

The Box Man Kobo Abe

Contested Spaces investigates space and conflict in novels, short stories, life writing, and journalism from Canada and Qu?bec by asking how counter-narratives challenge geographies of exclusion from below.

First Michael Jackson, then Pina Bausch and Merce Cunningham. Is someone killing famous dancers? A witty, creative, and seductive mystery.

'A spellbinder from beginning to end, an edgy masterpiece' Chicago Sun Times 'This is the record of a box man'. Anonymous and alone, the box man peeps out of his cut-out eyeholes and watches the world from behind his four cardboard walls. At first repulsed by the strange phenomenon of people who have decided to abandon society and live in boxes on the Tokyo streets, he has found himself drawn into the anonymity and voyeurism of their life. As he becomes obsessed with spying on a young nurse, his identity slips away, in Kobo Abe's eerie, disorienting and seductive masterpiece of unease. 'Funny, sad and destructive ... an invention with its own crazy pull, it gnaws at the reader ... a stunning addition to the literature of eccentricity' The New York Times

Though it has a lovely name, the real "Island of Dreams" is actually a hunk of reclaimed land in Tokyo Bay where the city dumps its garbage . . . and

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yet, Shozo Saka, a middle-aged widower, does indeed find the place beautiful: gravitating more and more, since the death of his wife, toward the Island's massive piles of trash. One day, however, his refuge is invaded by Yoko, a mysterious woman in black, who visits the Island on her motorcycle for no other reason than to treat it as her own private obstacle course. Soon Yoko has lured Saka away from his garbage-paradise, leading him back into a Tokyo far less benign than the things it's thrown away.

Acclaimed on its first publication, *Island of Dreams* is a sinister satire on urban decay.

This collection of Japanese short stories reveals a rapidly changing Japanese society and the deep draw of its traditional culture. The first half of this century saw the coming of age of the Japanese short story. Influenced by Western literary techniques, such innovative writers as Shiga Naoya, Ozaki Shiro, Yasunari Kawabata, Shimaki Kensaku, Hayashi Fumiko, Dazai Osamu, and (somewhat later) Kobo Abe reassessed the Japanese story tradition and brought new vigor to the uniquely Japanese sense of the detail and natural context of everyday life. The works of these writers stand at the center of modern Japan's literary development. Despite their differences, it is the simplicity and purity of their natural images-sultry late-summer days, cicadas, lizards, and the sounds of life's routines-that more than anything anchor the emotions and perceptions

of their stories. For *A Late Chrysanthemum*, translator and editor Lane Dunlop has selected twenty-one stories by these seven intriguing and influential authors to convey the depth and range of the modern Japanese story, a discriminating selection which, in Dunlop's sure and masterful English renderings, won this book the Japan-United States Friendship Award for Literary Translation. A moving, vividly rendered novel from the late author of *The Basketball Diaries*. When poet, musician, and diarist Jim Carroll died in September 2009, he was putting the finishing touches on a potent work of fiction. *The Petting Zoo* tells the story of Billy Wolfram, an enigmatic thirty- eight-year-old artist who has become a hot star in the late-1980s New York art scene. As the novel opens, Billy, after viewing a show of Velázquez paintings, is so humbled and awed by their spiritual power that he suffers an emotional breakdown and withdraws to his Chelsea loft. In seclusion, Billy searches for the divine spark in his own work and life. Carroll's novel moves back and forth in time to present emblematic moments from Billy's life (his Irish Catholic upbringing, his teenage escapades, his evolution as an artist and meteoric rise to fame) and sharply etched portraits of the characters who mattered most to him, including his childhood friend Denny MacAbee, now a famous rock musician; his mentor, the unforgettable art dealer Max Bernbaum; and one

