

SOFT SKULL PRESS

**NEW TITLES AND
SELECTED BACKLIST**



FALL 2018



VANISHING TWINS

A Marriage

LEAH DIETERICH

A lucid, suspenseful portrait of an open marriage, and a meditation on desire, bodies, queerness, art, ambition, and what it means to live in partnerships of all kinds.

"It's like we're the same person. We finish each other's sentences. This is what we've been taught to desire and expect of love. But there's a question underneath that's never addressed: once you find someone to finish your sentences, do you stop finishing them for yourself?"

As long as she can remember, Leah Dieterich has had the mysterious feeling that she's been searching for a twin—that she belongs as one of an intimate pair. It begins with friends, dance partners, and her own reflection in the mirror as she studies ballet growing up; continues with physical and emotional attractions to girlfriends in college; and leads her, finally, to Eric, whom she moves across the country for, and marries. But her steadfast, monogamous relationship leaves her with questions she can't answer about her sexuality and her identity, so she and her husband decide to try an open marriage.

How does a young couple make room for their individual desires, their evolving selfhoods, and their artistic ambitions while building a life together? Can they pursue other sexual partners, even live in separate cities, and keep their original passionate bond alive? This memoir looks for answers in psychology, science, pop culture, art, architecture, Greek mythology, dance, and language to create a lucid, suspenseful portrait of a woman testing the limits and fluidities of love.

SEPTEMBER

\$16.95

Trade Paper

Ebook Available

Rights available:

US/Canada

MEMOIR

9781593762919

288 pages

5.5" x 8.25"

"I'm captivated by Dieterich's naive but searching and intelligent narrator; the connections she ties between typography and twinning and ballet and sex are unexpected and frequently magical. I love this book."

—Sarah Manguso, author of *300 Arguments* and *The Two Kinds of Decay*



© John Houck

LEAH DIETERICH's essays and short fiction have been published by *Buzzfeed*, *BOMB Magazine*, *The Nervous Breakdown*, and *The Offing*. She is the author of a book of thank-you notes, *thxthxthx: thank goodness for everything*. She lives in Portland, Oregon, and Los Angeles, California, with her husband and daughter.

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BROKEN GLASS

ALAIN MABANCKOU
TRANSLATED BY HELEN STEVENSON

"Mabanckou is one of Africa's liveliest and most original voices, and this novel pulses with energy and invention."

—*The Times* (London)

"Let's say the boss of the bar Credit Gone West gave me this notebook to fill, he's convinced that I—Broken Glass—can turn out a book, because one day, for a laugh, I told him about this famous writer who drank like a fish . . ."

In Republic of the Congo, in the town of Trois-Cents, in a bar called Credit Gone West, a former schoolteacher known as Broken Glass drinks red wine and records the stories of the bar and its regulars, including Stubborn Snail, the owner, who must battle church people, ex-alcoholics, tribal leaders, and thugs set on destroying him and his business, and the Printer, who had a respectable life in France ruined by a white woman, his wife, and Robinette, who could out-drink and out-piss any man until a skinny-legged stranger challenged her reign, and Broken Glass himself, whose own tale involves as much heartbreak, squalor, disappointment, and delusion. A brand-new edition of an irreverent, allusive, scatological, tragicomic masterpiece from one of our greatest living Francophone writers.

OCTOBER
\$16.95
Trade Paper
Ebook Available
Rights available:
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REISSUE
FICTION
9781593763077
176 pages
5.5" x 8.25"

"Literary allusions (Holden Caulfield has a cameo) and gentle ironies punctuate this wickedly entertaining novel."

—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

"Important, entertaining and subtly moving."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Whatever else might be in short supply in the Congo depicted by Alain Mabanckou, imagination and wit aren't . . . Much of the writing from Africa (or at least most of the stuff we get to see) is of an earnest or grim character, and it makes a pleasant change to encounter a writer who isn't afraid of a laugh."

