

Thinkingdom

Foreign Rights

Spring 2023

Authors and Titles

Fiction

- Chen Chungheng, SUBMARINES IN THE NIGHT
- Dong Lai, YEAR OF WONDERS
- Mai Jia, THE COLONEL AND THE EUNUCH
- Mai Jia, THE MESSAGE
- Wang Xiaobo, GOLDEN AGE
- Yu Hua, WENCHENG

Non-Fiction

- Wang Xiaobo, PLEASURE OF THINKING: Essays
- Liu Zichao, LOST SATELLITES: A Journey Deep into Central Asia

Poetry

- Yu Xiuhua, MOONLIGHT RESTS ON MY LEFT PALM

SUBMARINES IN THE NIGHT

《夜晚的潜水艇》

Short Stories, 2020, Imaginist, 224 pages.

English sample available.

Rights Sold:

- Japanese (Astra House Japan)
- Spanish (Aristas Martínez)

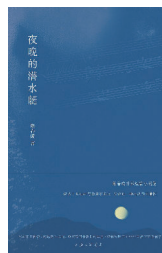
PageOne Literary Award, Spring 2021

One Way Street Bookstore Book Award, 2020

Asia Weekly 10 Best Fiction Books of 2020

Douban Best Chinese Literary Fiction of 2020

Blancpain-Imaginist Literary Prize, 2021



陈春成

CHEN CHUNCHENG

Chen Chuncheng was born in Ningde, Fujian in 1990. He was a landscape engineer when he began to publish fiction online in 2017. His short story "The Musicians" was listed as one of the 10 best short stories in 2019 by the prestigious Chinese literary magazine *Harvest*. His debut short story collection *Submarines in the Night* (2020) has been a critical success, garnering the inaugural PageOne Literary Award and the Blancpain-Imaginist Literary Prize in 2021. Chen Chuncheng currently lives in Quanzhou, Fujian, where he works at the local botanical garden.

**"Perhaps everything, I reckon,
connects with one another in ways unknown to us."**

A collection of nine short stories delving into the unbearable weight of norms, the excess of imagination, and the fierceness of art, interweaving the speculative genre with Chinese folklore.

These stories turn the spotlight on characters who throw themselves into the suicidal beauty of art-making and becoming. A young painter-to-be, caught by a daydreaming compulsion, pictures his bedroom as a submarine every night. A group of Buddhist monks are convinced that the best way to save a splendid calligraphic work from the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, is to keep it out of sight once and for all. After three thousand years of slumber, a man wakes up to find that the entire universe will be at stake if he loses memories about a canonical novel. After serving at the Office of Music Censorship in Leningrad for decades, an officer finds himself deeply attracted to the illicit music submitted by a mysterious author, the revelation of whose identity will forever change the officer's life.

Effortlessly swinging from ruminations on craftsmanship to satires about efficiency and stability, these stories remind any reader of the sheer pleasure of encountering a lyrical language and genuinely inventive narratives. Elegantly summoned and revived, the sensibility of classical Chinese literature seeps through these pages, gesturing toward how alternative ways of being can be radically imagined and lived.

Chen Chuncheng writes in a clear and elegant way rarely found among the younger generation of writers. These stories bring about a happy marriage between world literature and the classical canon. His writing feels neat and tidy, and yet it relentlessly probes into all kinds of crises: totalitarianism, paranoia, the end of history, memory loss, distressing evenings, uncanny dreams, and the ever-deferred redemption.

— David Wang, Professor of Chinese Literature, Harvard University

Chen Chuncheng is a surprise. What makes his writing stand out is how it strikes the balance between lightness and rigorosity - highly imaginative, yet rigorous in engaging with the reality.

— Yu Hua, writer

In *Submarines in the Night*, there is beauty, reflections, magic and fantasy. On top of everything, Chen Chuncheng's work is an ode to imagination, so deprived in childhood and so yearned for in adulthood.

— Abora Qué Leo, La Sexta

YEAR OF WONDERS

《奇迹之年》

Short Stories, 2021, Shanghai 99 Readers, 260 pages.
English sample available soon.



PageOne Literary Award, Fall 2021



东来 DONG LAI

Dong Lai (b. 1990, Jingdezhen, China) received the First Prize of the Douban Writing Contest for her novel *Escaping the Heat Island* in 2019. She is the author of the short story collections *Deep in the River* (2019) and *Year of Wonders* (2021). *Year of Wonders* won the PageOne Literary Award in 2021. Prior to becoming a freelance writer, Dong Lai worked in journalism and advertisement.

