

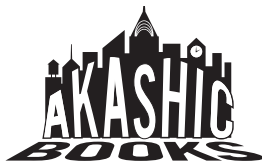
AKASHIC BOOKS

CATALOG

REVERSE-GENTRIFICATION
OF THE LITERARY WORLD

MAY—AUGUST 2025

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AKASHIC BOOKS is an award-winning independent company dedicated to publishing literary fiction and political nonfiction by authors who are either ignored by the mainstream, or who have no interest in working within the ever-consolidating ranks of the major corporate publishers. Akashic Books hosts additional imprints, including the Akashic Noir Series, the Akashic Drug Chronicles Series, Black Sheep Books for Young Readers, Open Lens, Peekash Press, Kaylie Jones Books, Dave Zirin's Edge of Sports, LyricPop, and Ann Hood's Gracie Belle.





FELONY JUGGLER

A NOVEL BY PENN JILLETTE



**From Penn Jillette of the legendary magic duo Penn & Teller:
A street performer finds himself enmeshed in a crime and must
outwit his fellow conspirators in his greatest juggling act yet**

In the early 1970s, Poe—a quick-witted young juggler from rural Massachusetts—abandons the talent shows of his childhood in favor of a nomadic life. He hops trains, hitchhikes, lives on the streets, sleeps rough, and juggles to feed himself. A few years before, he would have been a hobo; a few decades later, he would have been homeless; but in 1973, he is just a street-juggling hippie.

After roaming the country for a few years, Poe settles in Philadelphia and masters his street act before ever-growing crowds. In time, he runs all the busking around South Street like the don of a street-performing mafia. But his talent at manipulating crowds attracts the attention of a criminal organization who convince him to provide a diversion during a bank heist for a payday far greater than the coins he collects in his hat. Things go south, an innocent bystander is killed, and this peace-love talking hippie is now a felony murderer.

He splits town and goes into hiding, but he can't resist the lure of the crowd, and resurfaces under a pseudonym in Hibbing, Minnesota, drawing large crowds as a regular performer at a Renaissance Fair(e). Unfortunately, his notoriety outs him to the criminal organization who believes he took something of importance from them during the heist. Using all of the wit and misdirection that has made him the best street performer anyone has ever seen, Poe must outsmart and outmaneuver them in order to return to the peaceful life of juggling.

Felony Juggler is an accurate depiction of the streets and street performing in the 1970s, told with the excursive and a-little-too-honest style of Penn Jillette—who was, just coincidentally, in his own words, a street juggler and carny trash in the 1970s. Like his previous novel *Random*, Jillette's intellectual curiosity, twisting morality, and honed stagecraft fuel a madcap narrative brimming with his renowned humor.



PENN JILLETTE is a cultural phenomenon as a solo personality and as half of the world-famous Emmy Award-winning magic duo Penn & Teller, whose live show spent years on Broadway and is now the longest-running headlining show in Las Vegas. The pair have their own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Jillette cohosted the Showtime series *Penn & Teller: Bullshit!* which was nominated for thirteen Emmy Awards and won him a Writers Guild Award. He currently cohosts the CW Network competition series *Penn & Teller: Fool Us!* His weekly podcast, *Penn's Sunday School*, was the number one downloaded podcast on iTunes during its debut week and was named by iTunes as Best New Comedy Podcast. He is the author of numerous books, including, most recently, the novel *Random*, and the nonfiction *New York Times* best-selling books *Presto!: How I Made Over 100 Pounds Disappear and Other Magical Tales* and *God No!: Signs You May Already Be an Atheist and Other Magical Tales*; the novel *Sock*; and the essay collection *Every Day Is an Atheist Holiday!*



FELONY JUGGLER by Penn Jillette | Pub. Date: May 6, 2025 | 240 pages | Fiction/Literature

