

## Graceland Chris Abani

Writers & Company Drop City GraceLand Beasts of No Nation A Study Guide for Chris Abani's "Graceland" Miles and Me GraceLand The Hunter GraceLand Giovanni's Room There Are No Names for Red Abstraktion und Einfühlung The Virgin of Flames Forage Controlled Decay All Art Is Propaganda Dog Woman Masters of the Board Song for Night Half of a Yellow Sun Player One Becoming Abigail A Stranger in Olondria GraceLand Kalakuta Republic Sanctificum GraceLand Welcome to Our Hillbrow To be Hung from the Ceiling by Strings of Varying Length Mutiny The Face Narrating the New African Diaspora Making the Trees Shiver The Secret History of Las Vegas Lagos Noir Daphne's Lot Africa's Narrative Geographies The Book of Phoenix Hands Washing Water GraceLand

### Writers & Company

A Study Guide for Chris Abani's "Graceland," excerpted from Gale's acclaimed Novels 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 Novels for Students for all of your research needs.

### Drop City

"Compelling and gorgeously written, this is a coming-of-age novella like no other. Chris Abani explores the depths of loss and exploitation with what can only be described as a knowing tenderness. An extraordinary, necessary book."—Cristina Garcia, author of Dreaming in Cuban "Abani's voice brings perspective to every moment, turning pain into a beautiful painterly meditation on loss and aloneness."—Aimee Bender, author of The Girl in the Flammable Skirt "Abani's empathy for Abigail's torn life is matched only by his honesty in portraying it. Nothing at all is held back. A harrowing piece of work."—Peter Orner, author of The Esther Stories Tough, spirited, and fiercely independent Abigail is brought as a teenager to London from Nigeria by relatives who attempt to force her into prostitution. She flees, struggling to find herself in the shadow of a strong but dead mother. In spare yet haunting and lyrical prose reminiscent of Marguerite Duras, Abani brings to life a young woman who lives with a strength and inner light that will enlighten and uplift the reader. Chris Abani is a poet and novelist and the author, most recently, of GraceLand, which won the 2005 PEN/Hemingway Prize, a Silver Medal in the California Book Awards, and was a finalist for several other prizes including the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. His other prizes include a PEN Freedom-to-Write Award, a Prince Claus Award, and a Lannan Literary Fellowship. He lives and teaches in California.

## **GraceLand**

A gritty, riveting, and wholly original murder mystery from PEN/Hemingway Award-winning author and 2015 Edgar Awards winner Chris Abani. Before he can retire, Las Vegas detective Salazar is determined to solve a recent spate of murders. When he encounters a pair of conjoined twins with a container of blood near their car, he's sure he has apprehended the killers, and enlists the help of Dr. Sunil Singh, a South African transplant who specializes in the study of psychopaths. As Sunil tries to crack the twins, the implications of his research grow darker. Haunted by his betrayal of loved ones back home during apartheid, he seeks solace in the love of Asia, a prostitute with hopes of escaping that life. But Sunil's own troubled past is fast on his heels in the form of a would-be assassin. Suspenseful through the last page, *The Secret History of Las Vegas* is Chris Abani's most accomplished work to date, with his trademark visionary prose and a striking compassion for the inner lives of outsiders.

## **Beasts of No Nation**

An award-winning author and poet offers a unique appreciation and portrait of one of the century's greatest musicians, capturing the many facets of Miles Davis's brilliant and difficult nature, and chronicling his own growth through his friendship with Davis.

## **A Study Guide for Chris Abani's "Graceland"**

From the author of the award-winning *GraceLand* comes a searing, dazzlingly written novel of a tarnished City of Angels. Praised as "singular" (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*) and "extraordinary" (*The New York Times Book Review*), *GraceLand* stunned critics and instantly established Chris Abani as an exciting new voice in fiction. In his second novel, set against the uncompromising landscape of East L.A., Abani follows a struggling artist named Black, whose life and friendships reveal a world far removed from the mainstream. Through Black's journey of self-discovery, Abani raises essential questions about poverty, religion, and ethnicity in America today. *The Virgin of Flames*, a marvelous and gritty novel filled with indelible images and unforgettable characters, confirms Chris Abani as an immensely talented writer.

