

James Lasdun

Writer - Fiction and Non-fiction

James Lasdun was born in London in 1958 and now lives in the US. He has published three novels, four collections of poetry and four books of short stories, including the selection *The Siege*, the title story of which was made into a film by Bernardo Bertolucci (*Besieged*).



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Publications

Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
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VICTORY

2019

Jonathan Cape

Love and hate, desire and guilt, friendship and betrayal form the coordinates of these two intensely dramatic stories of men and women caught between their irrational passions and the urge for control.

In 'Feathered Glory' the seemingly happy marriage of a school principal and his artist wife reveals dangerous fault-lines as an old lover reappears in the husband's life and the wife, fascinated by a charismatic wildlife rehabilitator, brings an injured swan into their home. The poignant denouement leaves every character irreversibly transformed.

The past also haunts the present in 'Afternoon of a Faun', where an accusation of historic sexual assault plunges Marco Rosedale, an English journalist in New York, into a series of deepening crises. Set during the months leading up to Trump's election, this is at once a study of our shifting social and sexual mores, and a meditation on what makes us believe or disbelieve the stories of other people.

These gripping, darkly comic novellas reflect and complement each other, offering a sharply observed vision that will resonate with anyone interested in the clash of power and desire in our embattled contemporary lives.

THE FALL GUY

2017

UK: Jonathan Cape;

US: Norton;

Translation Rights:

Irene Skolnick

Agency

It is summer, 2012. Charlie, a wealthy banker with an uneasy conscience, invites his troubled cousin Matthew to visit him and his wife in their idyllic mountain-top house. As the days grow hotter, the friendship between the three begins to reveal its fault lines, and with the arrival of a fourth character, the household finds itself suddenly in the grip of uncontrollable passions. Who is the real victim here? Who is the perpetrator? And who, ultimately, is the fall guy?

A story of fracture in paradise, where ancient resentments and current desires lurch violently to the surface and an idyllic summer retreat becomes a stage for lies, lust and revenge, The Fall Guy is Lasdun's most entertaining novel yet: a taut psychological thriller that is superbly written, darkly vivid, with an unforgettably febrile atmosphere of erotic danger.

WATER SESSIONS

2012

UK: Jonathan

Cape/Vintage (for

US & foreign rights:

Irene Skolnick

Agency)

James Lasdun's new book of poems, his first since his acclaimed collection LANDSCAPE WITH CHAINSAW, applies his characteristic blend of the celebratory and the elegiac to a rich variety of new themes and old obsessions.

At once personal and political, WATER SESSSIONS brilliantly registers the shock waves of global tumult in the most intimately domestic of settings, while at the same time constantly feeling its way outward through private experience into the larger arenas of social and civic drama. Fathers and sons, men and women, desire and repression, art and silence, form the book's central polarities. Recurrent motifs of water and gardens give its wide-ranging subjects a satisfying coherence while also supplying its sometimes darkly urgent poems with a note of intense lyrical beauty.

Much praised for the wit and tensile strength of his line, Lasdun moves in this volume from the tight formality of 'Stones' through the highly original patient/therapist dialogue form of the title poem, to the exuberant free verse of 'Dog Days', with a versatility and intelligence that ensure his standing as one of the most gifted poets writing today.

IT'S BEGINNING TO HURT 2010 UK: Jonathan Cape; US: Farrar, Straus & Giroux; Translation: Irene Skolnick; Media: Christine Glover, APW	James Lasdun is one of the finest short story writers we have. His new collection features the story 'An Anxious Man', which won the inaugural Prospect/BBC competition in 2006. Other stories include 'Caterpillars', which will be published in Granta's December 2008 issue. Set in Britain, France and America (where Lasdun has lived for many years), these stories are beautifully crafted and carry a powerful charge.
SEVEN LIES 2007 UK: Jonathan Cape; US: Norton; Translation: Irene Skolnick; Media: A P Watt	Stefan Vogel grew up in the Big Brother society of East Germany. He describes himself as a poet, and can point to work in obscure literary magazines as proof. But Stefan Vogel lives with a terrible secret. Drawn into the counter-culture world of East Berlin in the 1970s, he meets writers and artists who seem to take him seriously. He also meets a beautiful actress, Inge, and as the wall between east and west is falling, he quickly marries her and persuades her to follow him to New York. But Stefan Vogel's secret will follow him wherever he goes. SEVEN LIES is another virtuoso performance from one of our best younger novelists, the author of the highly-acclaimed THE HORNED MAN.
THE HORNED MAN 2003 UK: Cape; US: Norton; Translation: Irene Skolnick	When Lawrence Miller discovers that his bookmark has mysteriously moved thirty pages on in his current reading, this is only the beginning of a series of apparently inexplicable circumstances in his life. A professor at a minor state university near New York, he has inherited his office from the enigmatic Bogomil Trumilcik. What are these strange objects in this office, including a hefty steel bar? And what connection does Trumilcik have with a number of hideous murders of young women? More importantly, what connection do all these things have to our narrator, Lawrence Miller? In THE HORNED MAN, the distinguished author of short stories and poetry, whose latest collection, LANDSCAPE WITH CHAINSAW, was shortlisted for the Forward Prize, triumphantly pulls off a literary confidence trick.

Non-Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
GIVE ME EVERYTHING YOU HAVE 2013 UK: Jonathan Cape; US: Farrar, Straus & Giroux	A true story of obsessive love turning to obsessive hate, GIVE ME EVERYTHING YOU HAVE chronicles James Lasdun's strange and harrowing ordeal at the hands of a former student, a self-styled "verbal terrorist," who began trying, in her words, to "ruin him". Hate mail—much of it violently anti-Semitic—online postings, and public accusations of plagiarism and sexual misconduct were her weapons of choice and, as with more conventional terrorist weapons, proved remarkably difficult to combat. James Lasdun's account, while terrifying, is told with compassion and humour, and brilliantly succeeds in turning a highly personal story into a profound meditation on subjects as varied as madness, race, Middle Eastern politics, and the meaning of honour and reputation in the Internet age.