HARDCOVER, \$26.95, ISBN: 978-1-63614-238-8 | E-book, \$22.73, E-ISBN: 978-1-63614-239-5

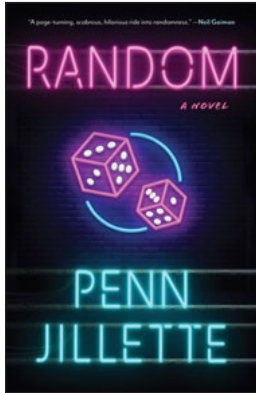
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PRAISE FOR *RANDOM* BY PENN JILLETTE



"Jillette's latest novel, *Random*, is about a young man who inherits his father's crushing debt to a loan shark and turns to dice—and other dangerous measures—to dig himself out. That the dice bring him luck sends him a new philosophy of leaving decisions both big and small up to chance." —*New York Times*

"Penn Jillette is an atheist, triple-goddamned lunatic, and his book is a glorious Las Vegas lunatic paean to chance and adventure—a page-turning, scabrous, hilarious ride into randomness." —Neil Gaiman

"*Random* is everything you would hope from Penn Jillette and so much more. Random numbers are seemingly crazy, unconnected, and unpredictable: this fabulous, wondrously compelling, funny, and original novel is all that too. As for laughs—it passed the the fling-up-the-head-snort-and-slap-the-thigh test a dozen times in the first few pages alone. Hugely recommended." —Stephen Fry, actor/writer

"Jillette (*Presto!*), the magician best known as the verbal half of Penn and Teller, unveils an entertaining Las Vegas picaresque . . . Jillette's acerbic wit and perfect pacing keep this afloat. Readers will hope Jillette has more fiction up his sleeves."—*Publishers Weekly*

"Jillette is one of our weirder national treasures. [His] unironic hero is Bobby Ingersoll, a nobody who makes his living driving strip club ads up and down the Strip . . . After accidentally ripping off some gangbangers during a botched robbery, Bobby drops it all on a roll of the dice and suddenly finds himself a multimillionaire with an epiphany: 'The Dice now owned Bobby. He owed his life to Chance' . . . An average joe's free-spirited, madcap romp through the last days of American empire." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"*Random*, is a corker about a Vegas guy in a tight spot who has a stroke of luck—and turns it into a life philosophy. It hits the world on Oct. 11—place a bet on it." —*CultureWag*

"Penn Jillette is half of Penn & Teller, the longest-running magic show in Las Vegas. This is his crime-fiction debut, and he has put together a wild story set in Sin City that is sinfully diverting . . . [A] crackerjack caper." —*Booklist*

"The reader on your list who loves to laugh will thoroughly enjoy *Random* by Penn Jillette. It's the story of an almost-twenty-one-year-old who inherits a pile of debt from his horrible father, and it's due to the (even more horrible) loan shark when the guy turns twenty-one. Will a roll of the dice eliminate all his problems? Lucky is the person who gets this book, to find out." —*QSaltLake Magazine*, Holiday Gift Guide

"As conjured up by Penn Jillette, master magician and best-selling author of both fiction and nonfiction, *Random* takes us on a crazy, dizzy, and inventive journey in which Las Vegas born and bred Bobby Ingersoll opts to let Chance guide his life . . . Like a night in Vegas experienced with a buzz on, this all becomes a tipsy ride . . . Entertaining reading for anyone who likes a gamble." —*Mystery Scene*

"[*Random*] is the story of Bobby Ingersoll, who finds himself responsible for his father's gambling debts, and who places his faith—or something like it—in 'Random,' the philosophy of basing life choices entirely on the roll of his 'lucky' pair of dice. What follows is a rollicking exploration of what happens when we give over every decision—from what to eat to whom to marry to how or when to die—to the random fall of two numbered cubes." —*Tulsa World*

FELONY JUGGLER by Penn Jillette | Pub. Date: May 6, 2025 | 240 pages | Fiction/Literature

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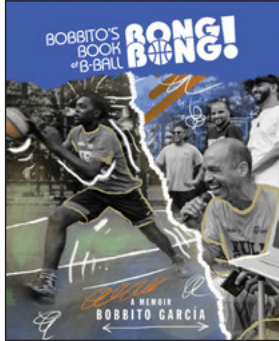
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BOBBITO'S BOOK OF B-BALL BONG BONG!