## **Miles and Me**

## **GraceLand**

Somewhere, he thinks, cherishing his last thought before sleep, somewhere, out there, the last tiger stands with her back to the rising wind and slowly shakes herself awake. An unnamed man arrives at a remote house on the fringe of a vast wilderness and soon disappears into a world of silence and stillness. His one mission: to find the last thylacine, the fabled Tasmanian tiger. She is said to have passed into myth but a sighting has been reported . . . Uncompromising and compelling, Julia Leigh's stunning first novel is a haunting tale of obsession that builds to an unforgettable conclusion. 'Leigh has completely mastered the craft of storytelling, and her evocation of place and time is stunning.' Guardian 'I was hooked from the first page.' Australian's Review of Books 'Julia Leigh has emerged with a writing voice of great purity and strength . . . her talent burns bright.' Frank Moorhouse

### **The Hunter**

Chris Abani's *Dog Woman* is a mesmerizing, haunting, and sometimes subversive exploration of the personal and cultural politics of disempowerment and power. In these heart rousing and lyrically complex poems, the poet enacts the reconstruction of his feminized selves, and his personae struggle to re-form and transform both themselves and the difficult worlds they inhabit. At turns, earthy, enigmatic, devout, outraged, and compassionate, these elemental women's voices ring true, as they sing siren songs, dirges, and hosannas, and as they navigate into new and unknown territories of human will and endurance. *Dog Woman* is a daring, trailblazing, and important book; it's a vital addition to the poetry of our times.

### **GraceLand**

*Making the Trees Shiver* is an eclectic collection recreating the magic that is the annual Fort Greene Park Summer Literary Festival. Poetry and prose by Chris Abani, Amiri Baraka, Cheryl Boyce-Taylor, Staceyann Chin, Kwame Dawes, Jennifer Egan, Marlon James, Jacqueline Johnson, Willie Perdomo, Sonia Sanchez, Hal Sirowitz, and Quincy Troupe is interspersed with work by the talented next generation of writers from NY Writers Coalition's creative writing workshops. *Making the Trees Shiver* celebrates community writing at it's finest: expansive, authentic, and full of life. Like Fort Greene Park itself, these pages are noisy at times, chilling at others, but always full of spectacular views.

### **Giovanni's Room**

This book provides the first comprehensive survey and collection of Nigerian diaspora literature, offering readings of novelists such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Sefi Atta, Helon Habila, Helen Oyeyemi, Taiye Selasi, Chika Unigwe, Chris Abani, and Ike Oguine. As members of the new African diaspora, their literature captures experiences of recent Nigerian migration to the United States and the United Kingdom. Examining representative novels, such as Adichie's *Half of a Yellow*

Sun and Americanah, Habila's Waiting for an Angel, Abani's GraceLand, and Oyeyemi's The Icarus Girl, the book discusses these novels' literary and narrative methods and provides detailed analyses of two of the most common themes: depictions of migratory experiences and representations of Nigeria. Placing the novels in their relevant historical, sociological, philosophical, and theoretical contexts, Narrating the New African Diaspora presents an insightful study of current anglophone Nigerian narrative literature.

### **There Are No Names for Red**

Gabriela Jauregui's debut poetry collection is animated by a rich sense of language's polyglot permeability, which she uses to explore the interpenetration of manifold cultural spaces, from the sublime to the grotesque. These poems emerge from points of connection and slippage where present and past, human and animal, converge. In all her poems, Jauregui's street savvy and sensual attention to words incorporate her responses to the world that surrounds us.

### **Abstraktion und Einfühlung**

If you said 'cubism' fifteen times, you would be getting close to some of what Percival Everett, a famous novelist and gifted painter himself, is playing with in this new book of poems. In words that mimic process, the poems here attempt to reverse the canvas, taking perspective and skewing it to reflect the world around it, spiraling into the work as a way to get out of it. Often what stands in the way of art is art itself, a lingering delusion that there is such a thing as beauty, especially universal beauty.

