



## Feel Free

*Zadie Smith*

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Zadie Smith

**Feel Free** Zadie Smith

**From Zadie Smith, one of the most beloved authors of her generation, a new collection of essays**

Since she burst spectacularly into view with her debut novel almost two decades ago, Zadie Smith has established herself not just as one of the world's preeminent fiction writers, but also a brilliant and singular essayist. She contributes regularly to *The New Yorker* and the *New York Review of Books* on a range of subjects, and each piece of hers is a literary event in its own right.

Arranged into five sections--In the World, In the Audience, In the Gallery, On the Bookshelf, and Feel Free--this new collection poses questions we immediately recognize. What is The Social Network--and Facebook itself--really about? "It's a cruel portrait of us: 500 million sentient people entrapped in the recent careless thoughts of a Harvard sophomore." Why do we love libraries? "Well-run libraries are filled with people because what a good library offers cannot be easily found elsewhere: an indoor public space in which you do not have to buy anything in order to stay." What will we tell our granddaughters about our collective failure to address global warming? "So I might say to her, look: the thing you have to appreciate is that we'd just been through a century of relativism and deconstruction, in which we were informed that most of our fondest-held principles were either uncertain or simple wishful thinking, and in many areas of our lives we had already been asked to accept that nothing is essential and everything changes--and this had taken the fight out of us somewhat."

Gathering in one place for the first time previously unpublished work, as well as already classic essays, such as, "Joy," and, "Find Your Beach," *Feel Free* offers a survey of important recent events in culture and politics, as well as Smith's own life. Equally at home in the world of good books and bad politics, Brooklyn-born rappers and the work of Swiss novelists, she is by turns wry, heartfelt, indignant, and incisive--and never any less than perfect company. This is literary journalism at its zenith.

## Feel Free Details

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Author : Zadie Smith

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## From Reader Review Feel Free for online ebook

### Krista says

*Writing exists (for me) at the intersection of three precarious, uncertain elements: language, the world, the self. The first is never wholly mine; the second I can only ever know in a partial sense; the third is a malleable and improvised response to the previous two. If my writing is a psychodrama I don't think it is because I have, as the internet would have it, so many feels, but because the correct balance and weight to be given to each of these three elements is never self-evident to me. It's this self – whose boundaries are uncertain, whose language is never pure, whose world is in no way “self-evident” – that I try to write from and to. My hope is for a reader who, like the author, often wonders how free she really is, and who takes it for granted that reading involves all the same liberties and exigencies as writing.*

In thirty-one essays, divided into five loose categories, Zadie Smith's *Feel Free* displays a mind of wide tastes and an enviable intellectual elasticity: Smith has diverse knowledge and a clear voice and she uses her gifts to assemble these little moments of harmony against the background noise. This is a book that asks to be read slowly, and I complied; enjoying most all of it (there are some book reviews for *Harper's* included that feel out of place; perhaps because Smith was writing for someone else, not herself.) In the end, nothing here really feels important – Smith isn't trying to convince the reader of anything – but as someone who has always been impressed by Smith's novels, I appreciated this more intimate glimpse into the workings of her mind; the font from where her art springs.

Because Zadie Smith is younger than I am, I described her the other day as “hip”; yet Smith will be the first to tell you that she is a throwback – a member of the last generation to grow up in a predigital age. Of those who came after her, Smith writes:

*They've spent a decade being berated for not making the right sorts of paintings or novels or music or politics. Turns out the brightest 2.0 kids have been doing something else extraordinary. They've been making a world.*

But it's not a world Smith necessarily likes: She ended up quitting Facebook two months after joining it (in 2010) because not only did she find it completely addicting, and therefore a waste of her limited time, but she immediately recognised it as one unpopular college sophomore's idea of how a circle of friends might look and act (the “pokes”, photosharing, an emphasis on favourite movies and TV shows in a personal profile). By then referencing Jaron Lanier's *You Are Not a Gadget* – in which he makes the point that by “locking in” to software that imperfectly captures the human experience, just because it's the one that was available in the beginning, we have begun degrading the entire human experience – Smith links pop culture (a viewing of *The Social Network*) with Lanier's respected scholarship, and filters it all through her own lived experience (I don't blame her for quitting Facebook if it led to every online page marketing her own books to her, lol). And this high-to-low-via-self formula is used frequently: Smith writes a scene-by-scene analysis of Charlie Kaufman's stop-motion animated film *Anomalisa* via Schopenhauer, but we never forget that Smith herself figures into the equation as viewer (with her friend, Tamsin-the-Nietzschean, whispering in her ear in the movie theatre); she writes of hating the music of Joni Mitchell when she was younger, throws in some Kierkegaard, and then describes an epiphinal moment of discovering that she *loves* the music of Joni