A MEMOIR BY **BOBBITO GARCÍA**



A Radio Hall of Famer and sneaker culture icon, Bobbito García is also a basketball sage who chronicles his unlikely experiences in and around the game as a Latino raised on hip-hop.

"Bobbito García's book is full of heart and needed in this world. It's also way more than a book—it's a visual and emotional journey with his rarely seen photography. I'm ready for an exhibit. Whip whop bong bong!"

—Vikki Tobak, author of *Contact High: A Visual History of Hip-Hop*

"Bobbito is the poet laureate of the playground game."

—David Hollander, author of *How Basketball Can Save the World*

"Bobbito epitomizes what playground basketball is truly about."

—Jesse Washington, coauthor of *I Came as a Shadow*

BASKETBALL ON NEW YORK CITY'S 700+ OUTDOOR COURTS was bubbling during the seventies and eighties and coincided with the birth of hip-hop and sneaker culture. Bobbito García came of age during this era and caught an uncontrollable fever to be a ballplayer, witnessing firsthand the gumbo of sports, music, and fashion in the local parks. The game influenced his style, language, movement, creative thought, and, in a personal manner, his well-being. He couldn't go anywhere without a ball in his hand, practice shorts under his pants, and kicks on his feet, ready for action at any point, any day (including his first job interview).

In the 1990s, Bobbito became a world-famous hip-hop radio host as well as the progenitor of sneaker journalism, but his world never stopped revolving around living and breathing at every local court he could find. Simultaneously, the outdoor basketball aesthetic emerged as a force in the sports/entertainment/footwear industry, a catalyst to market authenticity when a brand wanted to garner street credibility. Bobbito stood firmly at this cross section of subcultures, not only as a historian, photographer, writer, filmmaker, and active participant, but as a curator of the shift itself. Advertising legend John Jay, former global creative director at Wieden+Kennedy, called García his "cultural DJ" after they collaborated on Nike's groundbreaking "NYC City Attack" ad campaign. The lifestyle of the park pickup player, now exposed, went on to impact the world, and the ripple effect could even be seen on the hardwood floors of the NBA.

In 2013, the *New York Times* referred to Bobbito as "an ardent ambassador for New York City street basketball." This book is an intimate view into his life as a ballplayer, announcer, and performer. It doubles as a profound document for the unspoken folklore and history of the outdoor game, while speaking volumes to the roots of García's favorite pastime—putting up jumpers and getting busy with the rock in his hands. In his words: *Basketball is a religion. The park is my church . . .*



BOBBITO'S BOOK OF B-BALL BONG BONG! | by Bobbito García | Pub. Date: July 1, 2025 | 216 pages
Memoir/Sports | Edge of Sports is an imprint of Akashic Books

Hardcover, \$32.95, ISBN: 978-1-63614-230-2 | E-book, \$29.73, E-ISBN: 978-1-63614-231-9

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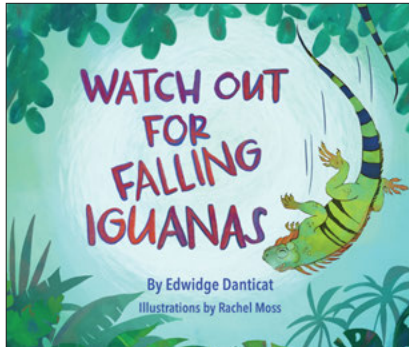
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WATCH OUT FOR FALLING IGUANAS

BY EDWIDGE DANTICAT

ILLUSTRATED BY RACHEL MOSS



Perfect for readers of all ages, this captivating picture book teaches children about iguanas' unique behaviors while celebrating the bonds between generations and the wonders of the natural world.

