

NEW YORK TIMES BEST FICTION BOOKS FOR 2015

BEATLEBONE. By Kevin Barry.

In razor-sharp prose, Barry's novel imagines John Lennon in 1978, on a journey through the west of Ireland in search of his creative self, conversing with an Irish driver.

THE BEAUTIFUL BUREAUCRAT. By Helen Phillips.

An administrative worker's experiences pose existential questions in Phillips's riveting, drolly –surreal debut novel.

BEAUTY IS A WOUND. By Eka Kurniawan

A novel about Indonesia's turbulent 20th century

CITY ON FIRE. By Garth Risk Hallberg.

Hallberg's ambitious –Dickens-scale descent into New York City circa 1976 77 doesn't shortchange the era's squalor. Many of its characters are lost kids in flight from their parents.

DELICIOUS FOODS. By James Hannaham.

This ambitious, sweeping novel of American captivity and –exploitation involves an addicted mother laboring on a commercial farm.

FATES AND FURIES. By Lauren Groff.

Groff's complex and remarkable novel about marriage offers two critically different narratives, first from

the husband's point of view, then from the wife's.

THE FIRST BAD MAN. By Miranda July.

In July's wry, smart first novel, two women's consensually violent host-guest relationship leads to an erotic awakening.

THE FISHERMEN. By Chigozie Obioma.

In its exploration of the murderous and the mysterious, the mind's terrors and a vibrant Africa, this debut novel is heir to Chinua Achebe.

GOD HELP THE CHILD. By Toni Morrison.

Child abuse cuts a jagged scar through Morrison's novel, a brisk modern-day fairy tale with shades of the Brothers Grimm, and a blunt moral:

What you do to children matters.

HOW TO BE BOTH. By Ali Smith.

The two parts of Smith's novel link a modern teenage girl and a 15th-century Italian painter.

THE INCARNATIONS. By Susan Barker.

In Barker's astonishing novel, a Beijing taxi driver learns of his previous lives as a bit player during 15 centuries of China's past.

LEAVING BERLIN. By Joseph Kanon.

In Kanon's thriller, a German-born American writer becomes a spy in East Berlin.

A LITTLE LIFE. By Hanya Yanagihara.

In Yanagihara's novel, four friends from college grapple with adulthood in New York.

MISLAID. By Nell Zink.

Zink's screwball comic novel about the making and unmaking of an American family lays bare our assumptions about race and sexuality.

OUTLINE. By Rachel Cusk.

Cusk's heartbreaking portrait of poise, sympathy, regret and rage suggests a powerful alternate route for the biographical novel.

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT LIFE. By –Atticus Lish.

Lish's gorgeous,upsetting debut novel follows the doomed love affair of a traumatized soldier and a Muslim immigrant.

PURITY. By Jonathan Franzen.

Connections emerge slowly as lies and secrets are revealed in this intricately plotted novel about the corruptions of money and power.

THE STORY OF MY TEETH. By Valeria –Luiselli.

Translated by Christina MacSweeney. This playful collaborative novel invites reader participation.

THE SYMPATHIZER. By Viet Thanh Nguyen.

Nguyen's tragicomic debut novel fills a void in Vietnam War literature, giving a voice to the Vietnamese and compelling the rest of us to look at the events of 40 years ago in a new light.

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING: Fiction. By Colum McCann.

A novella and three stories display –McCann's empathetic imagination and –belief in the capabilities of literature.

THE TRUTH AND OTHER LIES. By Sascha Arango.

Translated by Imogen Taylor. The writer in Arango's cunningly plotted, darkly humorous novel is a fraud — and a murderer.

THE TSAR OF LOVE AND TECHNO: Stories. By Anthony Marra.

Interconnected stories set in a Russian industrial city are seamlessly narrated, with flashes of dark humor.

VANESSA AND HER SISTER. By Priya –Parmar.

A novel of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell, constructed around an invented diary and letters.