Mitchell; she explores the unenviable personal life of Justin Bieber through the philosophical writings of Martin Buber (their surnames are apparently alternate spellings from the same German root) and uses Bieber's example to find her own place in Buber's *I-Thou/I-It* dichotomy. There's a lot going on here. Smith writes:

*When I find myself sitting at dinner next to someone who knows just as much about novels as I do but has somehow also found the mental space to adore and be knowledgeable about opera, have strong opinions about the relative rankings of Renaissance painters, an encyclopedic knowledge of the English Civil War, of French wines – I feel an anxiety that nudges beyond the envious into the existential. How did she find the time?*

I can't imagine who these dinner companions are who nudge Smith into "existential anxiety" with their greater levels of esoteric knowledge. In *Feel Free*, Smith muses thoughtfully and knowledgeably about music, from writing from Billie Holiday's point-of-view to tripping to Q-Tip and sitting down with Jay-Z; discusses movies from Jordan Peel's *Get Out* to Christian Marclay's twenty-four hour opus *The Clock* (along with much commentary on all of the movie clips featured in this film); she responds to visual art from the paintings of old masters to Sarah Sze's multimedia installation, *Centrifuge*; although these pieces were written a bit too early to really capture our today of 2018, Smith writes politically about Brexit and gentrification and artists being priced out of lower Manhattan and the razing of London's libraries to throw up condos. And, in pretty much every essay, Smith ties in books – novels, poetry and non-fiction – and demonstrates how what she has read informs her responses to everything else she discovers in the world. As I sat here googling her references, I could only marvel, *How did she find the time?* And a note on this googling-while-reading: Despite Smith sighing more than once that she wishes she could give up her iPhone, if I didn't have one I couldn't have, in real time, admired Titian's portrait of twelve year old *Ranuccio Farnese* alongside Smith's text about it, read William Empson's short poem "Let it Go" to see how it figured into St. Aubyn's work, watched the Nicholas Brothers performing, in *Stormy Weather*, what Fred Astaire called "the greatest example of cinematic dance ever performed" (a routine I watched with tears in my eyes as I considered the detail that the scenes with the Nicholas Brothers used to be cut out of movies before they were shown in the South; so much beauty in their movements balanced against so much ugliness. Race makes an appearance every now and then in these essays, but it's not a main focus.) Smith even specifically asks us to google the lyrics to Justin Bieber's "Boyfriend" so she could avoid the licensing fees of reproducing them. I obliged. Despite the disparate subject matter, I think the main thesis – tying into that opening quote from the book's Introduction – comes from Smith's writing about the paintings of Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, which pursue:

*...the essential, living communication between art work and viewer, a relationship that Yiadom-Boakye reminds us is indeed vicarious, voyeuristic, ambivalent and fundamentally uncontrollable.*

Smith seems to be saying that in these essays, as in her novels, she puts the art (which is her own reaction to the world) out there, knowing that she can't control what the reader will bring to the experience; can't control how that reader will react. Want to behave as though reading involves all the same liberties and exigencies as writing? *Feel free*. There's so much in this book, and while some of it feels a little dated already, Smith captures something very interesting from her position at the intersection between the personal and the universal; and what she makes of it is art.

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### **Max Urai says**

So: Zadie Smith, it seems, has replaced David Foster Wallace as my new person-to-aspire-to-be writer. Some pretty major shit going on with that right now. More as the story develops.

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### **David Yoon says**

Zadie offers up a collection of her essays here but what's interesting is that she notes in the foreword that all of them were written during the Obama presidency and therefore a product of an already bygone world. An interesting prompt for an essay I'd wish she'd written as well.

I am the poor reader that is willing to meet the author part of the way but cannot subsist on language alone. That is to say Smith scores some easy hits for me with her essays on Jay-Z, Key and Peele and I loved her examination between writers and dancers and she convinced me that I need to read more art criticism, especially if it's done as well as her.