ON A RARE CHILLY DAY IN MIAMI, Florida, young Leila sets off for school bundled up in her bright red jacket. But this isn't just any cold day—her grandmother, Grandma Issa, gives her an unusual warning: “Watch out for falling iguanas.”

As Leila navigates her morning, she can't stop thinking about Grandma's strange words. From remembering dodging coconuts and seeing her parents' car being held up by chickens crossing the road to admiring roaming peacocks, Leila's day is full of curious encounters. But nothing prepares her for the moment she sees an iguana drop from a tree.

Join Leila, her close friends, and her teacher Ms. Benoit on an unexpected adventure as they discover why these tropical creatures fall from trees during cold snaps. With charming illustrations by acclaimed Jamaican artist Rachel Moss and a truly heartwarming story, *Watch Out for Falling Iguanas* is a delightful tale about family, friendship, and the surprises nature can bring.



EDWIDGE DANTICAT was born in Haiti and moved to the United States when she was twelve. She is the editor of *Haiti Noir* and *Haiti Noir 2: The Classics*, and author of *Breath, Eyes, Memory* (an Oprah's Book Club selection), *Krik? Krak!*, and *The Dew Breaker*, among other books for adults. Her books for children include *Eight Days: A Story of Haiti*, *Mama's Nightingale: A Story of Immigration and Separation*, *The Last Mapou*, and *My Mommy Medicine*. Her young adult novels *Untwine*, *Anacaona: Golden Flower*, and *Behind the Mountains* offer profound insights into the immigrant experience and the beauty and complexity of Haitian culture. A MacArthur Fellow, Danticat currently teaches at Columbia University.



RACHEL MOSS is an illustrator in love with the bright colors and vibrant energy of the Caribbean. She was born in Jamaica and studied animation in England at the University for the Creative Arts. Moss now lives in Jamaica where she spends her days illustrating children's books such as *Respect* with song lyrics by Otis Redding, *These Boots Are Made for Walkin'* with song lyrics by Lee Hazlewood, *African* with song lyrics by Peter Tosh, *Lean on Me*, with song lyrics by Bill Withers, *I Am a Promise* by Shelly Ann Fraser Pryce, *Abigail's Glorious Hair*, and *Milo & Myra Learn Manners with Mr. Mongoose*.

WATCH OUT FOR FALLING IGUANAS | by EDWIDGE DANTICAT | illustrated by Rachel Moss

Pub. Date: July 1, 2025 | 32 pages | JUVENILE FICTION / Animals / Reptiles

Hardcover, \$16.95, 978-1-63614-232-6 | Ebook, \$16.95, E-ISBN: 978-1-63614-233-3 | Review copies upon request

Digital review copies via Edelweiss | BLACK SHEEP, an imprint of AKASHIC BOOKS | NEW YORK

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AND THEN CAME THE BLUES

MY JOURNEY FROM SURVIVOR TO NYPD DETECTIVE FIRST GRADE AND BEYOND

A MEMOIR BY **KATRINA BROWNLEE**



After being shot ten times by her fiancé and left for dead, Katrina Brownlee miraculously survived and became a decorated NYPD detective, a mentor, and founder of a nonprofit support group for at-risk women.