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extraordinary black bird. Marked by Carroll's sharp wit, hallucinatory imagery, and street-smart style, *The Petting Zoo* is a frank, haunting examination of one artist's personal and professional struggles. Of all the great Japanese novelists, Kobo Abe was indubitably the most versatile. With *The Ruined Map*, he crafted a mesmerizing literary crime novel that combines the narrative suspense of Chandler with the psychological depth of Dostoevsky. Mr. Nemuro, a respected salesman, disappeared over half a year ago, but only now does his alluring yet alcoholic wife hire a private eye. The nameless detective has but two clues: a photo and a matchbook. With these he embarks upon an ever more puzzling pursuit that leads him into the depths of Tokyo's dangerous underworld, where he begins to lose the boundaries of his own identity. Surreal, fast-paced, and hauntingly dreamlike, Abe's masterly novel delves into the unknowable mysteries of the human mind. Translated from the Japanese by E. Dale Saunders.

Gardner's final novel: a delicate tapestry of literary genres that create a wonderfully mysterious and ambitious narrative As Peter Mickelsson's brilliant career as a professor at Brown University winds down, he suffers from alcoholism and is on the brink of divorce. Seeking a new start, Mickelsson moves to an old farmhouse in the Pennsylvania countryside to take a position at Bingham University. But when mysterious supernatural events begin to occur, it

becomes clear that these new surroundings will not provide a refuge for this troubled man, but rather prompt an introspective look into the ultimate value of his life's work. With distinctive style and linguistic mastery, author John Gardner weaves together a string of extraordinary plots that culminate in an unforgettable conclusion. This ebook features a new illustrated biography of John Gardner, including original letters, rare photos, and never-before-seen documents from the Gardner family and the University of Rochester Archives.

A beautiful novella in 50 short chapters and 10 pictures about the life of Bada Shanren, the most influential Chinese painter of all times. In 1626, Bada Shanren is born into the Chinese royal family. When the old Ming Dynasty crumbles, he becomes an artist, committed to capturing the essence of nature with a single brushstroke. Then the rulers of the new Qing Dynasty discover his identity and Bada must feign madness to escape. Why Peirene chose to publish this book: 'Fact and fiction arrive at a perfect union in this exquisite novella. A beautiful story about the quiet determined pursuit of inspiration, this is a charming and uplifting book. After reading it, I looked at the world a little differently.' Meike Ziervogel 'The book is 110 pages (and 11 of those are pictures), but - much like one of Shanren's paintings - contains far more than its small compass might suggest.' Brandon Robshaw, Independent on Sunday 'Delicate and moving.' Boyd Tonkin, Independent 'Intriguing, elegant, awesome in its precision and uplifting in its sheer beauty, this is a book to read, enjoy... and then read again.' Pam Norfolk, Lancashire Evening Post 'The author's cool, succinct prose and use of short chapters enhance the meditative nature of

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this beguiling story, which interweaves art theory, history, metaphysics and narrative.' Shelf Unbound 'A powerful, poetic book. A two-hour enchantment.' Kulturspiegel They'd bought a stock and feed store called, of all things, The Farmer's Friend. Gracie could tell Jed thought it a great name. 'Farmers stick together. I like it.' Jed and Gracie's move to Featherwood brings big dreams and open hearts, despite the drought around them. The ready-made rural store even comes with an ancient homestead overlooking the river, albeit one requiring some TLC. Gracie is expecting, and they're eager to put down family roots in the tiny community. Midwife Nell has fled her life in Sydney, hoping to start afresh on a small farm away from prying eyes and gossip. She strives to go unnoticed, but that proves near impossible when she meets charismatic Gracie and Jed, and the unpredictable, attractive Liam, who has as much emotional baggage as Nell does herself. Jed's store becomes the meeting place for the town's colourful characters, people who'd do anything for their neighbours and friends. As Gracie's due date draws close, tensions rise between her and Jed when his impulsiveness strains their precarious financial situation. As a bushfire ravages the region, the whole town comes under threat, putting relationships and lives on the line. Can quiet achievers, unexpected heroes, and a valley of part-time fire-fighters and farmers help Featherwood rise again? By the bestselling author of The Bush Telegraph comes a moving and uplifting Australian drama about what it really means to be a community – and learning that best friends can also make the best family. Kobo Abe, the internationally acclaimed author of *Woman in the Dunes*, combines wildly imaginative fantasies and naturalistic prose to create narratives reminiscent of the work of Kafka and Beckett. In this eerie and evocative masterpiece, the nameless protagonist gives up his identity

