

BOOK REVIEW

Charles Yu's Interior Chinatown Wins National Book Award for Fiction

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[Charles Yu Wins National Book Award for 'Interior Chinatown' \(vulture.com\)](#)



Photo: Getty Images

On Wednesday, science-fiction writer Charles Yu was awarded the 2020 National Book Award for Fiction for his satirical novel *Interior Chinatown*.

The award was announced by committee chair [Roxane Gay](#), who led a panel of judges in reading 388 submissions, narrowing it down to five finalists before ultimately selecting Yu as the winner.

Yu has written on multiple television shows, including [Lodge 49](#) and [Legion](#), and also served as a writer and story editor on season one of [HBO's Westworld](#) and garnered two Writers Guild of America Award nominations for his work on the program.

Show business runs in his blood as his brother, [Kelvin Yu](#), writes for and voices characters on [Bob's Burgers](#), played Brian Yang on [Master of None](#), and reportedly has a role in [Wonder Woman 1984](#).

Included in Vulture's "[32 Books We Can't Wait to Read](#)," *Interior Chinatown* is "a bildungsroman for the binge-watch generation" that follows Willis Wu, a Taiwanese-American actor, who longs to graduate from playing bit parts like Disgraced Son, Delivery Guy, Striving Immigrant, and Generic Asian Man, and landed the coveted role of Kung Fu Guy.

Written in the form of a TV script for a *Law & Order*-style crime show called "Black and White," *Interior Chinatown* begs the question: "Can Willis ever land the leading role in his own life, or is he doomed to forever have a bit part in American culture?" Congrats to Yu and here's hoping that he finds a way back into the *Westworld's* writers' room for its very open-ended fourth season.