

# Summer Indie Book Picks

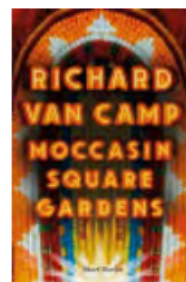
The Broken Pencil team picks the best 9 indie books coming out this summer! For author interviews, excerpts and more visit [brokenpencil.com/bookpicks](http://brokenpencil.com/bookpicks)

## SHORT STORIES

### Moccasin Square Garden

Richard Van Camp, Douglas & McIntyre

Any Van Camp book is an occasion, and this story collection is a triumph. There's the familiar fare: bittersweet narratives from the rez and up North. In one, a corrupt chief gets his due when a tug-of-war goes wrong. But it's the return of the Wheetago that shines. These voracious aliens, drawn from Indigenous lore, appear in Van Camp's last book. They're back, alongside his deft, understated prose.



## GRAPHICA

### The Pineapples of Wrath

Cathon, Pow Pow Press

Montréal-based graphic novelist Cathon serves up a zany tiki murder mystery. Set in Trois-Rivières' Hawaiian district (which, alas, does not actually exist), *The Pineapples of Wrath* follows tiki barmaid and crime novel enthusiast Marie-Plum Porter investigating the death of a former limbo champion. Police call it a piña colada overdose, but Marie-Plum's spidey senses tell her to look deeper. *The Pineapples of Wrath*'s art is detailed and immersive, bringing tiki kitsch to life.



Author interview at [brokenpencil.com/bookpicks](http://brokenpencil.com/bookpicks)

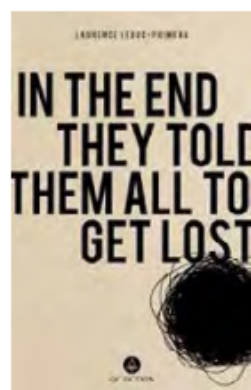
**TIKI MURDER MYSTERY  
A ZANY ADVENTURE**

## NOVEL

### In the End They Told Them All to Get Lost

Laurence Leduc-Primeau, Baraka Books

It's rare to find a first-time novelist as confident as Montreal's Laurence Leduc-Primeau. Narration from Chloe, who has inexplicably exiled herself to South America, is fragmented, but funny and embittered. Alone, but not entirely helpless, she boards with some feckless twenty-somethings, chatting to the ceiling stain in her tiny room (she names it Betty) and trying to master Spanish. Desperate for human connection, she finds a Russian to get drunk with. A bold debut.



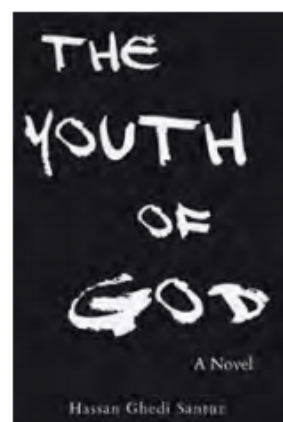
**BRAVE NOVEL LAYS BARE  
SOMALI IMMIGRANT  
EXPERIENCE**

## NOVEL

### The Youth of God

Hassan Ghedi Santur, Mawenzi House

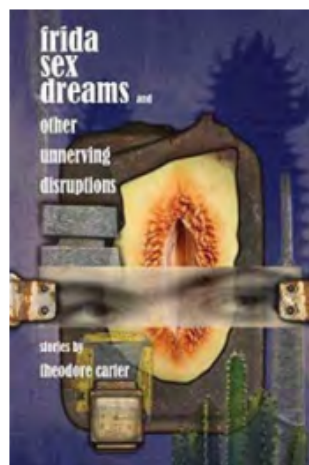
In stark prose, Toronto-based writer Santur explores the Somali-Canadian experience through the eyes of two characters: First, there's Mr. Ilmi, a passionate Mogadishu-born high school teacher trapped in an uncertain marriage, the result of an arranged union. Then there's his student Nuur, who knows only the grey suburban towers where he and much of his community lives. Nuur is a devoted Muslim, bullied by his peers (and his itinerant father) for his beard and traditional dress. Mr. Ilmi sees potential in the young man, but so does the radical Imam of Nuur's mosque. A brave novel that lays bare the complexity and pull of extremism.