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and the trappings of a normal life to live in a large cardboard box he wears over his head. Wandering the streets of Tokyo and scribbling madly on the interior walls of his box, he describes the world outside as he sees or perhaps imagines it, a tenuous reality that seems to include a mysterious rifleman determined to shoot him, a seductive young nurse, and a doctor who wants to become a box man himself. The Box Man is a marvel of sheer originality and a bizarrely fascinating fable about the very nature of identity. Translated from the Japanese by E. Dale Saunders.

An ordinary man finds himself caught in the power of bizarre and unpredictable forces when he discovers one morning at breakfast that radish sprouts have begun to grow out of his shins

Three plays by one of contemporary Japan's most prominent writers -- Involuntary Homicide, The Green Stockings, The Ghost is Here -- translated for this volume reveal Kobo Abe's deep love of absurdity in the face of universal concerns.

As a jump-shoe salesman searches for his wife in a sinister underground hospital, his fascination with the hospital's strange inhabitants, including a girl whose bones are gradually liquefying, causes him to barely notice his wife's unspeakable circumstances. Reprint. 10,000 first printing.

A collection of works including such stories as "An Irrelevant Death," "The Dream Soldier," "Dendrocalia," "The Special Envoy," and "The Crime of S. Karma"

Taking on a subject that is still largely avoided in Japan, this powerful thriller explores the threat posed by an emperor, even in a ceremonial role, to a democratic government. Set in a fictional island country, the novel is told from the perspective of a group of young adults who are embroiled in their private problems of friendship, work, and sex. Much of the plot is revealed through their internet postings, which gradually become a tool of resistance when the country's

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popular young emperor dies and his sister is next in line to the throne. In the confusion that follows, martial law is declared and the populace, obsessed with fears about personal and national security, agrees to accept a new authoritarian government. Horrified by the rapid swing in the nation's politics, the main characters confront the brutality that is eroding support for basic rights and environmental and humanitarian reforms.

A U.S. release of a signature work by the award-winning Japanese writer traces a brilliant psychotherapist's surreal battle in the realms of human subconscious when a psychiatric technology is stolen and used to invade dreams and induce insanity. Original. 15,000 first printing.

American Youth is a controlled, essential, and powerful tale of a teenager in southern New England who is confronted by a terrible moral dilemma following a fatal firearms accident in his home. This tragedy earns him the unwelcome admiration of a sinister group of boys at his school and a girl associated with them. Set in a town riven by social and ideological tensions – an old rural culture in conflict with newcomers – this is a classic portrait of a young man struggling with the idea of identity and responsibility in an America ill at ease with itself.

“A stimulating combination of literary criticism, essay, and fiction” (The New Yorker) from the incomparable Ali Smith Artful is a celebration of literature’s worth in and to the world—it is about the things art can do, the things art is made of, and the quicksilver nature of all artfulness. A magical hybrid that refuses to be tied down to either fiction or the essay form, Artful is narrated by a character

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who is haunted—literally—by a former lover, the writer of a series of lectures about art and literature. Ali Smith's heady powers as a novelist and short story writer harmonize with her keen perceptions as a reader and critic to form a living thing that reminds us that life and art are never separate.