—*The Guardian*

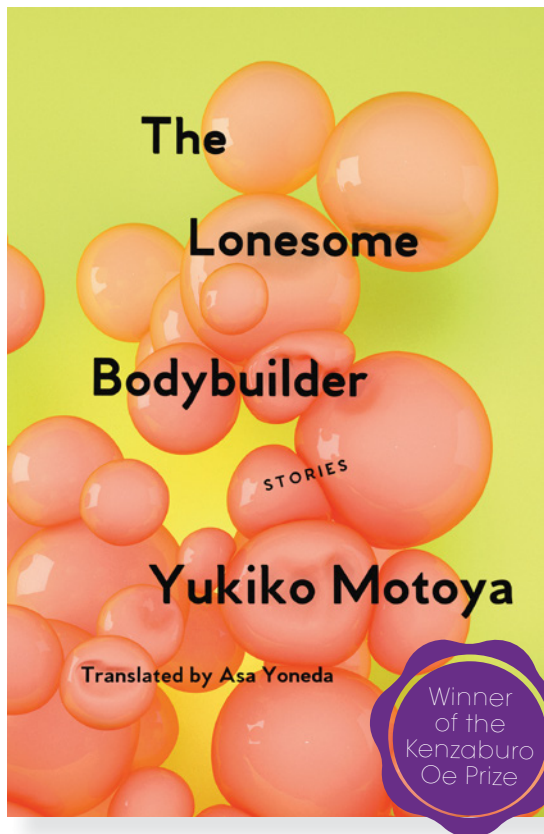
ALAIN MABANCKOU is a novelist, journalist, poet, and academic. A French citizen born in Republic of the Congo, he currently lives in Los Angeles, where he teaches literature and creative writing at UCLA. His books include *African Psycho*, *Letter to Jimmy*, *Black Bazaar*, *Tomorrow I'll Be Twenty*, *The Lights of Pointe-Noire*, and *Black Moses*. Mabanckou has twice been a finalist for the Man Booker International Prize, in 2015 and 2017.

HELEN STEVENSON is a piano teacher, writer, and translator who lives in Somerset, UK. Her translation of Alain Mabanckou's *Black Moses* was long-listed for the 2017 Man Booker International Prize, and her translation of Mabanckou's *The Lights of Pointe-Noire* won the Grand Prix French Voices Award 2015.

THE LONESOME BODYBUILDER

Stories

YUKIKO MOTOYA



These eleven surreal tales mark the English-language debut of one of Japan's most fearlessly inventive young writers.

A housewife takes up bodybuilding and sees radical changes to her physique—which her workaholic husband fails to notice. A boy waits at a bus stop, mocking businessmen struggling to keep their umbrellas open in a typhoon—until an old man shows him that they hold the secret to flying. A woman working in a clothing boutique waits endlessly on a customer who won't come out of the fitting room—and who may or may not be human. A newlywed notices that her husband's features are beginning to slide around his face—to match her own.

In these eleven stories, the individuals who lift the curtains of their orderly homes and workplaces are confronted with the bizarre, the grotesque, the fantastic, the alien—and, through it, find a way to liberation. *The Lonesome Bodybuilder* is the English-language debut of one of Japan's most fearlessly inventive young writers.

NOVEMBER

\$16.95

Trade Paper

Ebook Available

Rights available:

World English

SHORT STORIES

9781593766788

224 pages

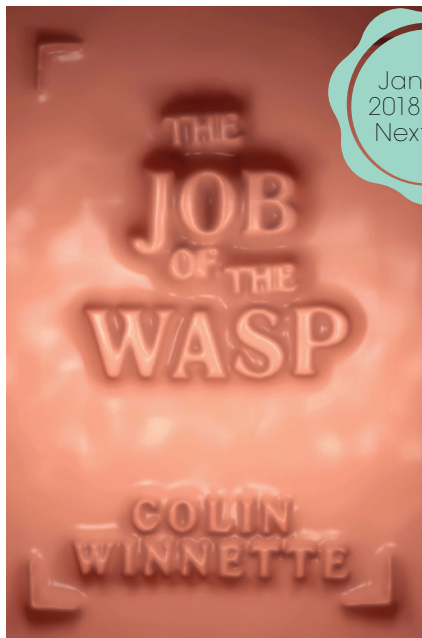
5.5" x 8.25"



Author photograph © Rana Shimada

YUKIKO MOTOYA was born in Ishikawa Prefecture in Japan in 1979. After moving to Tokyo to study drama, she started the Motoya Yukiko Theater Company, whose plays she wrote and directed. Her first story, "Eriko to zettai," appeared in the literary magazine *Gunzo* in 2002. Motoya won the Noma Prize for New Writers for *Warm Poison* in 2011; the Kenzaburo Oe Prize for *Picnic in the Storm* (retitled *The Lonesome Bodybuilder* for US publication) in 2013; the Mishima Prize for *How She Learned to Love Herself* in 2014; and Japan's most prestigious literary prize, the Akutagawa Prize, for *An Exotic Marriage* in 2016. Her books have been published or are forthcoming in French, Norwegian, Spanish, and Chinese, and her stories have been published in English in *Granta*, *Words Without Borders*, *Tender*, and *Catapult*.