### **The Virgin of Flames**

Graceland is a dazzling debut by a singular new talent The sprawling, swampy, cacophonous city of Lagos, Nigeria, provides the backdrop to the story of Elvis, a teenage Elvis impersonator hoping to make his way out of the ghetto. Broke, beset by floods, and beatings by his alcoholic father, and with no job opportunities in sight, Elvis is tempted by a life of crime. Thus begins his odyssey into the dangerous underworld of Lagos, guided by his friend Redemption and accompanied by a restless hybrid of voices including The King of Beggars, Sunday, Innocent and Comfort. Ultimately, young Elvis, drenched in reggae and jazz, and besotted with American film heroes and images, must find his way to a GraceLand of his own. Nuanced, lyrical, and pitch perfect, Abani has created a remarkable story of a son and his father, and an examination of postcolonial Nigeria where the trappings of American culture reign supreme. "A richly detailed, poignant, and utterly fascinating look into another culture and how it is cross-pollinated by our own. It brings to mind the work of Ha Jin in its power and revelation of the new."--T. Coraghessan Boyle

## Forage

“A devastating portrait of a boy holding onto the shreds of his innocence during a war that deliberately, remorselessly works to yank it away.”—Los Angeles Times Part Inferno, part Paradise Lost, part Sunjata epic, Song for Night is the story of a West African boy soldier’s terrifying yet oddly beautiful journey through a nightmare landscape of brutal war in search of his lost platoon. The mute protagonist—his vocal cords cut to lower the risk of detection by the enemy—writes in a ghostly voice about his fellow minesweepers, the things he’s witnessed, and the things he’s done, each chapter headed by a line of the sign language these children invented. This “immersive and dreamlike” novella (Publishers Weekly, starred review) by a PEN/Hemingway Award winner is unlike anything else written about an African war. “Not since Jerzy Kosinski’s The Painted Bird or Agota Kristof’s Notebook Trilogy has there been such a harrowing novel about what it’s like to be a young person in a war. That Chris Abani is able to find humanity, mercy, and even, yes, forgiveness, amid such devastation is something of a miracle.”—Rebecca Brown, author of The End of Youth “Impressive and fast-paced...narrated with such dry and lucid precision that it brings to mind Babel, Hemingway, McCarthy.”—Esquire

## Controlled Decay

This powerful collection of poems details the harrowing experiences endured by Abani and other political prisoners at the hands of Nigeria’s military regime in the late 1980s. Abani vividly describes the characters that peopled this dark world, from prison inmates such as John James, tortured to death at the age of fourteen, to the general overseers. First published after his release from jail in 1991, Kalakuta Republic remains a paean to those who suffered and to the indomitable human spirit. ‘Reading Abani’s poems is like being singed by a red hot iron.’ Harold Pinter ‘Abani’s poetry resonates with a devastating beauty which cuts to the heart of human strength, survival and tyranny.’ Pride Magazine ‘Stunning poems ... Abani conveys the experience in words shaped into art and made unforgettable by their quietness.’ New Humanist ‘A beautiful work of art elevates art and humanity above meanness and inhumanity.’ World Literature Today ‘A brave and challenging book I was moved as much by what the poems have achieved as by what they have rescued from that nightmare world. Reading, I found myself in tears.’ Sunday Tribune ‘An unheralded chunk of authentic literature’ New Statesman ‘Abani’s ...poems contain moments of grace, humanity and humor.’ Susannah Tarbush, Diwaniya ‘Chris has emerged with poems that are graceful pieces of art, almost ready to be hung in a gallery for others to come and enter them and rest in them and weep in them and admire them.’ Kwame Dawes, professor of English literature, University of Columbia, South Carolina, USA

## All Art Is Propaganda

a groundbreaking poetry collection and a work of interval, delay and retracing. Each page serves as a frame that superimposes itself temporally, aurally and visually on the pages that come before and after.

### **Dog Woman**

"Chris Abani's poetry resonates with a devastating beauty which cuts through to the heart of human strength."--Pride Hands Washing Water is Chris Abani's fourth poetry collection--a mischievous book of displacement, exile, ancestry, and subversive humor. The central section, "Buffalo Women," is a Civil War correspondence between lovers that plays on our assumptions about war, gender, morality, and politics. Sweetest Henri, I know we promised to be honest, one to the other, but your recent missive, though welcome as any epistle from you, filled me with a dread that clung like dampness to wet wood. I am terrified for your immortal soul, dear sweet Henri. This mad war of Lincoln is infecting you with a sickness too depraved to even address. . . Abani's writing is ruthless, at times traumatic, and consistently filled with surprising twists and turns.