Abe Kobo (1924–1993) was one of Japan's greatest postwar writers, widely recognized for his imaginative science fiction and plays of the absurd. However, he also wrote theoretical criticism for which he is lesser known, merging literary, historical, and philosophical perspectives into keen reflections on the nature of creativity, the evolution of the human species, and an impressive range of other subjects. Abe Kobo tackled contemporary social issues and literary theory with the depth and facility of a visionary thinker. Featuring twelve essays from his prolific career—including "Poetry and Poets (Consciousness and the Unconscious)," written in 1944, and "The Frontier Within, Part II," written in 1969—this anthology introduces English-speaking readers to Abe Kobo as critic and intellectual for the first time. Demonstrating the importance of his theoretical work to a broader understanding of his fiction—and a richer portrait of Japan's postwar imagination—Richard F. Calichman provides an incisive introduction to Abe Kobo's achievements and situates his essays historically and intellectually.

A band of savage thirteen-year-old boys reject the adult world as illusory, hypocritical, and sentimental, and train themselves in a brutal callousness they call 'objectivity'. When the mother of one of them begins an affair with a

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ship's officer, he and his friends idealise the man at first; but it is not long before they conclude that he is in fact soft and romantic. They regard this disillusionment as an act of betrayal on his part - and the retribution is deliberate and horrifying.

Horribly disfigured in an accidental lab explosion and rejected by and alienated from the rest of society, a scientist develops a perfect mask, one that provides a new identity that even his wife cannot penetrate. Reprint. When Lafcadio Wluki, a street-smart nineteen-year-old in 1890s Paris, learns that he's heir to an ailing French nobleman's fortune, he's seized by wanderlust. Traveling through Rome in expensive new clothes, he becomes entangled in a Church extortion scandal involving an imprisoned Pope, a skittish purveyor of graveyard statuary, an atheist-turned-believer on the edge of insolvency, and all manner of wastrels, swindlers, aristocrats, adventurers, and pickpockets.

Recently widowed, Amelia Ingram - Countess of Gresham, decides to shake off the fetters from her arranged and loveless marriage. Exploiting her new-found independence, Amelia indulges her yearning to explore - incognito. Her ploy works so well, she receives an offer of employment from the dangerously handsome, Rupert Latimer - Earl of Badlesmere. On impulse, she accepts and finds herself governess to Cate, a delightful scamp of a child. What began as a bit of a game on Amelia's part, evolves into something far more profound, and a flame she presumed impossible to ignite, is kindled. An unexpected turn of events leads to yet another offer. This time there is far more at stake and,

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determined history not repeat itself, Amelia confesses her ruse. Rupert has been burnt once. Will he douse the spark, or take a risk and trust his heart?

Walking to Hollywood is a dazzling triptych - obsessive, satirical, elegiac - in which Will Self burrows down through the intersections of time, place and psyche to explore some of our deepest fears and anxieties with characteristic fearlessness and jagged humour. 'Very Little' is ostensibly the account of a curative journey to Canada and the USA, but in fact the record of a nematode's progress, as the worm of obsession - with scale and packing and the 'stuff' of our lives - bores through a mind in extremesis. 'Walking to Hollywood' is an extreme satire on celebrity, in which the narrator believes that everyone he meets is played by a famous actor, and that only he can solve the mystery of who murdered the movies. 'Spurn Head' leads Self to a tormented sojourn with a madman whose house is sliding over the edge of a cliff, to a game of checkers with Death, and finally to an encounter with one of Swift's immortal Struldbruggs and a march through a tear in time itself. In Walking to Hollywood Will Self pushes memoir to the limits of invention.

When finance writer Yuki's enigmatic and estranged older brother is found decomposing in his apartment, her only clues to his bizarre demise are her memories of him. As Yuki descends deeper and deeper into her own psyche, she catches glimpses of her true nature. A brisk, bristling story of survivor's guilt, treacherous sex, and unexpected redemption, Outlet opens the door to a spiritual dimension that is both new and age-old. The

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climax is mind-blowing.