On the other hand her Harpers Magazine review of books I had no desire to read. While they are perfectly tuned to the specific style expected of the magazine they otherwise left me nodding off. Like any collection it's uneven. It's also a doorstopper of a read. But what shines is the warmth in which she speaks to the reader, perhaps a Zadie from a pre-Brexit, pre-Trump world.

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### **Molly Ferguson says**

This was an advance reading copy graciously lent to me.

What is truly amazing about Zadie Smith is her ability to go from "low" culture to high art in one sentence - she'll be musing on Key and Peele or Jay-Z and suddenly launch into a deep discussion of Schoepenhauer, Berger, or Buber. She tackles climate change, Brexit, Facebook, race, the boring parts of parenting, how pleasure is better than joy. Some of the essays in this book were so sparkling and luminescent, they are instant classics. Those were: "Northwest London Blues," "Fences: A Brexit Diary," "Dance Lessons for Writers," "Generation Why," "The I Who is Not Me," "The Bathroom," and "Joy".

Here's a glimpse of one of the many lines that resonated: "Early on, for better or for worse, I chose whose child I wanted to be: the child of the novel. Almost everything else was subjugated to this ruling passion, reading stories. As a consequence, I can barely add a column of double digits, I have not the slightest idea of how a plane flies, I can't draw any better than a five-year-old."

I would rate this about a 4.7 because a few of the essays were stinkers (why would an editor leave in the boring book reviews?), but the ones that were good, shone.

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## **Anni says**

This collection of essays spans a diverse range of topics: current events, music, art, books and movies, to name a few of the observations, covering both ends of the cultural spectrum. As an ex-librarian, I especially appreciated the piece on public libraries ('the only thing left on the high street that doesn't want either your soul or your wallet') and also the section on other writers. Her review of the work of Magnus Mills (one of my favourite authors) is particularly enlightening.

Some of the references seem rather dated and obscure for me, but I found the accounts from Smith's own family history, personal experiences and travels abroad far more relevant - and revealing. And although she describes her fear of personal disclosure (for instance, when using the first person narrative voice in her novels), I would love to read this author's autobiography.

Many thanks to the publisher for the ARC via NetGalley.

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## **Laura says**

The range of subjects Smith explores in this collection is truly dizzying: from the personal to the political, the philosophical to the physical, Brexit to Justin Bieber, Phillip Roth to Karl Ove Knausgard. Here are essays about her neighborhood library, traveling through Italy with her father, social media, music from rap to Billie Holiday to Joni Mitchell, and films of all persuasions, from arthouse to mainstream. She writes about art that has mattered to her at various times in her life, from contemporary painters and sculptors to Italian Renaissance artists. But the landscape of these essays is not purely material. Throughout and among her examination of art, music, and dance, she explores motherhood, race and its intersection with art, criticism and culture, philosophy, the practice of journaling, the nature of joy and memory, the role of an artist.

There was no central thread tying these essays together--this was not a book about art, or writing, or politics alone. "Look at the world," each essay seemed to say. "Everything on this earth is worth examining." What made these disparate essays such a joy to read was the thoughtfulness and creativity with which she handled each subject, the equal care she gave to the physical and the philosophical. Nothing is too small or too vast--all of our strange, contradictory, varied human existence is worth her exploration.

Her voracious curiosity, her desire to examine the world, her hunger to understand the complex, her interest in wrestling with contradiction and nuance--these things leap from the page. Though I did not love each individual essay--the Harper's book reviews especially felt a bit insular, at times--the overall feeling I was left with with a sense of awe and openness. In these pages, Zadie Smith is fully engaged and deeply connected, constantly questioning and excavating. At times, the openness, curiosity and humility with which she wrote about the world left me almost breathless.

The book as a whole left me wanting to dive into the world. I am not a traveler; I rarely seek out art forms that aren't books; I listen to the same music over and over again. *Feel Free* reminded me of the beautiful vastness of what's out there. I was left bursting with desire: to explore, to connect, to immerse myself in as many different lives and mediums and places and ideas as possible. That's the extraordinary power of a book.

Read my full review [here](#).

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### **Rod-Kelly Hines says**

There's enough here for any and everybody to enjoy! Brava Queen!

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### **Christy Childers says**

My most anticipated 2018 book!

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### **Trish says**

The essays in this book have been published before, mostly in the *New York Review of Books* and *The New Yorker*, but it is quite something to see and read them all together. One has the impression of a very talkative, precocious teenager who notices ceaselessly, has opinions on everything, and is curious what you think but wants to get her view out there first, in case you change her mind. The flexibility of her mind and her fluency is the remarkable thing.

