



Portland Noir

Kevin Sampsell (Editor) , Karen Karbo , Bill Cameron , Ariel Gore , Floyd Skloot , Kimberly Warner-Cohen , Jonathan Selwood , Justin Hocking , more... Jess Walter , Monica Drake , Jamie S. Rich , Zoe Trope , Megan Kruse , Gigi Little , Dan DeWeese , Luciana Lopez , Chris A. Bolton ...less

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In a city full of police controversies, hippie artist punk houses, and overzealous liberals, Portland, Oregon, is a place where even its fiction blurs with its bizarre realities.

Brand-new stories by: Gigi Little, Justin Hocking, Christopher Bolton, Jess Walter, Monica Drake, Jamie S. Rich (illustrated by Joelle Jones), Dan DeWeese, Zoe Trope, Luciana Lopez, Karen Karbo, Bill Cameron, Ariel Gore, Floyd Skloot, Megan Kruse, Kimberly Warner-Cohen, and Jonathan Selwood.

Editor **Kevin Sampsell** is a bookstore employee and writer. He is the author of a short story collection, *Creamy Bullets* (Chiasmus Press), and the upcoming memoir *The Suitcase* (HarperPerennial, summer 2009). He is also the editor of *The Insomniac Reader* (Manic D Press) and the publisher of the micropress Future Tense Books.

Portland Noir Details

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Author : Kevin Sampsell (Editor) , Karen Karbo , Bill Cameron , Ariel Gore , Floyd Skloot , Kimberly Warner-Cohen , Jonathan Selwood , Justin Hocking , more... Jess Walter , Monica Drake , Jamie S. Rich , Zoe Trope , Megan Kruse , Gigi Little , Dan DeWeese , Luciana Lopez , Chris A. Bolton ...less

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Genre : Fiction, Short Stories, Mystery, Noir, Crime

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From Reader Review Portland Noir for online ebook

Andrea says

Tried reading a couple of the stories and just couldn't get into them. May try this book again at a much later date.

Lara Seven says

Better than the Seattle one, plus one of the stories works in an appearance by Extremo the Clown's artcar!

Elizabeth says

Fantastic read (and such a good idea!) of short stories written by local authors. Noir is such a specific type of writing style that it took me a couple of stories to get over feeling that the authors were "overwriting." Once I got into it though I had SO MUCH FUN. Reading about all the places in Portland was great and being able to picture them added to the experience.

Chris says

i literally threw this book away after i had finished it because it was so terrible.

Babs says

Great group of short stories by very talented Portland area writers. Ready to hit Powell's Books, Shanghai Tunnel, Tik Tok and Voodoo Doughnuts.

Sonia says

What a disappointment. The only worthwhile pieces are those of Jess Walter and Floyd Skloot. Others are so self-indulgent and overwritten that I was turned off from this whole series, and indeed from some of the local authors whose other works I was planning to read.

It's not my main complaint, but the fact that this is an all-white-but-one book is not only irresponsible but a missed opportunity.

Thomas Holm says

Three of the stories are good. The rest are so-so.

Tiffani says

I read an interview with Meghan Abbott recently in which she described noir as a story in which everyone is fallen, and right and wrong are not clearly defined and maybe not even attainable. That description certainly seems to fit the stories in the book. They're bleak and often bloody with little in the way of redemption or even justice. There are no heroes. With several of the stories, it felt less like reading a story with a beginning, middle, and end and more like a series of reports of crimes as told by the criminal.

This is the second book in the Akashic Books noir series that I've read and I'm beginning to think this series just isn't for me. While there were a couple of interesting stories, most of them didn't go anywhere, or least not anywhere I wanted to go. I almost put the book down after reading two stories in a row about men killing their wife or girlfriend and getting a way with it. I like dark stories but I guess I want there to be some sort of correction at the end so that the world doesn't seem worse at the end of the book.

Mandy says

This should be required reading for the Portland State Univ. Pop Culture cluster... course titled "Olde Portland" if there was one.

Elvira says

since this is a series of short stories - each written by a different author, I kept reading think that the next one HAS to be better than the one I just finished. NOPE! they all were horrible.

Joy Cartier says

Dim the lights, put on some slow-burning jazz, and loosen your tie as you take the craft of flash fiction writing and apply it to the seedy, crime-riddled world of noir fiction. Your job is to present an engaging story in 500 words or less in that grand tradition of Raymond Chandler, Patricia Highsmith, or Jim Thompson. This contest is a fundraiser for p:ear, a program for homeless and transitional youth, and will be judged by Kevin Sampsell, editor of the bestselling anthology, Portland Noir (Akashic Books). The top three stories will be read at p:ear noir the fundraising event on October 7th from 7-9p, benefiting p:ear, and located at 338 NW 6th Ave. Author of the winning story will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Powell's Bookstore (available on line), a signed copy of Portland Noir, and a chapbook from IPRC containing the top 10 flash fiction entries.

