's novel is a protracted study of human pleasures, and the barbs they leave in us after we've known them. The scene is rich with subtle ironies and affinities: a secular Jewish-American family living "discretely" in Catholic Italy; a life of the mind, living in a body that declines--refuses--to be ignored; a world of sepia-toned books and culture and music, and the raw red emotions that bleed inexorably through all the artifice. A world of Lucretius, and Heraclitus, and Giordano Bruno in the Campo Di Fiori; but also of Dante, of Mussolini, of the crowded churches of Rome. Parallel lives.

The novel is intelligent, powerful, raw, brooding, contemplative, and sensual. Highly recommended!

-josh

Post by "Cassius" of July 10, 2019 at 10:41 PM

Thanks Joshua!

Post by “Hiram” of July 11, 2019 at 9:36 AM

I loved the movie. It was very sensual, and a celebration of warm Mediterranean imagery, food, and environment.

The young actor is currently filming the DUNE sequel which comes out next year, and I'm REALLY looking forward to.

Post by “Joshua” of July 11, 2019 at 10:25 AM

He is the PERFECT choice for Paul Atreides. Stellar casting.

I watched the movie before listening to the audiobook. Both were great. Arme Hammer (Oliver in the film) reads the audiobook. It was really well done.