### **Masters of the Board**

It is the seventies, at the height of flower power. Star has just joined Drop City, a hippie commune in sunny California living the simple, natural life. But underneath the drugs, music and transcendent bliss, she slowly discovers tensions and sexual rivalries that threaten to split the community apart. A world away in Boynton, a tiny town in the interior of Alaska, Sess Harder, a pioneer who actually does live off the land, hunting, trapping and fishing, yearns for someone to share the harsh winters with him. When the authorities threaten to close down Drop City, the hippies abandon camp and head up north to Alaska, the last frontier. But neither they nor the inhabitants of Boynton are completely prepared for each other - and as the two communities collide, unexpected friendships and dangerous enmities are born.

### **Song for Night**

Story of five people caught inside an airport cocktail lounge during a global disaster.

### **Half of a Yellow Sun**

### **Player One**

Born into poverty in the chaotic capital city of Nigeria, Elvis is tempted by the underworld and enters a life of crime, encountering beggars, musicians, and gobs of American pop culture as he tries to survive in postcolonial Nigeria. Original. 25,000 first printing.

### **Becoming Abigail**

'Dramatic and compelling . Mutiny has a slow, measured, meditative pace all of its own' Independent on Sunday

### **A Stranger in Olondria**

Building on the emerging field of geocriticism, this book explores Africa's complex, dynamic literary landscapes, proffering new methods for understanding the geographies of African literature. Using both cultural geography and political ecology, Crowley offers fresh insights into key authors' imagined geographies of resistance and alterity.

### **GraceLand**

A fiery spirit dances from the pages of the Great Book. She brings the aroma of scorched sand and ozone. She has a story to tell. The Book of Phoenix is a unique work of magical futurism. A prequel to the highly acclaimed, World Fantasy Award-winning novel, *Who Fears Death*, it features the rise of another of Nnedi Okorafor's powerful, memorable, superhuman women. Phoenix was grown and raised among other genetic experiments in New York's Tower 7. She is an "accelerated woman"—only two years old but with the body and mind of an adult, Phoenix's abilities far exceed those of a normal human. Still innocent and inexperienced in the ways of the world, she is content living in her room speed reading e-books, running on her treadmill, and basking in the love of Saeed, another biologically altered human of Tower 7. Then one evening, Saeed witnesses something so terrible that he takes his own life. Devastated by his death and Tower 7's refusal to answer her questions, Phoenix finally begins to realize that her home is really her prison, and she becomes desperate to escape. But Phoenix's escape, and her destruction of Tower 7, is just the beginning of her story. Before her story ends, Phoenix will travel from the United States to Africa and back, changing the entire course of humanity's future.

### **Kalakuta Republic**

With her award-winning debut novel, *Purple Hibiscus*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was heralded by the Washington Post Book World as the "21st century daughter" of Chinua Achebe. Now, in her masterly, haunting new novel, she recreates a seminal moment in modern African history: Biafra's impassioned struggle to establish an independent republic in Nigeria

during the 1960s. With the effortless grace of a natural storyteller, Adichie weaves together the lives of five characters caught up in the extraordinary tumult of the decade. Fifteen-year-old Ugwu is houseboy to Odenigbo, a university professor who sends him to school, and in whose living room Ugwu hears voices full of revolutionary zeal. Odenigbo's beautiful mistress, Olanna, a sociology teacher, is running away from her parents' world of wealth and excess; Kainene, her urbane twin, is taking over their father's business; and Kainene's English lover, Richard, forms a bridge between their two worlds. As we follow these intertwined lives through a military coup, the Biafran secession and the subsequent war, Adichie brilliantly evokes the promise, and intimately, the devastating disappointments that marked this time and place. Epic, ambitious and triumphantly realized, *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a more powerful, dramatic and intensely emotional picture of modern Africa than any we have had before. From the Hardcover edition.

## **Sanctificum**

Born into poverty in the chaotic capital city of Nigeria, Elvis is tempted by the underworld and enters a life of crime, encountering beggars, musicians, and gobs of American pop culture as he tries to survive in postcolonial Nigeria. Original. 25,000 first printing.

