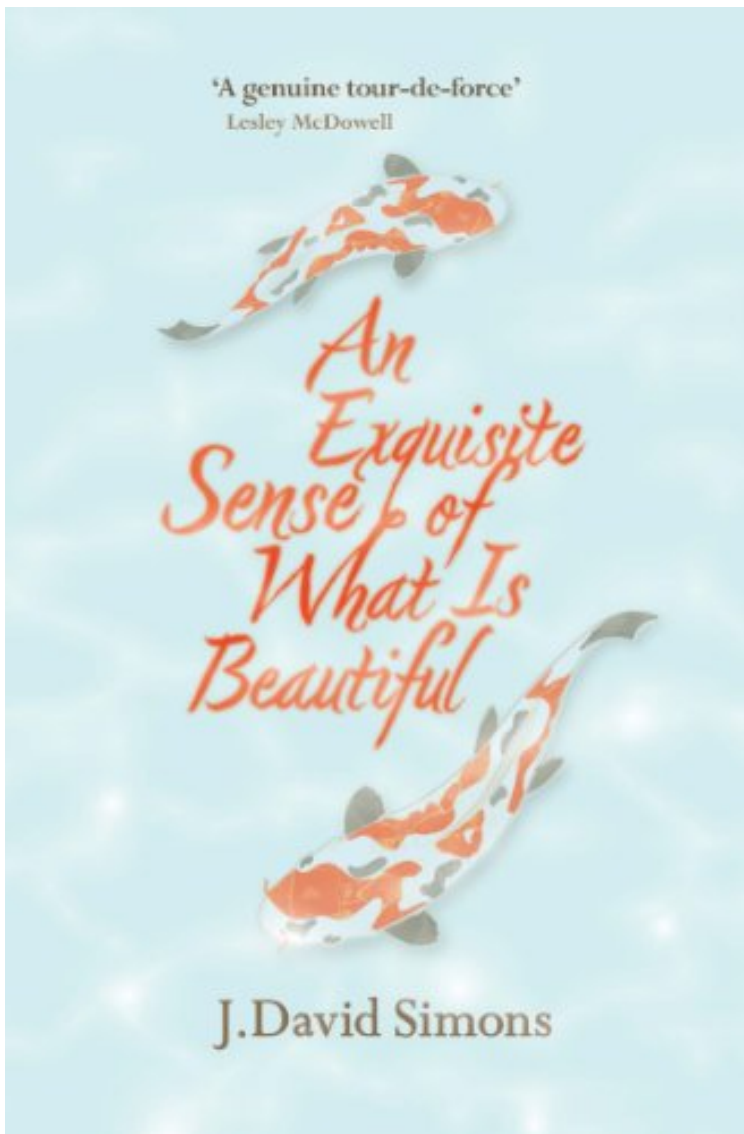


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An Exquisite Sense of What Is Beautiful



Par J David Simons
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur"A genuine tour-de-force" Lesley McDowell. An eminent British writer returns to the resort hotel in the Japanese mountains where he once spent a beautiful, snowed-in winter. It was there he fell in love and wrote his best-selling novel, The Waterwheel, accusing America of being in denial about the horrific aftermath of the Tokyo firebombings and the nuclear destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As we learn more about his earlier life, however - as a student in Bloomsbury, involved with a famous American painter - we realise that he too is in denial, trying to escape the past events that are now rapidly catching up with him. An Exquisite Sense of What is Beautiful is a sweeping novel of East and West, love and war, truth and delusion. Featuring richly drawn characters and a narrative that perfectly builds the tension up to the explosive climax, this book has all the hallmarks of a modern classic.Revue de presseJ. David Simons pulls

off an extraordinary trick in 'An Exquisite Sense of What Is Beautiful': the history of post-war Japan; the labyrinth of blame and shame from imperial war atrocities to the gratuitous horror of Nagasaki; Japan beating the West at its own military-industrial game all encapsulated in a subtle, seductive love story. 'An Exquisite Sense' is in the tradition of Graham Greene or our own William Boyd, taking in great sweeps of history without ever losing sight of the personal, the telling detail. Simons clearly knows Japan and, like his hero Edward, has glimpsed, in the cracks between the ancient and the modern, the East/West schizophrenia, the soul of the place. An accomplished and compelling novel by a storyteller at the top of his game, *An Exquisite Sense Of What Is Beautiful* lives up to its ambitious title, delivering a story that is both delicate in its detail and politically robust. --Chris Dolan, author of *Redlegs* and *Ascension Day*

If you're going to call your novel *An Exquisite Sense Of What Is Beautiful* then you have to be prepared to back it up in both style and substance. The title recalls such seminal and philosophical texts as *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* or *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, and that's a lot to live up to. Luckily David Simons does this with style and substance. Simons pulls off one of the hardest tricks for a novelist, reflecting world events through the lives of individuals while avoiding the reader feeling like they are being given a history lesson or are being preached to. Simons deals with some major topics, but does so with a wonderful subtlety that lends itself to recognition and empathy. This is Edward's story and it is his journey from a confused, if at times hubristic, youth to a man facing his final days that is so impressive. His life comes to be defined by love, and regret, and the passing of time tips the balance from one to the other, although it also allows for forgiveness, or at least acceptance, from others if never quite from himself. There are a couple of books and writers that [this] reminds me of: James Robertson's *And The Land Lay Still*, Anthony Burgess's *Earthly Powers*, in style if not in story. Like that novel *An Exquisite Sense Of What Is Beautiful* is artistic, literary and thoroughly involving. Simons depicts the pains and disappointments of old age with an honesty and eloquence which is as rare as it is welcome. A novelist who understands the craft of writing and who, in this case, has applied it exquisitely. --Alistair Braidwood, *Scots Whay*

J David Simons' latest novel set in Scotland, London and Japan is that rare thing, a genuine tour-de-force, a beautifully written love story that combines political impetus, questions about art and truth, and an exotic setting once almost blown to extinction in an act of war. It is the kind of sophisticated, grown-up writing that properly intrigues, and calls to mind the best of William Boyd and Sebastian Faulks. --Lesley McDowell, author and critic

Présentation de l'auteur "A genuine tour-de-force" Lesley McDowell. An eminent British writer returns to the resort hotel in the Japanese mountains where he once spent a beautiful, snowed-in winter. It was there he fell in love and wrote his best-selling novel, *The Waterwheel*, accusing America of being in denial about the horrific aftermath of the Tokyo firebombings and the nuclear destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As we learn more about his earlier life, however - as a student in Bloomsbury, involved with a famous American painter - we realise that he too is in denial, trying to escape the past events that are now rapidly catching up with him. *An Exquisite Sense of What is Beautiful* is a sweeping novel of East and West, love and war, truth and delusion. Featuring richly drawn characters and a narrative that perfectly builds the tension up to the explosive climax, this book has all the hallmarks of a modern classic.