“Ms. Brownlee, who had only ever been let down and ignored by men with badges, even as she stood as living evidence of the beatings and violence one of them had delivered, approached an institution she deeply distrusted, and stepped inside . . . In 2001 she entered the police academy. What followed was a twenty-year career of promotions to busy, dangerous areas of policing, from the streets of Brooklyn to undercover work in narcotics and prostitution stings. She ended up on the elite executive protection detail, as a bodyguard to the mayor of New York . . . She retired . . . as a first-grade detective. Only when she decided to put away those uniforms for good did her story finally spill forth.” —*New York Times*

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, in the United States, an average of twenty-four people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner, and one in three women have experienced some form of domestic violence. One of those women was Katrina Brownlee, who as a twenty-two-year-old mother of two experienced hell at the hands of her then-fiancé. He was a law enforcement officer—a group two to four times more likely than the general population to be abusive, and who are known for protecting their own. During his dangerous outbursts, Brownlee would call the police for help, only to see the cops turn their backs on her when her abuser flashed his badge. On a cold January morning in 1993, her fiancé shot her ten times and left her for dead.

Brownlee could have been just one more of the eleven women/girls killed per minute worldwide by a loved one. Instead, miraculously, she survived. Through hard work, faith, and perseverance, she recovered from her injuries and found a path through her trauma. She decided to become a police officer to help others in her situation, to be the “good cop” who had not been there for her when she had needed saving. In 2021, she retired from a highly decorated twenty-year career with the NYPD. As the founder of a support group for at-risk young women, Young Ladies of Our Future, Brownlee decided that the time had come to tell her story—the whole story—a story of self-empowerment, of healing generational trauma, and of turning pain into hope for herself and her community.



KATRINA BROWNLEE a retired NYPD police officer, is a sought-after speaker regarding her triumph over domestic violence; she also regularly teaches seminars to law enforcement officers on managing domestic violence incidents. Her story has been profiled on CBS’s *48 Hours* and in the *New York Times*. Brownlee has received many accolades for her mentorship work as the founder of Young Ladies of Our Future, a nonprofit organization serving at-risk young women. The organization’s mission is to heal the wounds of interpersonal violence, build self-esteem, and promote health and wellness so young women can achieve their goals and live successful lives.

Brownlee also established Can’t Be Silenced, an organization working on solutions to the urgent domestic violence crisis.



AND THEN CAME THE BLUES | by Katrina Brownlee | Pub. Date: August 5, 2025
288 pages | Memoir/Black Interest/Women’s Interest | Open Lens, an Imprint of Akashic Books

Hardcover, \$26.95, ISBN: 978-1-63614-236-4 | E-book, \$22.73, E-ISBN: 978-1-63614-237-1

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PARADISE ONCE

HISTORICAL FICTION BY OLIVE SENIOR



A historical novel that brings to life the resiliency of the indigenous Taíno people in the Caribbean whose culture was virtually destroyed within two generations of their “discovery” by Christopher Columbus in 1492

PARADISE ONCE TRACES THE AFTERMATH of the massacre by Spanish forces of the fictional Maima village in Cuba in 1513. Some believe the destruction of Maima is the result of angering the *cemíes*—Taíno spiritual entities—when foreign practices, contrary to the sacred laws of the Taíno, began to infiltrate the village.

Four young people who survive the massacre are unwittingly chosen by the *cemíes* to save a Sacred Bundle and return it to a cave in the Cauta mountain, the mythological place the Taíno are believed to have come from: Sekou, an enslaved African born in Spain who has aligned himself with the Taíno resistance; Night Orchid, a young girl and the reluctant bearer of the Sacred Bundle; the young Taíno noble Heart of Palm; and finally Flint, whose mother is part of the “Old Ones,” a remnant group of people on the islands displaced by the Taíno.

The four survivors start off on separate paths and only learn of their roles in the sacred mission when they unite at the holy site and encounter the Maima shaman Candlewood. Under the direction of the *cemíes*, Candlewood guides them into the cave, where the “dark” shaman Shark Tooth—who has sold his soul to the underworld powers—awaits. As they progress on their journey, Candlewood informs them of the leadership roles they are destined to play in the preservation of the Taíno culture. In time, they will together defend the heartland as resistance fighters who will become known in history as *Cimarrones* or Maroons. But first they must defeat Shark Tooth in a life-or-death battle for the possession of the Bundle in the sacred ball court at Cauta, the fate of the entire Taíno people in their hands.

