

abe kobo abe kobo

[#Kobo Abe](#) [#Japanese novelist](#) [#surrealism literature](#) [#avant-garde author](#) [#modern Japanese literature](#)

Delve into the enigmatic world of Kobo Abe, a celebrated Japanese novelist and playwright whose avant-garde works significantly shaped modern Japanese literature. Known for his profound exploration of identity, alienation, and the absurd through surrealism and existential themes, Abe remains a pivotal figure in 20th-century literature.

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The Box Man

'A spellbinder from beginning to end, an edgy masterpiece' Chicago Sun Times 'This is the record of a box man'. Anonymous and alone, the box man peeps out of his cut-out eyeholes and watches the world from behind his four cardboard walls. At first repulsed by the strange phenomenon of people who have decided to abandon society and live in boxes on the Tokyo streets, he has found himself drawn into the anonymity and voyeurism of their life. As he becomes obsessed with spying on a young nurse, his identity slips away, in Kobo Abe's eerie, disorienting and seductive masterpiece of unease. 'Funny, sad and destructive ... an invention with its own crazy pull, it gnaws at the reader ... a stunning addition to the literature of eccentricity' The New York Times

The Frontier Within

Abe Kobo (1924–1993) was one of Japan's greatest postwar writers, widely recognized for his imaginative science fiction and plays of the absurd. However, he also wrote theoretical criticism for which he is lesser known, merging literary, historical, and philosophical perspectives into keen reflections on the nature of creativity, the evolution of the human species, and an impressive range of other subjects. Abe Kobo tackled contemporary social issues and literary theory with the depth and facility of a visionary thinker. Featuring twelve essays from his prolific career—including "Poetry and Poets (Consciousness and the Unconscious)," written in 1944, and "The Frontier Within, Part II," written in 1969—this anthology introduces English-speaking readers to Abe Kobo as critic and intellectual for the first time. Demonstrating the importance of his theoretical work to a broader understanding of his fiction—and a richer portrait of Japan's postwar imagination—Richard F. Calichman provides an incisive introduction to Abe Kobo's achievements and situates his essays historically and intellectually.

The Face of Another

The narrator is a scientist hideously deformed in a laboratory accident - a man who has lost his face and, with it, connection to other people. Even his wife is now repulsed by him. His only entry back into the world is to create a mask so perfect as to be undetectable. But soon he finds that such mask is more than a disguise: it is an alternate self - a self that is capable of anything. A remorseless meditation on nature, identity, and the social contract, THE FACE OF ANOTHER is an intellectual horror story of the highest order.

A Study Guide for Kobo Abe's The Man Who Turned Into A Stick

A Study Guide for Kobo Abe's "The Man Who Turned Into A Stick," excerpted from Gale's acclaimed Drama For Students. This concise study guide includes plot summary; character analysis; author biography; study questions; historical context; suggestions for further reading; and much more. For any literature project, trust Drama For Students for all of your research needs.

Beasts Head for Homey

In the aftermath of World War II, Kuki KykzM, a Japanese youth raised in the puppet state of Manchuria, struggles to return home to Japan. What follows is a wild journey involving drugs, smuggling, chases, and capture. KykzM finally makes his way to the waters off Japan but finds himself unable to disembark. His nation remains inaccessible to him, and now he questions its very existence. *Beasts Head for Home* is an acute novel of identity, belonging, and the vagaries of human behavior from an exceptional modern Japanese author.

Beyond Nation

In the work of writer Abe KMbM (1924–1993), characters are alienated both from themselves and from one another. Through close readings of Abe's work, Richard Calichman reveals how time and writing have the ability to unground identity. Over time, attempts to create unity of self cause alienation, despite government attempts to convince people to form communities (and nations) to recapture a sense of wholeness. Art, then, must resist the nation-state and expose its false ideologies. Calichman argues that Abe's attack on the concept of national affiliation has been neglected through his inscription as a writer of Japanese literature. At the same time, the institution of Japan Studies works to tighten the bond between nation-state and individual subject. Through Abe's essays and short stories, he shows how the formation of community is constantly displaced by the notions of time and writing. *Beyond Nation* thus analyzes the elements of Orientalism, culturalism, and racism that often underlie the appeal to collective Japanese identity.

The Ruined Map

Of all the great Japanese novelists, Kobe Abe was indubitably the most versatile. With *The Ruined Map*, he crafted a mesmerizing literary crime novel that combines the narrative suspense of Chandler with the psychological depth of Dostoevsky. Mr. Nemuro, a respected salesman, disappeared over half a year ago, but only now does his alluring yet alcoholic wife hire a private eye. The nameless detective has but two clues: a photo and a matchbook. With these he embarks upon an ever more puzzling pursuit that leads him into the depths of Tokyo's dangerous underworld, where he begins to lose the boundaries of his own identity. Surreal, fast-paced, and hauntingly dreamlike, Abe's masterly novel delves into the unknowable mysteries of the human mind. Translated from the Japanese by E. Dale Saunders.