Reviewers and other novelists will find this collection important for how Smith structures her arguments, what she chooses to focus on, what she says about point of view and novelistic structure. When one desires particularly bright conversation but doesn't have it to hand on an ordinary day, this collection is just the thing to provide food for thought. I listened to the audio, produced by Penguin Audio and read oh-so-brilliantly by Nikki Amuka-Bird. This is a wonderful way to digest Smith's ideas, the essay form particularly good for a commute.

It took long time to finish the collection, so some of my favorites come from the end simply because I remember them better. But I do remember one near the front called "Dance Lessons for Writers," which had particularly beautiful descriptions of the dance moves of Michael Jackson and Prince, Baryshnikov & Nureyev. Here's Baryshnikov on Fred Astaire:

"I was very star-struck, I hardly spoke. But I watched his hands all the time, they were like a lesson in themselves,—so elegant."

Smith discusses the comedy marriage of Key & Peele in "Brother from Another Mother," the comedy duo who grew their audience during the Obama presidency. "...Subject to all the normal pressures of a marriage," their routine has reached its natural end, but while it was going on it poked fun at attitudes of whites while raising issues faced by blacks. It led us into a more mature understanding and way of interacting by highlighting the ways "blacks" are often not black at all, but mixed and even mostly white. Time to drag one's consciousness into the 21st Century, America.

There is a whole section called "In The Gallery," in which Smith discusses art, including the first time she noticed art at her mother's apartment and later, going to museums or to other parts of Europe in search of art. Her father, she points out, was always a natural viewer of art, not intimidated by the notion that an ordinary working man should not be able to comprehend art. He stood in front of a painting or sculpture and could say what he saw or how it affected him. He taught his daughter with her fancy education something about

naturalness. She attributes some of that naturalness to her father's love of John Berger and his 1972 TV show *Ways of Seeing*.

In "Love in the Gardens" Smith's discusses inviting her father to Italy with money from her first book. He'd wanted to spend more time in France, she found out later, but she was young and insistent on Italy. They visited gardens and cities positively overrun with tourists. He hardly took a picture, and he was an amateur photographer. Later, after her father had died, Smith went to live in Rome and found a place he would have loved. Why hadn't we spent more time in Rome she wondered, as she took in the beauty of the statutes and the women. He would have loved it here.

One of the best reasons to pick up the hardcopy of this book are the photographs reproduced. When Smith is discussing a particular piece of art, she may include a reproduction, or perhaps a photograph both she and her brother picked out of her father's collection independently of one another, a photograph of a newspaper-carrying father kissing his toddler upon his return home from work, while the mother, wearing a skirt and pumps and a chignon, watches television expressionlessly. It is titled "The Family is a Violent Event."

One of the last essays is about Justin Bieber, the pop music star, and Martin Buber, long-dead Jewish philosopher. Smith imagines a meeting between the two and discusses both in the context of Buber's 1923 *I-Thou* and *I-It* essay. Not being familiar with Buber's essay, I listened kind of clueless and the very next day came across another reference to Buber's essay, of which I could say quite a little bit, gratis Smith's introduction.

And a real meeting of minds when, in "Getting In and Out," Smith talks about how "black is now cool," and how "white people want to get inside & walk around in black skin" now. But she elegantly demolishes the notion of how one "appropriates" experience by noticing it, by speaking of it, by writing about it. I had withheld my judgment on arguments about appropriation, all the time wondering how one can possibly NOT want people to understand, empathize, and yes, *write about* another's experience as though it were their own. Smith makes the logical argument that a mixed person then cannot speak about the experience of someone with darker skin, though both have been labelled black, and what about someone who looks white but is, in fact, mixed? Will they have to pull out their credentials for all to make a decision whether or not she will have the right to speak of or even imagine the black experience?

I loved this book of essays and think England has got themselves a national treasure who can both write and think.

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### **Andre says**

??????5?? The standout aspect of these essays is the writing is always stunning. It is not difficult to understand why Zadie Smith is hailed in all corners of the literary world. There is an essay where she is talking about Joni Mitchell's music and the passion rising off the page made me go, search and listen to some Joni Mitchell tunes. Wow. That is the power of effective, great, and passionate reading. The one drawback to this collection is the lack of clarity about when these essays were crafted. The lack of dates attached to the pieces is frustrating, although at times the content will be the clue to the time period. Reading through the essays you get the impression that Zadie Smith is a very sharp intelligent woman. Someone that you would love to engage in conversation. She is highly engaged when discussing art, writers, and culture even though some references will feel obscure.