Senior’s exquisitely crafted historical fiction authentically evokes the spiritual heart of the Taíno people in this love song to the Caribbean.



OLIVE SENIOR is the award-winning author of twenty books of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and children’s literature. She was the Poet Laureate of Jamaica from 2021 to 2024, and has received numerous awards and honors, including honorary doctorates from the University of the West Indies (Jamaica) and York University (Canada), the Gold Medal of the Institute of Jamaica, Canada’s Matt Cohen Award for Lifetime Achievement, the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature, and the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize. Senior’s work is widely translated, and is taught in schools and other institutions worldwide; her writing is also the subject of numerous critical essays. She splits her time between Toronto, Canada and Kingston, Jamaica.



PARADISE ONCE | by Olive Senior | Pub. Date: June 3, 2025 | 336 pages
Historical Fiction/Literature/Caribbean Interest

Hardcover, \$29.95, ISBN: 978-1-63614-227-2 | E-book, \$26.23, E-ISBN: 978-1-63614-228-9

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HAMBURG NOIR



EDITED BY **JAN KARSTEN**



The historic northern port city Hamburg joins Berlin as the Akashic Noir Series continues its foray into one of Western Europe’s most storied nations.

“Even the supposedly ‘most beautiful city in the world’ has its dark sides. This well-edited anthology impressively shows them in literary form. Powerful stories: Hamburg from below.” —*Hamburger Abendblatt*

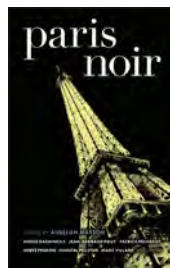
“Hamburg, the metropolis on the River Elbe, has always been an important trading city, a gateway to the world, a center for musicals, and a tourist magnet. But there are other sides to Hamburg [and] the editor of this volume shows this in his fourteen short stories by renowned authors . . . These are short crime stories, but they are also character and milieu studies, masterfully and pointedly told, despite and precisely because of their brevity, and they cast a spotlight on Hamburg’s dark side. Absolutely worth reading, even if you don’t live on the Alster, and therefore recommended to all readers.” —*EKZ*

FEATURING BRAND-NEW STORIES FROM: Nora Luttmer, Till Raether, Matthias Wittekindt, Ingvar Ambjørnsen, Bela B. Felsenheimer, Jasmin Ramadan, Frank Göhre, Timo Blunck, Katrin Seddig, Tina Uebel, Zoë Beck, Brigitte Helbling, Kai Hensel, Robert Brack; translated from German by Noah Harley, Paul Young, and Geoff Howes.

Hamburg Noir offers fourteen original stories, fourteen unique perspectives, fourteen distinct neighborhoods, and fourteen fascinating pieces of a larger puzzle. It is a gripping journey of discovery through the darker sides of the city—from the north of Hamburg to downtown, from the south via the harbor and Altona to the affluent Blankenese. The book is at once an exhilarating literary portrait and a deep, dark declaration of love to this multifaceted city.

JAN KARSTEN is the publisher and editor of CulturBooks, an award-winning independent publishing house based in Germany that specializes in contemporary international literature and crime fiction and has twice won the Deutsche Krimipreis award. Karsten also translates literature from English, including works by Keith Gessen, Carl Nixon, and Kathryn Scanlan. He lives in Hamburg.

ALSO AVAILABLE IN THE AKASHIC NOIR SERIES



HAMBURG NOIR | edited by Jan Karsten | Pub. Date: August 5, 2025 | 288 pages | Fiction/Mystery Anthology

Trade paperback original, \$17.95, ISBN: 978-1-63614-115-2 | E-book, \$17.48, E-ISBN: 97-8-163614-184-8

Review copies upon request | Digital review copies via Edelweiss | AKASHIC BOOKS / NEW YORK

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THE AKASHIC NOIR SERIES

Launched with the summer '04 best seller *Brooklyn Noir*, Akashic Books continues its award-winning series of original noir anthologies. Each book comprises all new stories, each one set in a distinct neighborhood or location within the geographical area of the book.