The Ark Sakura

The protagonist of Abe's creation, nicknamed Mole by himself and Pig by others, is a dreamer and something of a mad inventor. He turns an underground quarry into an ark that can survive a nuclear war and starts to recruit passengers to accompany him on a voyage.

Secret Rendezvous

'A gorgeously entertaining, provocative book' *Chicago Tribune* It is 4am when the ambulance comes to take the man's wife away - although no-one has called it, and there is nothing wrong with her. As he sets out to find her, he finds himself in the corridors of a vast underground hospital, where he encounters sinister medics, freakish sexual experiments and the unmistakable feeling of being watched. Even when he is suddenly appointed as the hospital's chief of security, reporting to a man who thinks he is a horse, he will not give up his search. *Secret Rendezvous* is a nightmarish satire of bureaucracy, medicine and modern life. 'Reads as if it were the collaborative effort of Hieronymus Bosch, Franz Kafka and Mel Brooks' *Chicago Sun Times*

The Ruined Map

'A brilliant display of pyrotechnics, a compelling tour de force ... by a master jeweller of polished prose' *The New York Times* A private detective is hired to find a missing person, but nothing is normal about this case. Why has the beautiful, alcoholic wife of the vanished salesman waited over half a year to search for him? Why are the only clues a photo and a matchbox? As the investigator's ever-more puzzling hunt takes him into the labyrinthine depths of the urban underworld, he begins to wonder if it is in fact he who is lost. An intoxicating blend of noir thriller and surreal dream, *The Ruined Map* questions identity itself. 'An exciting, imaginative and entertaining novel' *San Francisco Chronicle*

The Face of Another

In the last novel written before his death in 1993, one of Japan's most distinguished novelists proffered a surreal vision of Japanese society that manages to be simultaneously fearful and jarringly funny. The narrator of *Kangaroo Notebook* wakes on morning to discover that his legs are growing radish sprouts, an ailment that repulses his doctor but provides the patient with the unusual ability to snack on himself. In short order, Kobo Abe's unraveling protagonist finds himself hurtling in a hospital bed to the very shores of hell. Abe has assembled a cast of oddities into a coherent novel, one imbued with unexpected meaning. Translated from the Japanese by Maryellen Toman Mori.

Inter Ice Age 4

'One of Japan's most venerated writers' David Mitchell In this unnerving fable from one of Japan's greatest novelists, a recluse known as 'Mole' retreats to a vast underground bunker, only to find that strange guests, booby traps and a giant toilet may prove even greater obstacles than nuclear disaster. 'As is true of Poe and Kafka, Abe creates an unexpected impulsion. One continues reading, on and on' New Yorker 'Abe's depiction of the deadly game of survival is hilarious but at the same time leaves us with a chilling sense of apprehension about the brave new world that awaits us' Los Angeles Times

Kangaroo Notebook

A collection of works including such stories as "An Irrelevant Death," "The Dream Soldier," "Dendrocalia," "The Special Envoy," and "The Crime of S. Karma"

The Ark Sakura

Kobo Abe's *The Face of Another* is a psychological study in which the moment-to-moment eventfulness makes much of it read like melodrama. The protagonist is a scientist whose face is disfigured in a laboratory explosion. He feels cut off from the human community, alienated. When even his wife repulses him as he tries to make love to her, he resolves to create a mask so perfect as to be unrecognisable. He then realises that he can acquire a new personality to go with the new face. Is this new personality his inner self, the invisible man? Or is this only a masquerade? The scientist conceives of the masked person as an adventurer and seducer, and he begins to act out the role. He tests the mask in many situations, then seduces his wife -with consequences astonishing to both him and the reader.

Beyond the Curve

The Woman in the Dunes, by celebrated writer and thinker Kobo Abe, combines the essence of myth, suspense and the existential novel. After missing the last bus home following a day trip to the seashore, an amateur entomologist is offered lodging for the night at the bottom of a vast sand pit. But when he attempts to leave the next morning, he quickly discovers that the locals have other plans. Held captive with seemingly no chance of escape, he is tasked with shoveling back the ever-advancing sand dunes that threaten to destroy the village. His only companion is an odd young woman. Together their fates become intertwined as they work side by side at this Sisyphean task.

Face of Another, The

A young entomologist, trapped in a sandpit with an attractive widow, finds he is a prisoner.