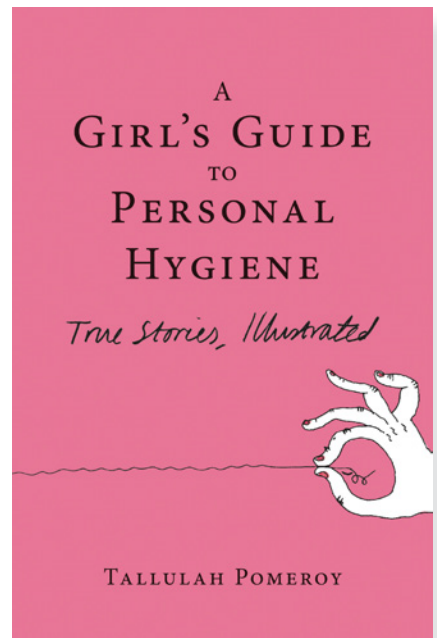
ASA YONEDA is a literary translator and editor. Writers she has translated include Aoko Matsuda, Yukiko Motoya, and Natsuko Kuroda.



January 2018 Indie Next Pick

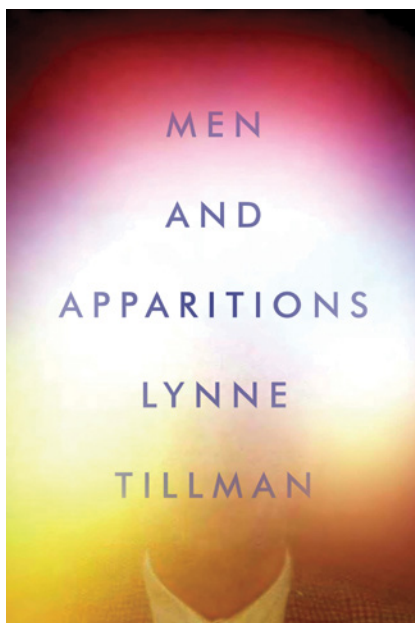
THE JOB OF THE WASP: A NOVEL
by Colin Winnette
Fiction • Paperback • 9781593766801
\$16.95 • 208 pages • Ebook Available

“This deeply haunting mix of literary aesthetics, murder mystery, and the dark intensity of contemporary thriller will be savored by fans of Jac Jenc’s *The Grip of It*, Donna Tartt’s *The Secret History*, Marisha Pessl’s *Night Film*, and Peter Straub’s *Shadowland*.”
—*Library Journal* (starred review)



A GIRL'S GUIDE TO PERSONAL HYGIENE: TRUE STORIES, ILLUSTRATED
by Tallulah Pomeroy
Humor/Art • Paperback, full color • 9781593761820
\$18.95 • 112 pages • Ebook Available

“*A Girl's Guide to Personal Hygiene* is everything I never knew I wanted: a disgusting, hilarious, and honest book that pays tribute to the female body and all of its habits and suppurations.”
—Carmen Maria Machado, author of *Her Body and Other Parties*



MEN AND APPARITIONS: A NOVEL
by Lynne Tillman
Fiction • Paperback • 9781593766795
\$16.95 • 416 pages • Ebook Available

“With callouts to a mind-revving roster of photographers, writers, filmmakers, intellectuals, and media magnets, erudite, discerning, and everdaring Tillman has forged a mischievous conflation of criticism and fiction. Incantatory, maddening, brilliant, zestful, compassionate, and timely.”
—*Booklist* (starred review)



Newly Reissued

SOMETHING BRIGHT, THEN HOLES
by Maggie Nelson
Poetry • Paperback • 9781593762308
\$16.00 • 78 pages • Ebook Available

Available June 2018

“Over three sections, Nelson employs a consistent narrator, recognizable settings, recurring characters and a few structures closely resembling plots. But it’s not fiction. And though each section also has lines, stanzas, and lyric musicality, it’s poetry only in a very loose sense. Instead, it’s a stunning collection of real-world stories shadowed by the netherworld of poetry.”
—*Publishers Weekly*



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