"Hold the eggnog: What you need is a draft of 'edgy fatalism and sexy recklessness,' of flashy crime, gallows humor, and 'desperate deals with a variety of devils,' served up every year since 2004 by the editors of Akashic Books' brilliant noir anthologies. From Brooklyn to Boston, from Phoenix to pre- and post-Katrina New Orleans, each volume in the series reveals a city's distinctive inner darkness." — *O, The Oprah Magazine*

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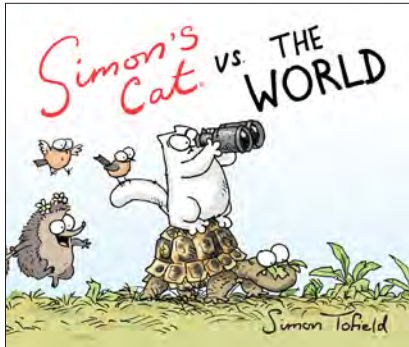
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SIMON'S CAT VS. THE WORLD



BY SIMON TOFIELD



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Simon's Cat proved his authority in the house. He returned victorious from his adventures beyond the garden fence. He prevailed after the chaotic arrival of a new kitten in *Simon's Cat in Kitten Chaos*. Now he takes on the world! Illustrated in glorious full color, this volume explodes from the page with mesmerizing levels of detail.



SIMON TOFIELD is an award-winning animator and cartoonist. He has had a lifelong interest in animals, beginning as a child, when his uncle gave him a plastic pond that quickly filled with wildlife. Simon was given his first cat when he was nine and now has four rescue cats, which are the mischievous inspiration for his work. He is the author of multiple Simon's Cat books, including *Simon's Cat in Kitten Chaos*, *Simon's Cat vs. the World*, and *Simon's Cat Off to the Vet . . . and Other Cat-astrophes*.



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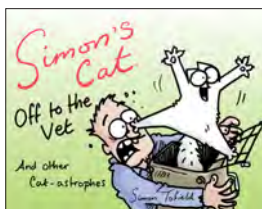
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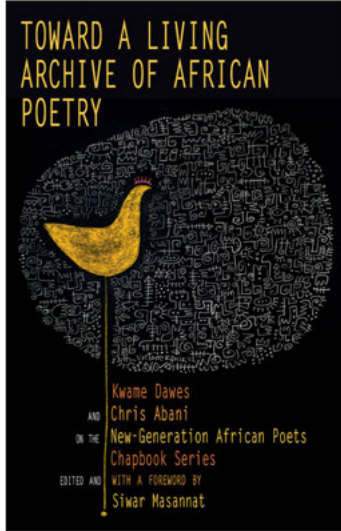




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FROM THE PREFACE BY SIWAR MASANNAT:

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KWAME DAWES is the Ghanaian-born, award-winning author of twenty-two books of poetry—including *Sturge Town* from W.W. Norton—and numerous other books of fiction, criticism, and essays. He has won Pushcart prizes, a Guggenheim Fellowship, an Emmy, and was the 2019 awardee of the Windham-Campbell Prize in Poetry. He currently teaches at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.



CHRIS ABANI, a Nigerian-born, award-winning poet and novelist, currently teaches at Northwestern University in Chicago. He is the recipient of a PEN USA Freedom-to-Write Award, a Prince Claus Award, a Lannan Literary Fellowship, a California Book Award, a Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, a PEN Beyond Margins Award, a PEN/Hemingway Award, and a Guggenheim Award.



SIWAR MASANNAT is a Jordanian writer and the author of *cue* and *50 Water Dreams*. Masannat works as managing editor of the African Poetry Book Fund and *Prairie Schooner*.



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