**“On December 21st, 2012,
the day everyone knows too well, the world has already ended.”**

In this kaleidoscopic survey of life in contemporary China, Dong Lai interrogates the everyday till it shatters into magical fragments. She is representative of a new generation of writing that refuses to paint away individual struggles with dislocation, loss, and anxiety during the nation's high-growth period.

In Dong Lai's empire of words, any attempt to separate fiction from history, fantasy from reality, is simply doomed to fail. Amid the feverish pursuit of psychic powers in the 1980s, a child finds himself in possession of an unexpected talent of bending metal cutlery by staring at it. A millionaire writes an epic play for a lover who never reads it. Two veterinarians, while wandering around to perform pet euthanasia, gradually lose the ability to recognize human faces. A mesmerizing fictional city looms on the horizon as a young couple goes for a long walk. When a high schooler turns his back on a potentially bright future with a senseless act of violence, everyone desperately strives to understand what lies beneath his impulsive murder of the only person that could have empathized with him.

Each story in this collection confronts readers with a definite sense of disenchantment in a unique, unforgettable way. With incredibly rich sensual details and surprisingly diverse narrating voices, Dong Lai calls back, in a timely and powerful manner, a world that was once full of wonders and magic, and yet vanished without a trace before anyone could fully grasp its profound implications.

A plurality of temporalities operates in her language... A young writer with multiple selves, who opens herself up for suspension, leaps forward to the possibility of language, and pays homage to the vanishing.

— Hu Sang, poet

Borderless writing... Capturing the collective memories that have once existed with such sharpness but faded away into the mist too soon.

— Committee of the PageOne Literary Award

THE COLONEL AND THE EUNUCH

《人生海海》

Novel, 2019, Thinkingdom, 345 pages.

Full English translation available.

Over 2,770,000 copies sold

South Literary Award, 2020

Shi Nai'An Literary Award, 2020

Newweekly Best Book of the Year, 2019

Douban Reader's Choice Award, 2019



麦家 MAI JIA

Mai Jia was born in 1964 and is arguably the most successful writer in China today. He is the winner of the Mao Dun Literature Prize, the highest literary honor in China. His novels have sold over 12 million copies in China alone and have been translated into over twenty languages.

Mai Jia's new novel in eight years and his most ambitious work to date. An exciting departure from spy thrillers, this is a coming-of-age story, a family saga, and a searing exploration of what makes a hero.

During his childhood in a small village in southern China, no one has ever piqued the boy's interest as much as the Colonel, a most peculiar man of legend and mystery. The Colonel served as an army doctor for the Nationalist Party during the Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese Civil War, saving countless lives with a set of pure-gold scalpels. Recognized for his exceptional intelligence and discretion, he later became a formidable spy, making life-or-death decisions. But now, he appears content to live a normal life with his superstitious mother and two cats. Villagers occasionally gossip behind his back about him. Some refer to him as "the Eunuch", and accuse him of being a traitor to the Party or a wicked sex machine. Some claim he was castrated in a woman-related vengeance, while others claim the Japanese tattooed inscrutable messages under his belt.

The boy tries to piece together who the Colonel truly is, while modern China is undergoing rapid changes in the 1960s. As the Cultural Revolution spreads throughout the village, anything labeled as reactionary can drastically alter a person's life. Red Guard teenagers pry into the Colonel's life by force and reveal a hidden secret, resulting in the irreversible collapse of the Colonel and the boy's family, forcing the boy to flee his own country. When he returns from decades of hardship abroad, lunacy has finally freed the Colonel from his haunting past, and the remaining puzzle pieces are about to be reassembled.

Through the boy's eyes, the Colonel is not only a unique figure shrouded in the tragedy of war and history, but also an inspiring and honored man who redefines heroism in his unwavering devotion to life and ultimate defense of dignity.

Mai Jia takes many risks, occasionally writing himself into what seem to be impossible situations, but he always dances away from disaster. We fear for him, but then we are forced to admire his skill even more.

— Mo Yan, Nobel Prize laureate

Mai Jia's masterpiece; it's both perfectly representative of his work, while also being completely different. I think the term "hypnagogia" – that transitional state between dreams and reality – might be the best one to describe the book.

— Wong Kar-wai, film director and producer

The novel's disgraced Colonel is emblematic of our parents' generation. *The Colonel and the Eunuch* is a cello sonata for our fathers.

