



Writing on the Fault Line: Haitian Literature and the Earthquake of 2010 (Contemporary French and Francophone Cultures LUP)

Martin Munro

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What are the effects of a catastrophic earthquake on a society, its culture and politics? Which of these effects are temporary, and which endure? Are the various effects immediately discernible, or do they manifest themselves over time? What roles do artists, and writers in particular have in witnessing, bearing testimony to, and gauging the effects of natural disasters? What is the worth of literature in a time of disaster? These are the fundamental questions addressed in this book, which examines the case of the Haitian earthquake of 12 January 2010, a uniquely destructive event in the recent history of cataclysmic disasters, in Haiti and the broader world. The book argues that Haitian literature since 2010 has played a primary role in recording, bearing testimony to, and engaging with the social and psychological effects of the disaster. It further shows that daring literary invention - what Edwidge Danticat calls "dangerous creation" - constitutes one of the most striking and important means of communicating the effects of such a disaster, and that close engagement with the creative imagination is one of the most privileged ways for the outsider in particular to begin to comprehend the experience of living in and through a time of catastrophe.

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