The Woman in the Dunes

An absurdist drama about the gradual destruction of the individual. A family enters the apartment of a young man and announces that they will save him from his loneliness by living with him. Slowly, they destroy everything, in the cheerful psychotic name of "brotherly love".

The Woman in the Dunes

Since the 1950s, Abe KMBM (1924-1993) has achieved an international reputation for his surreal or grotesque brand of literature. Bolton explores how this reconciliation of ideas and dialects is for Abe part of the process whereby texts and individuals form themselves--a search for identity that occurs at the level of the self and society at large.

Friends; [play]

Kobo Abe (1924-93) author of *Women in the Dunes*, *The Box Man*, *Inter Ice Age Nine* and *The Ark Sakura* led Japanese fiction in a new and original direction. Abe was also active as a playwright and a director, and from 1969 to 1980 he headed his own theatre company, the Abe Studio. In those years he produced and directed many plays, including such seminal works as *Fake Fish*, *The Ghost is Here* and *The Little Elephant is Dead*. In addition to performing in Tokyo, Abe's troupe toured the United States and Europe, and his plays have been produced by companies around the world.

Sublime Voices

"At breakfast one morning, the narrator of *Kangaroo Notebook* discovers to his horror that what appear to be radish sprouts are growing out of his shins. Thus begins Kobo Abe's strange and wonderful last novel, completed not long before his death in 1993, and set in a skewed version of modern urban Japan. Funny and terrifying by turns, it is the story of an ordinary man in the grip of bizarre and thoroughly extraordinary forces - a self-propelled hospital bed that takes him literally to the edge of hell, doctors eager to cure the wrong ailments, mysterious windstorms, a nurse devoted to taking blood (her monthly quota is about three quarts), infant ghosts, and an American known as Master Hammer Killer who is making a film called *Fatal Accidents*."--BOOK JACKET. Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

The Woman in the Dunes

Transl. from the Japanese original *BM ni natta otoko*

Fake Fish

Three plays by one of contemporary Japan's most prominent writers -- *Involuntary Homicide*, *The Green Stockings*, *The Ghost is Here* -- translated for this volume reveal Kobo Abe's deep love of absurdity in the face of universal concerns.

Kangaroo Notebook

In the last novel written before his death in 1993, one of Japan's most distinguished novelists proffered a surreal vision of Japanese society that manages to be simultaneously fearful and jarringly funny. The narrator of *Kangaroo Notebook* wakes on morning to discover that his legs are growing radish sprouts, an ailment that repulses his doctor but provides the patient with the unusual ability to snack on himself. In short order, Kobo Abe's unraveling protagonist finds himself hurtling in a hospital bed to the very shores of hell. Abe has assembled a cast of oddities into a coherent novel, one imbued with unexpected meaning. Translated from the Japanese by Maryellen Toman Mori. "From the Trade Paperback edition.

Box Man, The

In this chilling, futuristic novel, Professor Katsumi of Tokyo has assembled and programmed a computer which, given all the available facts about a person or situation, can predict the future. Because a similar computer in Moscow is being used to make forecasts of a political nature, his institute's governing body decides to avoid politics and try to foresee the future of an individual. A man is picked, apparently at random, only to be murdered before he can be programmed, but the computer can still read his mind. The resulting involvements are complicated by a climactic shift--*Inter Ice Age 4*--which puts earth under water.

The Man who Turned Into a Stick

-- New England Theatre Journal

Three Plays by Kobo Abe

Among the great authors of postwar Japan, Abe Kb (1924-1993) is the mechanic. Works such as *The Woman in the Dunes* (1962), which brought him worldwide renown, conduct a profound analysis of human existence, while revelling in technical detail. The early postwar years were not only formative for Abe as a writer and political activist, they were also formative years for Japanese literature, culture, and politics. While progressing, in his own words, "from existentialism, to surrealism, and on to Communism\

Kangaroo Notebook

Duncan Peck has travelled alone to Dartmoor in search of his cousin. He has come from the city, where the fires are always burning. In his cousin's town, Peck finds a place with tea rooms and barley fields, a church and a schoolhouse. They sit in the shadow of a vast wall, inscribed with strange messages. Out here, the people live an honest life - and if there's any trouble, they have a way to settle it. Anyone can write on the wall, anonymously, about their neighbours, about any wrongdoing that might compromise the community. Nothing happens if there's only one allegation. Or two. But any more than that, and there has to be a reckoning. Don't try running. The moors are a dangerous place, boggy and treacherous; a wrong foot can see you sunk. A troubling, uncanny book about fear and atonement, responsibility and justice, and the violence of writing in public spaces, *The Last Good Man* dares to ask, who speaks, and who do they speak for? What power do sentences have to bind us to our deeds? And what power do names have to anchor the world when extinction is in the air?