Poetry. Art. Asian & Asian American Studies. 2014 Kore Press First Book Winner, selected by Joy Harjo. SILENT ANATOMIES is a poetic-visual hybrid that traverses the body's terrain, examining the phenomena of cultural silences. Whether it is shame obscuring the female body, the social stigma shrouding certain illnesses, or the cryptic stories of her ancestors, Monica Ong interrogates the agency of the daughter, who must decide whether or not to speak out. What happens to stories that go underreported, un-translated, or are completely erased? Flowers of Grass is Takehiko Fukunaga's fully realized portrait of a young man of fastidious intelligence and great sorrow, and shows us how it is possible, seeing reality from the side of death and despair, to still choose life. Outside Tokyo, a tuberculosis sanatorium in the village of K has a six-bed ward that the narrator, an aspiring poet, shares with a student of linguistics and budding writer named Shiomi. After the stubborn Shiomi insists on undergoing a dangerous surgical procedure and dies in the process, two notebooks turn up in his bed-sheets. Flowers of Grass unfolds as the narrator reads them, asking himself if Shiomi's death was a sort of suicide, and learning the details of his late friend's two great loves: for a brother and sister, both of whom reject him. Fukunaga himself spent seven years recuperating from tuberculosis following World War II, and drew on his own experiences to create a fully realized portrait of a young man of fastidious intelligence and great sorrow, and how it is possible, seeing reality from the side of death and despair, to still choose life.

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In a Kafkaesque novel set in a fictional Western nation, husbands, wives and lovers are entwined in complicated, often tortuous relationships as they, stepping in and out of each other's fantasies, explore the deepest realms of human desire. Original.

In the aftermath of World War II, Kuki Ky?z?, a Japanese youth raised in the puppet state of Manchuria, struggles to return home to Japan. What follows is a wild journey involving drugs, smuggling, chases, and capture. Ky?z? finally makes his way to the waters off Japan but finds himself unable to disembark. His nation remains inaccessible to him, and now he questions its very existence. *Beasts Head for Home* is an acute novel of identity, belonging, and the vagaries of human behavior from an exceptional modern Japanese author.

Against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, five aristocratic families in Russia are transformed by the vagaries of life, by war, and by the intersection of their lives with each other. Hundreds of characters populate *War and Peace*, many of them historical persons, including Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I, and all of them come to life under Tolstoy's deft hand. *War and Peace* is generally considered to be Tolstoy's masterpiece, a pinnacle of Russian literature, and one of history's great novels. Tolstoy himself refused to call it that, saying it was "not a novel, even less is it a poem, and still less a historical chronicle." It contains elements of history, narrative, and philosophy, the latter increasing in quantity as the book moves towards its climax. Whatever it is called, it is a triumph whose breadth and depth is perhaps unmatched in literature. This production

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restores the Russian given names that were anglicized by the Maudes in their translation, the use of Russian patronymics and diminutives that they eliminated, and Tolstoy's original four-book structure. This book is part of the Standard Ebooks project, which produces free public domain ebooks.

This fantastically varied and exciting collection celebrates the great Japanese short story, from its modern origins in the nineteenth century to the remarkable works being written today. Short story writers already well-known to English-language readers are all included here - Tanizaki, Akutagawa, Murakami, Mishima, Kawabata - but also many surprising new finds. From Yuko Tsushima's 'Flames' to Yuten Sawanishi's 'Filling Up with Sugar', from Shin'ichi Hoshi's 'Shoulder-Top Secretary' to Banana Yoshimoto's 'Bee Honey', The Penguin Book of Japanese Short Stories is filled with fear, charm, beauty and comedy. Curated by Jay Rubin, who has himself freshly translated several of the stories, and introduced by Haruki Murakami, this book will be a revelation to its readers.

The Woman in the Dunes, by celebrated writer and thinker Kobo Abe, combines the essence of myth, suspense and the existential novel. After missing the last bus home following a day trip to the seashore, an amateur entomologist is offered lodging for the night at the bottom of a vast sand pit. But when he attempts to leave the next morning, he quickly discovers that the locals have other plans. Held captive with seemingly no chance of escape, he is

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tasked with shoveling back the ever-advancing sand dunes that threaten to destroy the village. His only companion is an odd young woman. Together their fates become intertwined as they work side by side at this Sisyphean task.