Q&A with the author at [brokenpencil.com/bookpicks](http://brokenpencil.com/bookpicks)



**A BOOK AS  
DISTURBING  
AS IT IS  
COMPELLING**



**SHORT STORIES**

## Frida Sex Dreams and Other Unnerving Disruptions

Theodore Carter, Run Amok

We're quickly becoming fans of new, upstart indie press Run Amok. Last year, they published the excellent noir western *The Green Ghetto*, and now they've followed it up with this compelling string of disturbing yarns. A mix of magic realism and Freudian nightmare, Carter's wild imagination gifts us a winged woman yearning for freedom (and sex); a marriage torn apart by Frida Kahlo fantasies; and let's not forget the alien horny for President Jimmy Carter. All that and so much more!

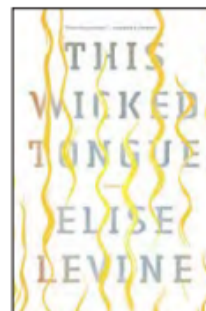
**Author interview at**  
[brokenpencil.com/  
bookpicks](http://brokenpencil.com/bookpicks)

**NOVEL**

## This Wicked Tongue

Elise Levine, Biblioasis

In her first short story collection in 20+ years, Levine masterfully weaves entire consciousnesses out of a few perfect sentences or a single setup, capturing lives that ooze remorse and longing. There's Eddie, haunted by his childhood memory of carrying live chickens to the butcher. Or ex-cop Bryce, who relives his marriage's failures as he searches for his wife in a fake French cave, complete with copycat wall drawings. One by one, serpentine sentences curl you into corner teeming with life's worst venom — regret.



**NON-FICTION**

## Herbert Marcuse, Philosopher of Utopia

Nick Thorkelson, City Lights

Boston-based cartoonist Thorkelson delivers a keen biography of thinker Herbert Marcuse. A German Jew coming of age in the turbulent times after World War I, Marcuse rubs elbows with everyone from Heidegger to Horkheimer before finding relative safety in the U.S. There, he plugs into the social movements of the '60s and pens the influential *One Dimensional Man*, a scathing critique of consumerism. A smart accessible primer on a fascinating mind that never ceased to challenge the present "with its own alternative possibilities."

**Exclusive author  
interview at**  
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## COMIC ZINE COMPILATION AS RELEVANT AS EVER

**GRAPHICA**

## The Complete Stay as you are.

Brad Yung, Three Ocean Press

Yung's *Stay as you are.* mini-zines might just be the ultimate Gen-X underground comic. Two guys in their 20s simply banter away in that post-ironic tone that was cool when it came out in the late '90s. Collected at last, the zine is still despairingly hilarious, and when it doesn't quite stand the test of time (musings on the internet, anyone?), grown-up Yung owns up to his misfires. Oh, let's not forget occasional breaks for a homicidal bear! Far from an exercise in nostalgia, *Stay as you are.* is like putting on an old favourite album and finding that its subtle tunes and painfully true lyrics affect you in surprisingly new ways.

**NON-FICTION**

## The Body Papers

Grace Talusan, Restless Books



This moving memoir opens with a tender childhood memory: Talusan's childhood move from the Philippines to a Boston suburb. But funny, painful moments of cultural dissonance — like her dad's failed attempt to foist a hamster breeding business on his daughters — give way to horror. The hamsters eat their babies, and we discover that Grace's grandfather repeatedly abuses her. Suddenly, those white, '70s suburbs shift. Clouds blacken the spire of the family's Catholic church, and darkness stretches over Grace's life. However, Grace resists in ways big and small. Returning to her homeland as a determined adult, she finally confronts her family's intergenerational trauma.