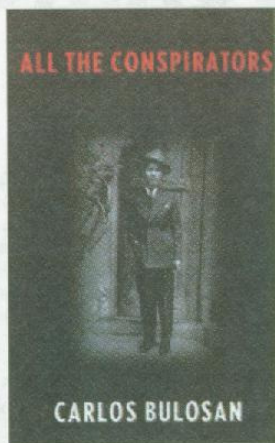


# New and Notable Books



BY TERRY HONG | Special to AsianWeek



## FICTION

### ALL THE CONSPIRATORS

By Carlos Bulosan, introduction by Caroline S. Hau and Benedict Anderson (University of Washington Press)

A pseudonymously penned mystery thriller from the chronicler of the early Filipino American experience, this "lost" novel's publication falls serendipitously on the 75th anniversary of Bulosan's immigration to America. Bookended by scholarly context and supporting evidence of authorship, *Conspirators* is a marked departure for Bulosan as it follows one man's search for his best friend at the behest of the woman whom both men loved.

### BUYING A FISHING ROD FOR MY GRANDFATHER: STORIES

By Gao Xing Jian, translated by Mabel Lee (Perennial / HarperCollins)

This slim text of short stories by Nobel Prize Winner Gao does not offer linear tales with pithy morals. Instead, it's an elliptical collection of thoughts, perceptions and memories, melded together to create a small but dazzling mosaic of lingering images.

### SNAKES AND EARRINGS

By Hitomi Kane-

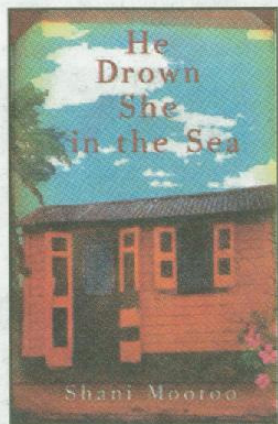
hara, translated by David Karashima (Dutton / Penguin)

If this 120-page novel rife with sex and violence were any longer, reading it would be unbearable. But it must be more than just a gratuitous record of nihilistic Japanese youth as it won Japan's highest literary honor, the Akutagawa Prize, for its then-20-year-old author.

### HE DROWN SHE IN THE SEA

By Shani Mootoo (Grove Press)

This one is just delicious—and



delightfully plotted in playing with time and place and people. The beginning: a man, a woman, her husband, her daughter. Fast backward to the man and woman and their intertwined childhoods until the woman's father unjustly banishes the then-boy. Thankfully, in the end—in this case, the middle, as well—true love triumphs.

### INNOCENT WORLD

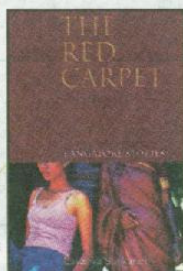
By Ami Sakurai, translated by Steven Clark (Vertical)

Innocence lost: 17-year-old Ami is schoolgirl and prostitute, pregnant by her mentally challenged older brother, brutally gang raped by a rock star and his groupies, but capable of restoring the dormant virility of her birth-father-by-sperm-donation in a graveyard.

### THE RED CARPET: BANGALORE STORIES

By Lavanya Sankaran (Dial Press / Random House)

A changing, bustling Bangalore is at the core of fabulous stories



about a man who falls in love too late with the wrong woman, an old man who looks on helplessly as a young neighbor woman's life falls apart, a young mother who recalls the abuses of her childhood nanny, and a young woman too-long debilitated by her father's suicide.

### BUDDHA 5: DEER PARK BUDDHA 6: ANANDA

By Osamu Tezuka, translated by Yuji Oniki (Vertical)

Two more volumes in the eight-volume graphic odyssey of Buddha's life by the master of anime himself. As with the preceding four, these are un-put-down-able. In *Deer Park*, the enlightened Buddha talks to the animals while in *Ananda*, he gathers disciples.