## **GraceLand**

## **Welcome to Our Hillbrow**

Born into poverty in the chaotic capital city of Nigeria, Elvis is tempted by the underworld and enters a life of crime, encountering beggars, musicians, and American pop culture as he tries to survive in postcolonial Nigeria. 2004.

## **To be Hung from the Ceiling by Strings of Varying Length**

"The masterful wedding of the narrative and the lyric in these poems (whose subject is the maturation of a sensibility, the coming-of-age of a young Englishwoman--the power of her ties to family, husband and her 'adopted' country, Nigeria--as well as the illumination of her own soul and that of the narrator's) fills the reader with both sorrow and wonder. It is an instructive tale for our age--its vision of the individual will and imagination resisting the madness of politics and the destruction of war is singular and profound." --Carol Muske-Dukes

## **Mutiny**

Chris Abani's *Dog Woman* is a mesmerizing, haunting, and sometimes subversive exploration of the personal and cultural politics of disempowerment and power. In these heart rousing and lyrically complex poems, the poet enacts the reconstruction of his feminized selves, and his personae struggle to re-form and transform both themselves and the difficult worlds they inhabit. At turns, earthy, enigmatic, devout, outraged, and compassionate, these elemental women's voices ring true, as they sing siren songs, dirges, and hosannas, and as they navigate into new and unknown territories of human will and endurance. *Dog Woman* is a daring, trailblazing, and important book; it's a vital addition to the poetry of our times. - Maurya Simon, author of *Ghost Orchid* These poems reveal a prodigious imagination, which is enlivened by sardonic wit and an inexhaustible capacity for irony and empathy. Daring to span a historical continuum that takes us as far back as the rituals of Christ suffering, through the tragic history of the Mayans of Mexico, to the starkly modern concerns of contemporary life, these poems find beauty and grace in the most painful things. The achievement here lies in the poet's ability to bring an engaging. Intelligence to bear on the complexities of race, gender and memory. Abani's line has a sharp precision that turns a scream into a line of memorable lyric music without losing the emotion and force. That he does this again and again in poems of such vulnerability speaks highly of Abani's art. - Kwame Dawes, author of *Midland*

### **The Face**

Chris Abani finds the sacred in a charged and broken world, to "build meaning from detritus."

### **Narrating the New African Diaspora**

"A stellar cast of award-winning Nigerian authors . . . a must-read for crime lovers looking for something different."—Brittle Paper In Akashic Books's acclaimed series of original noir anthologies, each book comprises all new stories set in a distinct neighborhood or location within the respective city. Now, West Africa enters the Noir Series arena, meticulously edited by one of Nigeria's best-known authors. In *Lagos Noir*, the stories are set in "a city of more than 21 million and an amazing amalgam of wealth, poverty, corruption, humor, bravery, and tragedy. Abani and a dozen other contributors tell stories that are both unique to Lagos and universal in their humanity . . . This entry stands as one of the strongest recent additions to Akashic's popular noir series" (Publishers Weekly, starred review, pick of the week). The anthology includes stories by Chris Abani, Nnedi Okorafor, E.C. Osondu, Jude Dibia, Chika Unigwe, A. Igoni Barrett, Sarah Ladipo Manyika, Adebola Rayo, Onyinye Ihezukwu, Uche Okonkwo, Wale Lawal, 'Pemi Aguda, and Leye Adenle. "The beauty of this book, which contains 13 stories from Nigerian writers, is that it serves as a travelogue, too."—Bloomberg, "The Darkest Summer Reading List for Those Bright, Beachy Days" "With writers like Igoni Barrett, Leye Adenle, and E.C. Osondu contributing, *Lagos Noir* offers wildly different perspectives on both the city itself and the state of noir fiction. This book is almost like a world in itself, one that you'll want to dive back into and get lost in again and again."—CrimeReads, "One of the 10 Best Crime Anthologies of

2018”

## **Making the Trees Shiver**

As a critic, George Orwell cast a wide net. Equally at home discussing Charles Dickens and Charlie Chaplin, he moved back and forth across the porous borders between essay and journalism, high art and low. A frequent commentator on literature, language, film, and drama throughout his career, Orwell turned increasingly to the critical essay in the 1940s, when his most important experiences were behind him and some of his most incisive writing lay ahead. All Art Is Propaganda follows Orwell as he demonstrates in piece after piece how intent analysis of a work or body of work gives rise to trenchant aesthetic and philosophical commentary. With masterpieces such as "Politics and the English Language" and "Rudyard Kipling" and gems such as "Good Bad Books," here is an unrivaled education in, as George Packer puts it, "how to be interesting, line after line."