— Su Tong, winner of the Mao Dun Literature Prize

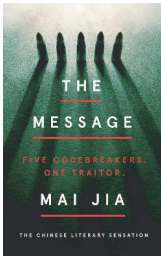
THE MESSAGE

《风声》

Novel, 2007, Nan Hai Publishing, 260 pages.
Full English translation available.

Rights Sold:

- English (Head of Zeus-UK&BC)
- Hungarian (Libri)
- Italian (Marsilio)
- Korean (Gimm-Young)
- Portuguese (Quetzal)
- Turkish (Marti)



A dazzling literary thriller set in Japan-occupied China from the most translated Chinese novelist of our time.

China, 1941.

At the height of the Second World War, Japan rules over China. In Hangzhou, a puppet government propped up by the Japanese wages an underground war against the Communist resistance.

Late one night, five intelligence officers, employed as codebreakers by the regime, are escorted to an isolated mansion outside the city. The secret police are certain that one of them is a communist spy. None of them is leaving until the traitor is unmasked.

It should be a straightforward case of sifting truth from lies. But as each codebreaker spins a story that proves their innocence, what really happened is called into question again and again.

Film Adaptation

In January 2023, the Korean movie *The Phantom* adapted from *The Message* was successfully launched. The movie is directed by Lee Hae-young, with Sol Kyung-gu, Lee Hane, Park So-dam (*Parasite*) and Park Hae-soo (*Squid Game*) starring.



This is a spy novel on a grand scale in which nothing is as it seems ... This slyly playful narrative makes it clear, all that really matters is the storytelling. Give it a little time and *The Message* will draw you into a deliciously sticky web.

— *The Times*

A fascinating play on history, loyalty, logic and coded puzzles and the setting, and point of view, will certainly be unusual to European readers.

— *Shots Magazine*

In this readably spry translation, Jia's playful mix of tradecraft, puzzle-solving and human folly brings an original twist to the spy fiction canon.

— *Sunday Times*

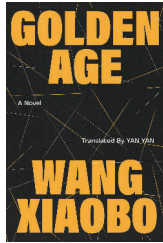
GOLDEN AGE

《黄金时代》

Novel, 2021, Thinkingdom, 244 pages.
Full English translation available.

Rights Sold:

- English (Astra House-US, Penguin Classics-UK&BC)
- Hebrew (Modan)
- Korean (Changbi)
- German (Matthes & Seitz)
- Spanish (Galaxia Gutenberg)
- Danish (Korridor)
- Polish (P.I.W.)
- Japanese (Bensei Publishing Inc.)
- Italian (Carbonio)
- Portuguese (Tordesilhas-Brazil)



王小波 WANG XIAOBO

Wang Xiaobo was born in Beijing in 1952. During the Cultural Revolution, as millions of urban youths, he was sent to Yunnan province to learn from the farmers and then to Shandong province, where he served as a community teacher. He pursued an undergraduate degree at Renmin University of China in Beijing in 1978. In 1984, he moved to the U.S. and received a master's degree from University of Pittsburgh. Coming back to China in 1988, he worked as a lecturer until 1992 when he resigned to become a full-time writer. He died in 1997 at the age of 45.

A leading literary icon in the 90s China, Wang Xiaobo's cerebral and sarcastic narratives are regarded as a vivid reflection on the failures of individuals, as well as the enormous political, social, and personal changes in 20th century China.

Like Gary Shteyngart or Michel Houellebecq, Wang Xiaobo is a Chinese literary icon whose satire forces us to reconsider the ironies of history.

Golden Age chronicles the vicissitudes and the sexual awakening of Wang Er, a young, educated man who, like millions of Chinese youths during the Cultural Revolution, was sent to the rural province of Yunnan for his reeducation. There he tediously spends his days, between the dull tasks of taking the buffalo out to graze, and the quarrels and foolish accusations among his colleagues in the production team. When he meets the young nurse Chen Qingyang, sex becomes Wang Er's way out from tedium and humiliation.

Accused of adultery, Chen and Wang are arrested by the local authorities and forced to write a confession for their crimes but instead, Wang takes it upon himself to write a modernist literary tract, exposing the absurdity and arbitrariness surrounding him. Twenty years later, when Wang and Chen run into each other in Beijing by chance, both reckon that, despite all the sufferings and the painful epiphany of the banality of their existence, those years in Yunnan were indeed their *Golden Age*.

What makes this novel both hilarious and important is Xiaobo's use of the awkwardness of sex as a metaphor for all that occurred during the Cultural Revolution. This achievement was revolutionary and places *Golden Age* in the great pantheon of novels that highlight the freedom and authenticity of human nature.

