

Amigorena, Santiago H. *The Ghetto Within*. HarperVia. tr. from French by Frank Wynne. ISBN 9780063018334.

In 1940s Buenos Aires, Vicente Rosenberg initially thinks little of the mother and brother he has left behind in Poland but is eventually overwhelmed by urgently drawn feelings of guilt, remorse, and helplessness as the plight of Europe's Jews emerges. Inspired by his grandfather, this first book by Argentine-born, French-raised director/screenwriter Amigorena to be translated into English brilliantly parallels Vicente's desperation and the tragedy unfolding abroad.

Chen, Kevin. *Ghost Town*. Europa Editions. tr. from Chinese by Darryl Sterk. ISBN 9781609457983.

Returning to his backwater Taiwanese hometown after being released from a Berlin jail for killing his German cellist boyfriend T, Keith Chen arrives in time for the all-important Ghost Festival and reflects on his family's tortured past and his own painful sense of otherness. At once luminous

and tartly observant, Chen's tour de force reveals how we all hold onto our ghosts.

Chernov, Mstyslav. *The Dreamtime*. Cherry Orchard: Academic Studies. tr. from Ukrainian by Peter Leonard & Felix Helbing. ISBN 9781644699881.

First published in 2020 at a video-art exhibition in Kyiv, this debut novel from internationally renowned Ukrainian war correspondent Chernov was meant to examine media's role in creating public collective experiences. It proves especially timely, using four interlocking narratives to portray the 2014 Ukrainian-Russian conflict in harrowing, you-are-there language framed by *Dreamtime*, an aspect of Indigenous Australian religion.

Mandanipour, Shahriar. *Seasons of Purgatory*. Bellevue Literary. tr. from Persian by Sara Khalili. ISBN 9781942658955.

In exile from Iran, where his books are banned, Mandanipour delivers a scorchingly beautiful collection in elegant,

skewer-sharp prose. With stories ranging from a father demanding that his sons uphold tradition after their grandfather's death and return to live in the ancestral home, to a girl accusing her parents of causing the death of her daring older sister, Mandanipour offers a deep understanding of the human condition.

Murata, Sayaka. *Life Ceremony*. Grove. tr. from Japanese by Ginny Tapley Takemori. ISBN 9780802159588.

Maho is flummoxed by the joyous new tradition of eating a deceased person's flesh; Kumi's sister subsists on blue-powdered drinks while bemoaning Kumi's weird cooking, supposedly based on recipes from a magical city; and Naoki resists honoring the dead—while efficiently deploying resources—by using their bodies

Petrovich, demands that journalist Pavel Vladimirovich—who once rescued Vadim from Chechnya—serve as negotiator. As Pavel struggles to find a solution, the narrative delivers a blistering critique of Russia's policies and their passive acceptance by Russia's people. Freelance journalist Shevelev no longer collaborates with Russian state or private media.

Tawada, Yoko. *Scattered All Over the Earth*. New Directions. tr. from Japanese by Margaret Mitsutani. ISBN 9780811229289.

When Japan vanished beneath climate-changed waves, Hiruko was trapped in Denmark, where she teaches immigrant children through picture dramas while purveying a delightfully grammar-fractured language she's invented called Pan-

ska (pan-Scandinavian). Linking up with amateur linguist Knut, she travels through Europe to find speakers of her native language. As the smart, ever-inventive Tawada reveals, borders and languages may shift, but the need to connect endures.

Tokarczuk, Olga. *The Books of Jacob*. Riverhead. tr. from Polish by Jennifer Croft. ISBN 9780593087480.

Once again balancing fact and fiction on a knife's edge, the Nobel Prize-winning Tokarczuk does justice to the roiling life of 18th-century Polish religious leader Jacob Frank in this fictionalized portrait. After appearing out of nowhere in a Polish village, Jacob traveled through the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires, converted from Judaism to Islam and then Catholicism, and was both loved and hated, worshipped and condemned. What a saga.

Villada, Camila. *Bad Girls*. Other. tr. from Spanish by Kit Maude. ISBN 9781635422023.

In Córdoba, Argentina, as a group of trans sex workers do their nightly rounds, their 178-year-old leader discovers a barely alive baby who's quickly adopted into their surrogate family. Through deft portraiture, family member Camila conveys their story in language at once grittily realistic, lushly fantastical, and entirely moving. A startling first novel from Villada, a transgender Argentine actress and writer.

WORLD LITERATURE

BY BARBARA HOFFERT



for clothing and furniture. Throughout this eye-popping collection, Murata challenges us to consider why we believe what we believe.

Pamuk, Orhan. *Nights of Plague*. Knopf. tr. from Turkish by Ekin Oklap. ISBN 9780525656890.

In the early 1900s, the imaginary Ottoman island of Mingheria is beset by plague, and visiting Princess Pakize and her new husband, Prince Consort Doctor Nuri Bey, are drawn into events that reveal the island's history and cultural divisiveness. What results is an effusively detailed and abundantly readable new work from Nobel Prize winner Pamuk, dealing with timely issues of quarantine, nationalism, and dissolution of empire.

Shevelev, Mikhail. *Not Russian*. Europa Editions. tr. from Russian by Brian James Baer & Ellen Vayner. ISBN 9781609458119.

In 2015, terrorists take hostages at a church near Moscow, and their leader, Vadim