Why Feel Free as a title? As she writes in the forward, "I have no real qualifications to write as I do. Not a philosopher or sociologist, not a real professor of literature or film, not a political scientist, professional music critic or trained journalist. I'm employed in an MFA programme, but have no MFA myself, and no PhD. My evidence – such as it is – is almost always intimate. I feel this – do you? I'm struck by this thought – are you? Essays about one person's affective experience have, by their very nature, not a leg to stand on. All they have is their freedom. And the reader is likewise unusually free, because I have absolutely nothing over her, no authority. She can reject my feelings at every point, she can say: 'No, I have never felt that' or 'Dear Lord, the thought never crossed my mind!'" "I have been enriched and informed by these essays and I'm confident most readers will come away with a similar conclusion. Thanks to Edelweiss and Penguin Books for an advanced ebook. Book will hit shelves February 18, 2018.

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. says

**2.991 stars - - - i'm free!**

*this was a struggle to continue the more i read. broken into five sections: 'in the world', 'in the audience', 'in the gallery', 'on the bookshelf', and 'feel free', this book covers* eclectic material like christian marclay's 24 hr movie, *the clock*; mark bradford's video homage to marylin monroe's walk in *niagara*; sarah sze's "centrifuge" art installation; brexit/english politics and policies; the film *anomalisa* (wonderful film, frustrating essay - zadie, we. get. it. you are familiar with schopenhauer; must you find annnnnnnny and evvvvvvvvvery excuse to stuff his name into the crust that is this essay?!? it seemed like there were fourteen mentions too many past the point where i said if i see that name once more i'll [depends on mood]), a rather fun key & peeble interview, a number of book reviews, and personal stories/tidbits throughout.

what i thought would take four to five days to complete took close to two months, and i must admit i did skip some of the essays (either they were just too brutally unexciting a few pages in or the subject matter seemed the aforementioned without sampling any). for me, collecting all these essays together made for an extremely dense read. i'll accept all the weight, but ms. smith is just too academically elevated compared to myself; if the language didn't feel like it was going over my head naturally it felt like she was indeed trying too hard. again, it's not that i didn't enjoy learning new material, but with so many lengthy, linguistically labyrinthian lines after line after line (*after line*) it made the reading experience a chore - the retained, absorbed information too little a consolation prize.

*thanks to penguin press and all involved in this goodreads giveaway.*

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**Roman Clodia says**

A mixed collection of essays: the best are when Smith is discussing issues of politics (the closure of public libraries, the Brexit vote) where she brings a personal intimacy to national questions.

Less enticing are the 'musing' essays where Smith responds to artworks, books, or plays with ideas such as how different dancers epitomize styles of authorship. These pieces often have an interesting idea at their heart but they feel unstructured, sometimes unfinished, more like entries in a writer's diary than a polished essay. They also feel too long: shortened and sharper would have held my interest more and made the piece more impactful.

So not for me a book to be read cover to cover, but good for something stimulating and thoughtful to dip into while commuting. Thanks to Penguin for an ARC via NetGalley.

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### **Lara says**

Just gonna say, *Some Notes on Attunement* is one of the best essays about music I've ever read. I know 100% nothing about Joni Mitchell. I'm sure I've heard something of hers at some point, but I have no idea what, and I've always sort of put her in this camp with U2 and the Beatles and Janis Joplin and Eric Clapton (*aka* artists that a lot of people really, really love and who are generally considered some of music's greats, but whom I have absolutely no interest in). This essay made me want to fall in love with Joni, *expect* to fall in love with Joni, before even listening to a single note, and also articulated so well that feeling of looking back on a former version of yourself and wondering who that person even was, as well as just...the ways we sometimes just close ourselves off to some things while leaving the doors wide open for others. Zadie Smith is magic.

My homework for today: listen to Joni.

Anyway, there are a lot of really great essays in here. I struggled with some of the book reviews because I didn't really know what she was talking about (I kinda don't read much literary fiction, sorry!), but then there were also a number of other essays about things I might never have even heard of that made me want to run out and experience those things RIGHT NOW (like Joni Mitchell, although of course I'd at least heard of her). I think maybe it depended on how Smith connected with those things personally...when she got excited about a subject, I did too!