Fills the reader with aching poignancy, and yet makes them want to laugh out loud.

— Jung Chang, author of *Wild Swans*

Startlingly funny, darkly profound, *Golden Age* is one of the most memorable novels published in Chinese language in the past hundred years, and it will still be read a hundred years from now

— Yiyun Li

Admired for his cynicism, irony, humor, readers and critics around the world now widely regard Wang Xiaobo as one of the most important modern Chinese authors ... His [writing is] considered crucial to understanding China's recent past.

— Ian Johnson, *New York Review of Books*

Like a Chinese Kurt Vonnegut. By turns lyrical and satirical, Wang Xiaobo's sexual comedies set during the Chinese Cultural Revolution are as improbable as that genre sounds. His long overdue publication in English comes as a gift. *Golden Age* is funny and brave and profound.

— Chris Kraus

WENCHENG

《文城》

Novel, 2021, Thinkingdom, 352 pages.

Full English translation available.



Rights Sold:

Dutch (De Geus), French (Actes Sud), German (Matthes & Seitz), Indonesian (Gramedia), Italian (Feltrinelli), Korean (Prunsoop), Complex Chinese (Rye Field Publishing), Thai (Nanmeebooks), Mongolian (Nepko), Turkish (Jaguar), Vietnamese (Coral Books), Spanish (Seix Barral), TV rights

Yu Hua's International Awards:

1998 Premio Grinzane Cavour for *To Live*, Italy

2002 James Joyce Award, Ireland

2004 Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France

2008 Shortlisted for the Man Asian Literary Prize for *Brothers*, UK

2008 Prix Courier International du Meilleur Livre Étranger for *Brothers*, France

2014 Premio Letterario Giuseppe Acerbi for *To Live*, Italy

2018 Ivo Andrić Prize for Literature for *To Live*, Serbia

2022 Yasnaya Polyana Literary Award for *Brothers*, Russia



余华 YU HUA

Yu Hua is one of the best-known Chinese writers. Born in 1960, he belongs to the generation of avantgarde writers who transformed the landscape of modern Chinese literature after the Cultural Revolution in the 1980s.

He is the author of six novels, several collections of short stories and essays to date. His works have been translated into more than thirty languages.

Spanning twenty eventful years in Chinese history, a searing story of a man who drifts across the mainland, in search of a lost city and an impossible love. A heartwarming epic from one of the most influential writers in China.

Lin Xiangfu is a mysterious figure for the locals in a remote southern town called Creek Town. Ten years ago, he showed up unexpectedly on an extraordinary snow-storm day, imploring for milk to feed his daughter in a heavy northern accent. Now, he is the richest landlord with no hint of his past disclosed, except for one thing: he has always been looking for a city named Wen Cheng, a place that no one has ever heard of. For Lin, this is exactly where he is meant to be but doomed to miss, all because of a woman, Xiao Mei.

Years ago, when northern China foreboded abundance and a chance for a new start, Xiao Mei dropped by Lin Xiangfu's mansion on an autumn dusk. To Lin, Xiao Mei was tender and caring, yet utterly elusive. They shared a living together and brought up their child. Life flowed in such tides till one year later when, as unexpectedly as she entered Lin's life, Xiao Mei disappeared. She left Lin with his daughter and only one clue about herself: a place she once whispered, Wen Cheng.

In this account of Lin's unwavering quest for love, a dazzling kaleidoscope of lives in China's darkest historical era, spanning from the collapse of Qing dynasty to the warlord tumults in the 1930s, is brought to life: bandits who kill and save, landlords who enslave and liberate, prostitutes and fortune tellers who trick and help. Through civil wars and bandit assaults, surviving famines and droughts, Lin is determined to find Xiao Mei, at the risk of his own life.

Steeped in the language and traditions of Southern China, interweaving folklore-like stories with a historical narrative, larded with Yu Hua's characteristic deadpan humor, *Wen Cheng* is an epic of a man and a woman's odyssey across mainland China for a different destiny and an unyielding love, a gripping narrative of unrelenting fate and unfailing humanity.

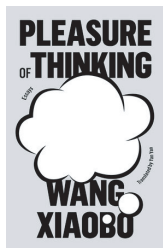
PLEASURE OF THINKING: ESSAYS 《我的精神家园》

Essays, 2017, Thinkingdom, 208 pages.

Full English translation available.