## **The Secret History of Las Vegas**

When David meets the sensual Giovanni in a bohemian bar, he is swept into a passionate love affair. But his girlfriend's return to Paris destroys everything. Unable to admit to the truth, David pretends the liaison never happened - while Giovanni's life descends into tragedy. United by the theme of love, the writings in the Great Loves series span over two thousand years and vastly different worlds. Readers will be introduced to love's endlessly fascinating possibilities and extremities: romantic love, platonic love, erotic love, gay love, virginal love, adulterous love, parental love, filial love, nostalgic love, unrequited love, illicit love, not to mention lost love, twisted and obsessional love . . . .

## **Lagos Noir**

In *The Face: Cartography of The Void*, Chris Abani has given us a brief memoir that is, in the best tradition of the genre, also an exploration of the very nature of identity. Abani meditates on his own face, beginning with his early childhood that was immersed in the Igbo culture of West Africa. *The Face* is a lush work of art that teems with original and profound insights into the role of race, culture and language in fashioning our sense of self. Abani's writing is poetic, filled with stories, jokes and reflections that draw readers into his fold.

## **Daphne's Lot**

Welcome to *Our Hillbrow* is an exhilarating and disturbing ride through the chaotic and hyper-real zone of

Hillbrow—microcosm of all that is contradictory, alluring, and painful in the postapartheid South African psyche. Everything is there: the shattered dreams of youth, sexuality and its unpredictable costs, AIDS, xenophobia, suicide, the omnipotent violence that often cuts short the promise of young people's lives, and the Africanist understanding of the life continuum that does not end with death but flows on into an ancestral realm. Infused with the rhythms of the inner-city pulsebeat, this courageous novel is compelling in its honesty and its broad vision, which links Hillbrow, rural Tiragalong, and Oxford. It spills out the guts of Hillbrow—living with the same energy and intimate knowledge with which the Drum writers wrote Sophiatown into being.

## **Africa's Narrative Geographies**

### **The Book of Phoenix**

The harrowing, utterly original debut novel by Uzodinma Iweala about the life of a child soldier in a war-torn African country—now a critically-acclaimed Netflix original film directed by Cary Fukunaga (True Detective) and starring Idris Elba (Mandela, The Wire). As civil war rages in an unnamed West-African nation, Agu, the school-aged protagonist of this stunning debut novel, is recruited into a unit of guerilla fighters. Haunted by his father's own death at the hands of militants, which he fled just before witnessing, Agu is vulnerable to the dangerous yet paternal nature of his new commander. While the war rages on, Agu becomes increasingly divorced from the life he had known before the conflict started—a life of school friends, church services, and time with his family, still intact. As he vividly recalls these sunnier times, his daily reality continues to spin further downward into inexplicable brutality, primal fear, and loss of selfhood. In a powerful, strikingly original voice, Uzodinma Iweala leads the reader through the random travels, betrayals, and violence that mark Agu's new community. Electrifying and engrossing, *Beasts of No Nation* announces the arrival of an extraordinary new writer.

### **Hands Washing Water**

Jevik travels to the city of Olondria where he is overtaken by a ghost from his past.

### **GraceLand**

"Her questioning truthfulness demonstrates that Wong is a significant poet." --George Elliott Clarke, Halifax Sunday Herald

[ROMANCE](#) [ACTION & ADVENTURE](#) [MYSTERY & THRILLER](#) [BIOGRAPHIES & HISTORY](#) [CHILDREN'S](#) [YOUNG ADULT](#) [FANTASY](#)  
[HISTORICAL FICTION](#) [HORROR](#) [LITERARY FICTION](#) [NON-FICTION](#) [SCIENCE FICTION](#)