In conclusion, I really love this woman's way of writing and I feel ridiculous for never having read anything of hers until now. I will be reading her novels, literary fiction or not, ASAP.

Thanks, Penguin and Goodreads for the opportunity to read and review!

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### **Khush says**

Zadie Smith must have felt freer in writing this book. She deals with a broad range of issues in her essays. There is no single theme that runs through them. There are essays that are quite ordinary. I have expected far more intellectually stimulating stuff from her. For instance 'North West London Blues' did not speak to me at all. In reading this book, I also have the feeling that since she is so well-known, no matter what she writes, she finds readers.

Some of the essays are brilliant, but they are not too many. I enjoyed reading 'Love in the Gardens.' Not that I found it intellectually stimulating, I like its free and frank nature – the homely touch; it seems to me that

she could have written a full-length novel on that experience. I found it truly 'feel-free' sort of essay.

For absolutely different reasons, I enjoyed reading 'Dance Lessons for Writers.' Even if one does not know about the artists, one can enjoy what she has to say about them. It is one of the best essays in the book. The only essay where I stopped and reread, just to enjoy the words a little longer. The only difference between the essay I mentioned earlier and this one is this; once you read the essay 'DLW' you might not want to read it again; it impresses with its clever observations, but her essay 'Love in the Gardens' has that life-like quality that makes one read go back to it again and again. It has moments that many of us can identify with it; it is a nice place to inhabit as it celebrates time spent with someone we value and admire; a friend, a sibling, a parent, or a lover.

Actually, I have not read these essays in any particular order. The ones that I am instinctively drawn to are the ones that I read first. For instance, one such essay is called 'Life Writing,' but I was a bit disappointed as it was only two or three pages long. Some of the other essays that I liked reading are 'On Optimism and Despair', 'Generation Why,' 'The I Who Is Not Me,' and 'Man versus Corpse.'

A long time ago I read her brilliant essay "Fail Better" and I guess essays like that compelled me to buy her book. However, I must add that there are essays which do require some sort of background knowledge or a lot of patience to admire them in the section titled 'The Gallery.' I skipped them because I did not understand.

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### **Vivek Tejuja says**

My association with the works of Zadie Smith started somewhere in 2003, with *White Teeth*. It was one of those books that are actually unputdownable (I have always been of the opinion that terms such as these are nothing but marketing gimmicks). Since then, Smith has been one of my favourite writers and with good reason. Her prose is like biting into a plum – tart and sweet and almost awakens you from your stupor. It makes you stand up and take notice of how the world works and perhaps what it always was. Smith doesn't mince her words. Her characters are everyday people who speak their mind and this is also reflective in her new collection of essays, aptly or ironically (given the world we live in) titled, "Feel Free".

"Feel Free" to me is one of the books of our times. The kind of book that doesn't preach but makes so many relevant points that you want to see the world and put it so eloquently as Smith does. It is the collection of essays which are spread over five sections – In the World, In the Audience, In the Gallery, On the Bookshelf and *Feel Free*. These sections pose questions that we recognize and perhaps want answers to: What is the Social Network? What is joy and what is the tolerance of it, if there is something like it? How many kinds of boredom make up life? Who owns the narrative of black America? There are many such questions over a diverse range of topics and that's what makes Zadie's essays stand out.

*Feel Free* speaks of pop culture, culture, social change, political debate, the ever-changing fabric of society and what it really means to be human in the 21st century. Some of these essays have appeared before and some are new. At the same time, all of them are relevant and essential to most areas of our lives.

Smith's essays are sometimes written with the perspective of an insider, but mostly she is an outsider looking in. It isn't difficult to understand Smith and to me that was the most brilliant aspect of this collection. For instance, when she writes about a book, you want to get up and go read it. When she speaks of Joni Mitchell,

you just want to listen to “River” and “Circle Game” on loop. To me, that is the power of great writing.

Essays are often tough to read and since they are so personal in nature, it becomes even more difficult to gauge the place they are coming from. This does not happen when you are reading “Feel Free”. Zadie’s essays are personal and yet appeal to all. The universal quality of her words is too strong to not be understood and related to. “Feel Free” is the collection of essays that needs to be savoured and pondered on. The one that you will not forget easily.

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