Rights Sold:

- English (Astra House-US, Penguin Classics-UK&BC)



王小波 WANG XIAOBO

Wang Xiaobo was born in Beijing in 1952. During the Cultural Revolution, as millions of urban youths, he was sent to Yunnan province to learn from the farmers and then to Shandong province, where he served as a community teacher. He pursued an undergraduate degree at Renmin University of China in Beijing in 1978. In 1984, he moved to the U.S. and received a master's degree from University of Pittsburgh. Coming back to China in 1988, he worked as a lecturer until 1992 when he resigned to become a full-time writer. He died in 1997 at the age of 45.

A leading literary icon in the 90s China, Wang Xiaobo's cerebral and sarcastic narratives are regarded as a vivid reflection on the failures of individuals, as well as the enormous political, social, and personal changes in 20th century China.

Non-Fiction

A collection of the most representative non-fiction pieces on the importance of critical thought from Wang Xiaobo, one of the foremost Chinese intellectuals whose works enjoy great popularity among young people in China.

This collection of essays comprising some of Wang Xiaobo's best-known pieces offers insight into the author's time studying in the United States. From his personal take on the intellectual and social situations in modern China to musings about the future of the internet and science fiction cinema, Wang Xiaobo prods his readers, in a gentle, humorous way, to think about what it means to think.

In between, he questions the social sciences and offers his own understanding of how they should be practiced. Several pieces focus on literature, with notable essays devoted to Italo Calvino, Bertrand Russell, and Ernest Hemingway, whom Wang admired greatly. Other pieces are more personal in nature, ranging from vignettes on life in the United States, to a meditation on getting mugged, to the consideration of the question: why do I write? Like his fiction, Wang's nonfiction is never about one thing in particular, often juxtaposing and drawing parallels among disparate discourses. But taken together, his essays and fiction all coalesce toward a sort of intellectual optimism that brilliantly anticipates Chinese thought in the 21st century.

A companion to *Golden Age*, *Pleasure of Thinking* by Wang Xiaobo contains essays, travelogs, book reviews, and more. As well known in China for his essays as for his novellas, Wang's nonfiction pieces offer a key to understanding his at times enigmatic fiction. His central thesis—the importance of independent and critical thinking—is accessible and thought-provoking to readers of all backgrounds.

To teach ignorance is the worst crime committed by otherwise good people. Therefore, we should never lower our guard against good people. Had I been duped by an evil scheming villain, I could come to terms with it; but to have been duped by kind, dimwitted people is intolerable.

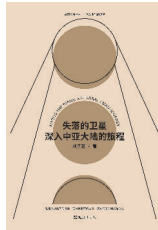
— Wang Xiaobo

LOST SATELLITES: A Journey Deep into Central Asia

《失落的卫星：深入中亚大陆的旅程》

Memoir/Travel, 2020, Thinkingdom, 416 pages.
English Sample available.

Honorable Mention in True Story Award, 2019
One Way Street Bookstore Award, 2021
Douban Best Chinese Non-Fiction of 2021



刘子超 LIU ZICHAO

Liu Zichao, born in 1984, graduated from the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at Peking University. He was a journalist for *Southern People Weekly* and *GQ*. Regarded as one of the most promising non-fiction writers in China, he has published travelogues including *Arrival Before Midnight: A Central European Odyssey* (2015), *Chasing the Monsoon: Dispatches from India and Southeast Asia* (2019), *Among the Stans: A Central Asian Journey* (2020). He is also the translator of literary works such as *Thrilling Cities* by Ian Fleming, *A Moveable Feast* by Ernest Hemingway, and *The Long Goodbye* by Raymond Chandler, among others.

A deep journey into the heartland of Central Asia from one of the most promising non-fiction writers in China.

During nine years, Liu Zichao traveled deep into the mystical hinterland of the Eurasian continent: Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Following the steps of Xuan Zang, a seventh-century Chinese Monk who authored the epoch-making *Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, he wanders in between this borderland of globalization and superpowers, embarking on an exploration in search of the past and the future.

Drifting through Pamir's no-man's land, visiting the nuclear explosion test sites in Kurchatov, treading the abandoned battlefields of the Tajik Civil War, Liu Zichao directs his gaze towards isolated places with the fervent heart of an explorer. Along the journey, he meets people across cultures and societies: a Tashken princess who fled to the US in pursuit of becoming the "Lady Gaga of Central Asia", the offspring of North Korean exiles who can no longer speak the language of their ancestors, a Tajiki youth who eagerly learns Chinese in the hope of a brighter future in China. Through these encounters, he witnesses and feels the heartbeats of Central Asia's history of modernization. Combining historical and cultural references to the vestiges of the Soviet time, he ponders over the close and ambiguous relationship between the Soviet Union and China under the umbrella of socialism, reflecting on their different paths, leaving indelible marks on this land.