### DEADLY SLIPPER: A NOVEL OF DEATH IN THE DOR-DOGNE

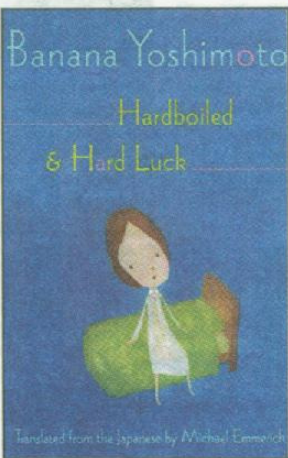
By Michelle Wan (Doubleday / Random House)

Nineteen years after her twin's unsolved disappearance, Mara Dunn finds her sister's camera in a junk sale. Its final roll of film—of rare orchids—offers a definitive path of clues and the final answer to her sister's fate. Just one question—what is "cock[ing] an Oriental eye" supposed to mean?

### HARDBOILED & HARD LUCK

By Banana Yoshimoto, translated by Michael Emmerich (Grove Press)

Two novellas about women on the verge of change: in *Hard-*



*boiled*, a hiker on a remote mountain spends the anniversary of her ex-lover's death with a ghost, while in *Hard Luck*, a woman awaits the inevitable death of her comatose sister with her sister's runaway fiancé's brother as her fondest companion.

## NON-FICTION

### THE DANCING GIRLS OF LAHORE: SELLING LOVE AND SAVING DREAMS IN PAKISTAN'S ANCIENT PLEASURE DISTRICT

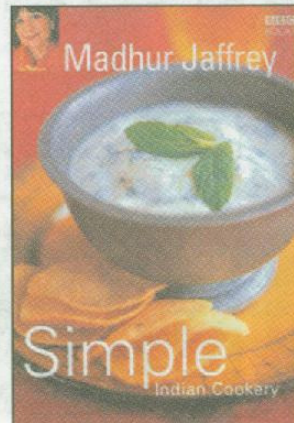
By Louise Brown (Fourth Estate / HarperCollins)

Breathtaking, heartbreaking account of the women trapped for generations in Pakistan's pleasure quarter—once beloved, artistically gifted courtesans now reduced to devastating prostitution.

### SIMPLE INDIAN COOKERY

By Madhur Jaffrey (BBC Books / distributed by Trafalgar Square)

Gorgeous pages with ingredient



lists so short that you might actually start believing that "simple" is not a misnomer!

### SIMPLE VIETNAMESE FOR YOU

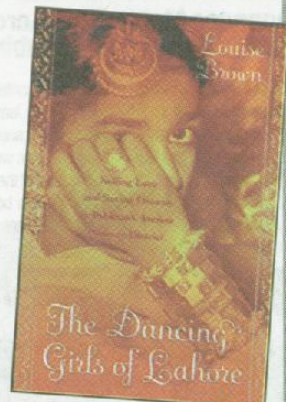
By Nguyen Thanh Tri (BookSurge)

Complete with rudimentary drawings of tongue positions for proper pronunciation, this guide has quite the collection of translated sentences from "These models do have their sexually flaming excited bodies" to "Please, give me a bowl of beef noodle soup."

### NEGOTIATING ETHNICITY: SECOND-GENERATION SOUTH ASIAN AMERICANS TRAVERSE A TRANSNATIONAL WORLD

By Bandana Purkayastha (Rutgers University Press)

Purkayastha relies on personal stories and the sociological context of 48 second-generation South Asian Americans to explore do they project self-identification in a world where they are clearly not white, yet often not Asian enough.



## YOUNG READERS

### MONSOON SUMMER

By Mitali Perkins (Delacorte / Random House)

A grand coming-of-age story, Jazz Gardner travels to India with her family where her Indian-born mother will establish a prenatal clinic at the orphanage where she once lived. In America, she's just realizing her best friend is also the love of her life. But it's in India, and in her Indian roots, where Jazz finds her own true self.

### TIGER: BOOK ONE IN THE FIVE ANCESTORS

By Jeff Stone (Random House)

The inaugural title of an entertaining new series introduces five 17th-century Chinese young monks, each with special powers, who must save their world from destruction by one of their fellow brethren gone astray. Loosely based on the history of the legendary Shaolin monks.



### AND FOR THE YOUNGER KIDDIES ...

### AMERICANS WHO TELL THE TRUTH

By Robert Shetterly (Dutton / Penguin)

A stirring collection of portraits of activists, writers, artists and (even!) politicians. But disturbingly, not a single APA among the brave 50.