Entry fee: \$15, a mighty portion of the proceeds benefit p:ear.

Deadline: please submit Flash Fiction entries by September 11th online at www.pearmentor.org or wordstockfestival.com or mail them with check to Flash Fiction, p:ear, 338 NW 6th, Portland OR 97209

As in the rest of the series from Akashic, all the stories in Portland Noir are set in a specific city. If you live in Portland, OR read this book. If you don't live in Portland, read this book. It details the underbelly of any city. It's got everything - cops and robbers, otherworldly Twilight Zone stuff, and other stories that defy easy categorization in a voice that keeps you listening.

Portland Noir is so good and well, so darn fun I have to recommend the fund raiser that's being based on it for p:ear, a program for homeless youth in Portland (www.pearmentor.org). In collaboration with Wordstock (www.wordstockfestival.com) and Kevin Sampsell, the editor of Portland Noir, readers from the book and flash fiction contest winners will come together on October 7th from 7-9pm at p:ear to indulge in the dark and bring a little light into the lives of homeless kids. This is going to be good. Save the date.

Alan says

Portland Noir will give you false impressions of Portland, Oregon. This town's not nearly as uniformly seedy as these pages portray. Nor is it as smoky, especially after the indoor-smoking ban went through, a year or more *after* most of these stories were written. Nor will you be tripping over a body every block or so in real life here. Honestly, I know... this is the town where I live.

However, Kevin Sampsell's book does contain a wealth of local color—the gray of drizzle and the green of moss; the rich, dark browns of strong roasted coffee and microbrewed porter—and those details all ring true to me. Or true enough, anyway; storytellers lie to us, you know, dark and beautiful lies that we invite with our eyes... and that's just what you'll get here: dark and beautiful lies, though the beauty's often in the shine of a bruise or the slick of rain-washed blood under a streetlight.

Each story is keyed to a particular area of Stumptown, and there's even a map at the front to show you where each one lies. Oregonian readers (and others) will recognize Floyd Skloot's name among the contributors; the other names didn't ring many bells with me, but their work stands on its own: every story is consistently strong and emotionally charged.

If I had to pick three favorites, it'd be very tough to do. Sampsell did a stunning job assembling this book. Looking back over the Table of Contents... the new homeowner who turns amateur detective in Luciana Lopez's "Julia Now"; Bill Cameron's "Coffee, Black" from the Crooks & Cops section, with its adroit mix of global and local politics; and the graphic (as in, black-and-white art) story "Gone Doggy Gone," by Jamie S. Rich and Joëlle Jones. And oh, okay, toss in Jonathan Selwood's "The Wrong House," which 'happened' just up the street from me.

I suppose it's unfair of me to complain about the fact that all of these stories are dark; it is a *noir* anthology, after all. Happy endings aren't in the cards. The most you can hope for is bittersweet. And for that reason I would recommend reading this book in small doses, one or two tales at a time, rather than all at once—unless you think you're tough enough to handle it.

Carye Bye says

This was a book we read for the Hidden Portland book. It's a collection of 16 new short stories by local or

localish authors who were asked to write on the theme of Noir. There are other Noir cities in the collection, but Portland has a great underbelly and fringe culture so it's a perfect fit. I'm not really a fiction writer, and I admit I got frustrated at times at how just when I was getting interested, the story was wrapped up (sorta) and then on to the next. I took notes about Portland mentions and enjoyed little snippets such as Extremo the Clown, the Portland Horse Project, Sam Adams campaign sign, a queen bee bag, that you know a lot about if you live here. Some authors did a great job describing locals such as Dots Cafe or the Oaks Bottom. Some were great at descriptions of people or good at getting under your skin, some seemed less noir and more erotica. Over all I may have not finished the book if not for book club but it gave me a sampling of local writers and editor Kevin Sampsell writes a really good intro. The book was published in 2009 and still does pretty well. Had a chance to talk with KS at our book club and he expressed an interest to do another and had ideas, but didn't know where or if he had the time or the publisher was interested in revisiting Portland again.

Kevin says

I edited this really fun and gritty collection of literary crime fiction for Akashic. It comes out in early June. Some great Portland lit stars like Monica Drake, Ariel Gore, and Zoe Trope team up with seasoned mystery authors like Jess Walter and Bill Cameron. But a couple of my favorite pieces came from lesser-known Portlanders like Dan DeWeese and Megan Kruse.

Jacob says

Cool to see stories in my favorite genre set in Portland. Felt uneven in quality and, much like the city, lacked diversity. A few standouts and a few clunkers.