Drenched in the scents of carrot mutton stew, dazed after bowls of hot Kumis, through Liu Zichao's evocative narration we savor the taste of unique charisma carried in the heart of Central Asia. Like a star derailing from its orbit, this land as he witnesses it, is lingering on ambiguity and loneliness, sticking to buoyancy and strength, echoing the very paradox of this world.

Unlike most travel authors, Zichao Liu does not try to speak to the very important people and does not pretend to know it all. Instead, he speaks to the men and women on his way, asking simple questions and getting unusual answers. All this gives his work a touch of authenticity and sincerity which is hardly to beat.

— Jon Lee Anderson, author of *The Fall of Baghdad* and *Che Guevara*

Zichao has a pleasingly spare and direct prose style, a unique sense of humor, and a curious and adventurous spirit. In this book, he has led us to a Central Asian heartland that is at once mysterious and surprisingly intimate. Zichao is a keen observer of human nature and a gifted writer, someone we are certain to hear more from in the coming years.

— Margrit Sprecher, jury of True Story Award 2019

MOONLIGHT RESTS ON MY LEFT PALM

《月光落在左手上》

Poetry, 2020, Thinkingdom, 255 pages.
Full English translation available.

Rights Sold:

- World English (Astra House)



余秀华 YU XIUHUA

Yu Xiuhua (b.1976) grew up in an impoverished family in rural Hubei, China. Born with cerebral palsy, she was unable to attend college or find work. While trapped in an arranged marriage, she began to write poetry in 1998 and gained wide recognition in 2014 when her poem "Crossing Half of China to Fuck You" became an online sensation. Her poetry collection *Moonlight Rests on My Left Palm* (2015) sold over 300,000 copies, breaking the record for Chinese poetry titles in the past two decades. Yu received the Peasant Literature Award in 2016. *Still Tomorrow*, an award-winning documentary film about her life and poetry, was released to critical acclaim the same year. In 2018, she was awarded the Hubei Literary Prize.

In defiance of the stigma attached to her disability, her status as a divorced single mother, and as a peasant in rural China, Yu Xiuhua found her voice in poetry. Starting in the late 90s, writing has become a vehicle for her to explore and share her reflections on homesickness, family and ancestry, as well as the reality of disability in the context of a body's urges and desires.

In 2014, Yu's poem "Crossing Half of China to Fuck You" blew open the doors on the world of contemporary Chinese poetry. She became an Internet sensation, finding a devoted following among young readers who enthusiastically welcomed her fresh, bold, confessional voice into the literary canon.

The rhythm of Yu's writing rises and falls with the seasons, capturing the physical toil of farming, the textures of leaves and grasses, and the light contained in a raindrop or dancing on a rock. Yet, her relationship with the nature goes further than one of admiration, trust, and peace – Yu also reflects on the suffocating impossibility and frustration around her and the limitations of the body.

This collection includes more than fifty poems, sectioned by eight lyrical essays. Thematically organized, these essays and poems are in conversation with each other around subjects that include love, nostalgia, mortality, the natural world, and writing itself.

The ruminative essays, rendered in elegant but somewhat mannered prose, offer context and insight on her life and poetry... The poems, which compress her thoughts into daring and disconcerting forms, are another matter... The multiplicity, therefore, becomes essential, as the poems are rarely frozen in a single feeling. Yu renders her life in a way that is irreducible.

— Chris Littlewood, *The Washington Post*

The poet's language rises out of the natural, tinged by elemental soil and light.

— Yusef Komunyakaa, **winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry**

Yu Xiuhua's writing is steeped in the imagination... Many of the poems included in this work are moving precisely because of how they register the limits of the imagination, rather than its transformative capacities... Rejecting the poetics of metaphor, lines like [Yu's] call on us to look closely, listen carefully, and notice the world around us.

— Rebecca Ruth Gould, *Harriet Books*, the Poetry Foundation

Yu finds the numinous in the very dust and air of Hengdian...Sze-Lorrain's translation successfully evokes Yu's transcendental connection to the world around her, from the grass at her feet to the sky above her.

— Anne Henochowicz, *Los Angeles Review of Books*

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