Inter Ice Age 4

This reassessment of some of the major fictional, dramatic, documentary, and critical texts in which Abe worked out his theory of realism in the 1950s and 1960s explores the ways in which the documentarian and the detective became important metaphors in Abe's realist project. It opens up new possibilities for exploring ideas that Abe investigates in virtually all of his significant works: how we 'see,' how we 'know,' and how we ethically engage with alterity.

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From the acclaimed author of *Woman in the Dunes* comes *Secret Rendezvous*, "" the bizarrely erotic and comic adventures of a man searching for his missing wife in a mysteriously vast underground hospital. From the moment that an ambulance appears in the middle of the night to take his wife, who protests that she is perfectly healthy, her bewildered husband realizes that things are not as they should be. His covert explorations reveal that the enormous hospital she was taken to is home to a network of constant surveillance, outlandish sex experiments, and an array of very odd and even violent characters. Within a few days, though no closer to finding his wife, the unnamed narrator finds himself appointed the hospital's chief of security, reporting to a man who thinks he's a horse. With its nightmarish vision of modern medicine and modern life, *Secret Rendezvous* is another masterpiece from Japan's most gifted and original writer of serious fiction.

Three Plays

A far-out, far-fetched, and fiendishly funny story about a strange nightclub and its outrageous entertainment.

Abe KMbM, Literary Strategist

The four stories and novella translated in this volume represent the best short fiction by Ishikawa Jun (1899-1987), one of the most important modernist writers to appear on the Japanese literary stage during the years before and after World War II. Throughout his career, Ishikawa resisted the tide of popular opinion to address issues of political and artistic significance and thereby paved the way for a generation of Japanese internationalists and experimentalists, including Abe Kobo and Oe Kenzaburo. Highly acclaimed and respected in Japan, Ishikawa remains little known in the West-in part because of the tendency of Western critics and readers of Japanese literature to focus on writers concerned with aesthetic issues. Combining a strong interest in politics with a brilliant use of modernist techniques, Ishikawa's work defies easy categorization. Banned in 1938, "Mars' Song" has been called the finest example of anti-war fiction written during Japan's march to war in China and the Pacific. In it Ishikawa denounces the chorus of jingoism that swept Japan, and via a metafictional tale within a tale, he warns against the suicidal destruction to which complicity in warmongering will lead. The allegorical "Moon Gems," written in the spring of 1945, further explores the tenuous position of the writer moving against the current in a country not only still at war but very near defeat. In "The Legend of Gold" and "The Jesus of the Ruins," both from 1946, Japan has been reduced to a charred wasteland yet Ishikawa envisions destruction as fertile ground for rebirth and resurrection. Finally, the semi-surrealistic novella *The Raptor* plumbs the meanings and possibilities of peace in the post-Occupation era. William Tyler's eminently readable translations are faithfully expressive of stylistic and tonal nuances in the original works. In a perceptive introduction and the critical essays that follow, Tyler emphasizes Ishikawa's importance as an anti-establishment--even "resistance"--writer and argues that the writer's political iconoclasm goes hand-in-hand with the modanizumu of his literary experimentation. *The Legend of*

Gold will be of tremendous importance in enlarging a Western understanding of the development of the writer's role as social critic and the evolution of the modernist movement in postwar Japan.

Abe Kôbô

The New Yorker has called Donald Keene "America's preeminent scholar of Japanese literature." Now he presents a new book that serves as both a superb introduction to modern Japanese fiction and a memoir of his own lifelong love affair with Japanese literature and culture. *Five Modern Japanese Novelists* profiles five prominent writers whom Donald Keene knew personally: Tanizaki Jun'ichiro, Kawabata Yasunari, Mishima Yukio, Abe Kobo, and Shiba Ryotaro. Keene masterfully blends vignettes describing his personal encounters with these famous men with autobiographical observations and his trademark learned literary and cultural analysis. Keene opens with a confession: before arriving in Japan in 1953, despite having taught Japanese for several years at Cambridge, he knew the name of only one living Japanese writer: Tanizaki. Keene's training in classical Japanese literature and fluency in the language proved marvelous preparation, though, for the journey of literary discovery that began with that first trip to Japan, as he came into contact, sometimes quite fortuitously, with the genius of a generation. It is a journey that will fascinate experts and newcomers alike

The Last Good Man

Among the great authors of postwar Japan, Abe Kôbô (1924–1993) is the mechanic. Works such as "The Woman in the Dunes" (1962), which brought him worldwide renown, conduct a profound analysis of human existence, while revelling in technical detail. The early postwar years were not only formative for Abe as a writer and political activist, they were also formative years for Japanese literature, culture, and politics. While progressing, in his own words, "from existentialism, to surrealism, and on to Communism"

The Ruined Map

Truth from a Lie