NOW A MAJOR FILM, LEAVE NO TRACE, DIRECTED BY DEBRA GRANIK AND STARRING BEN FOSTER AND THOMASIN HARCOURT MCKENZIE A thirteen-year-old girl and her father live in Forest Park, an enormous nature preserve in Portland, Oregon. They inhabit an elaborate cave shelter, wash in a nearby creek, store perishables at the water's edge, use a makeshift septic system, tend a garden, even keep a library of sorts. Once a week they go to the city to buy groceries and otherwise merge with the civilized world. But one small mistake allows a backcountry jogger to discover them, which derails their entire existence, ultimately provoking a deeper flight. Inspired by a true story and told through the startlingly sincere voice of its young narrator, Caroline, *My Abandonment* is a riveting journey into life at the margins and a mesmerizing tale of survival and hope.

Adam Levin's debut novel *The Instructions* was one of the most buzzed-about books of 2010, a sprawling universe of "death-defying sentences, manic wit, exciting provocations and simple human warmth" (*Rolling Stone*). Now, in the stories of *Hot Pink*,

Levin delivers ten smaller worlds, shaken snow-globes of overweight romantics, legless prodigies, quixotic dollmakers, Chicagoland thugs, dirty old men, protective fathers, balloon-laden dumptrucks, and walls that ooze gels. Told with lust and affection, karate and tenderness, slapstickery, ferocity, and heart, *Hot Pink* is the work of a major talent in his sharpest form.

NATIONAL BESTSELLER *Wind/Pinball*, a unique two-in-one volume, includes, on one side, Murakami's first novel *Hear the Wind Sing*. When you flip the book over, you can read his second novel, *Pinball*, 1973. Each book has its own stunning cover. In the spring of 1978, a young Haruki Murakami sat down at his kitchen table and began to write. The result: two remarkable short novels—*Hear the Wind Sing* and *Pinball*, 1973—that launched the career of one of the most acclaimed authors of our time. These powerful, at times surreal, works about two young men coming of age—the unnamed narrator and his friend the Rat—are stories of loneliness, obsession, and eroticism. They bear all the hallmarks of Murakami's later books, and form the first two-thirds, with *A Wild Sheep Chase*, of the trilogy of the Rat. Widely available in English for the first time ever, newly translated, and featuring a new introduction by Murakami himself, *Wind/Pinball* gives us a fascinating insight into a great writer's beginnings.

"Deeply satisfying...succeeds on a grand scale...best of all is the language....Hopkinson's narrative voice has a way of getting under the skin."--The New York Times Book Review "Caribbean patois adorns this novel with graceful rhythms...Beneath it lie complex, clearly evoked characters, haunting descriptions of exotic planets, and a stirring story...[This book] ought to elevate Hopkinson to star status." --Seattle Times

It's Carnival time and the Caribbean-colonized planet of Toussaint is celebrating with music, dance, and pageantry. Masked "Midnight Robbers" waylay revelers with brandished weapons and spellbinding words. To young Tan-Tan, the Robber Queen is simply a favorite costume to wear at the festival--until her power-corrupted father commits an unforgiveable crime. Suddenly, both father and daughter are thrust into the brutal world of New Half-Way Tree. Here monstrous creatures from folklore are real, and the humans are violent outcasts in the wilds. Tan-Tan must reach into the heart of myth and become the Robber Queen herself. For only the Robber Queen's legendary powers can save her life . . . and set her free.

Every night, Kawashima Masayuki creeps from his bed and watches over his baby girl's crib while his wife sleeps. But this is no ordinary domestic scene. He has an ice pick in his hand, and a barely controllable desire to use it. Deciding to confront his demons, Kawashima sets into motion a chain of

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events seeming to lead inexorably to murder...

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