

# THE ART OF NOVEL MILAN KUNDERA

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**Bacon** - Francis Bacon 1996

From distorted self-images to brutal portrayals of friends and fellow artists, the portraits of Francis Bacon account for one of the most remarkable aspects of the work of the British painter. This work looks at his stylistic distortions of classicism and his famous deformations. Milan Kundera provides an introduction explaining his personal response to Bacon's work, exploring the paradox that lies in the faithfulness of the distorted images, and linking Bacon's genius with that of Samuel Beckett, both working at the outer limits of their art. France Borel's essay sets Bacon's works in the context of his life and influences and explains his approach to portraiture.

**The Art of the Novel** - Milan Kundera 2020-12-23

The classic of literary criticism from one of the world's greatest novelists. In seven independent, but closely related chapters, Milan Kundera presents his personal conception of the European novel, which he describes as 'an art born of the laughter of God'. 'Invigoratingly suggestive . . . Kundera's map of the development of the European novel is outlined with the reckless brevity of the man who knows exactly what and where the salient points are.' London Review of Books 'Kundera is the saddest, funniest and most loveable of authors.' The Times

**Identity, Politics and the Novel** - Ian Fraser 2013

Identity, Politics and the Novel is a diverse and wide-ranging book that offers an innovative and unique approach to several works by four critically acclaimed novelists: Milan Kundera, Ian McEwan, Michel Houellebecq, and J. M. Coetzee. Drawing from classical and contemporary political, philosophical, and social theory--including foundational texts by Adorno, Aquinas, Camus, Hegel, and Nietzsche--Ian Fraser tracks these novelists' use of the aesthetic self and, in turn, develops the notion of a Marxist aesthetic identity through the medium of contemporary fiction.

**Shakespeare in a Divided America** - James Shapiro 2021-03-09

One of the New York Times Ten Best Books of the Year • A National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist • A New York Times Notable Book A timely exploration of what Shakespeare's plays reveal about our divided land. "In this sprightly and enthralling book . . . Shapiro amply demonstrates [that] for Americans the politics of Shakespeare are not confined to the public realm, but have enormous relevance in the sphere of private life." –The Guardian (London) The plays of William Shakespeare are rare common ground in the United States. For well over two centuries, Americans of all stripes—presidents and activists, soldiers and writers, conservatives and liberals alike—have turned to Shakespeare's works to explore the nation's fault lines. In a narrative arching from Revolutionary times

to the present day, leading scholar James Shapiro traces the unparalleled role of Shakespeare's four-hundred-year-old tragedies and comedies in illuminating the many concerns on which American identity has turned. From Abraham Lincoln's and his assassin, John Wilkes Booth's, competing Shakespeare obsessions to the 2017 controversy over the staging of Julius Caesar in Central Park, in which a Trump-like leader is assassinated, Shakespeare in a Divided America reveals how no writer has been more embraced, more weaponized, or has shed more light on the hot-button issues in our history.

**The Book of Laughter and Forgetting** - Milan Kundera 2023-03-28

"An absolutely dazzling entertainment. . . . Arousing on every level—political, erotic, intellectual, and above all, humorous." –Newsweek "The Book of Laughter and Forgetting calls itself a novel, although it is part fairy tale, part literary criticism, part political tract, part musicology, and part autobiography. It can call itself whatever it wants to, because the whole is genius." –New York Times Rich in its stories, characters, and imaginative range, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting is the novel that brought Milan Kundera his first big international success in the late 1970s. Like all his work, it is valuable for far more than its historical implications. In seven wonderfully integrated parts, different aspects of human existence are magnified and reduced, reordered and emphasized, newly examined, analyzed, and experienced.

**The Art of the Novel** - Milan Kundera 1986

**The Unbearable Lightness of Being** - Milan Kundera 2004-05-04

When The Unbearable Lightness of Being was first published in English, it was hailed as "a work of the boldest mastery, originality, and richness" by critic Elizabeth Hardwick and named one of the best books of 1984 by the New York Times Book Review. It went on to win the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction and quickly became an international bestseller. Twenty years later, the novel has established itself as a modern classic. To commemorate the anniversary of its first English-language publication, HarperCollins is proud to offer a special hardcover edition. A young woman in love with a man torn between his love for her and his incorrigible womanizing; one of his mistresses and her humbly faithful lover -- these are the two couples whose story is told in this masterful novel. Controlled by day, Tereza's jealousy awakens by night, transformed into ineffably sad death-dreams, while Tomas, a successful surgeon, alternates loving devotion to the dependent Tereza with the ardent pursuit of other women. Sabina, an independent, free-spirited artist, lives her life as a series of betrayals -- of parents, husband, country, love itself -- whereas her lover, the intellectual

Franz, loses all because of his earnest goodness and fidelity. In a world in which lives are shaped by irrevocable choices and by fortuitous events, a world in which everything occurs but once, existence seems to lose its substance, its weight. Hence we feel, says the novelist, "the unbearable lightness of being" -- not only as the consequence of our private acts but also in the public sphere, and the two inevitably intertwine. This magnificent novel encompasses the extremes of comedy and tragedy, and embraces, it seems, all aspects of human existence. It juxtaposes geographically distant places (Prague, Geneva, Paris, Thailand, the United States, a forlorn Bohemian village); brilliant and playful reflections (on "eternal return," on kitsch, on man and animals -- Tomas and Tereza have a beloved doe named Karenin); and a variety of styles (from the farcical to the elegiac) to take its place as perhaps the major achievement of one of the world's truly great writers.

**Testaments Betrayed** - Milan Kundera 1996-08-02

Milan Kundera has established himself as one of the great novelists of our time with such books as *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, *Immortality* and *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*. In *Testaments Betrayed*, he proves himself a brilliant defender of the moral rights of the artist and the respect due to a work of art and its creator's wishes. The betrayal of both--often by their most passionate proponents--is the principal theme of this extraordinary work. Readers will be particularly intrigued by Kundera's impassioned attack on society's shifting moral judgments and persecutions of art and artists, from Mayakovsky to Rushdie.

**The Festival of Insignificance** - Milan Kundera 2023-07-18

"Slender but weighty, thoroughly cerebral. . . . It comes as a welcome corrective to so much American-style realist fiction, which in heavy doses can blur into a kind of sameness. . . what is moving about this novel is its embrace of what has always driven Kundera, the delicate state of living between being and nothingness."-- Boston Globe From the internationally acclaimed, bestselling author of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, an unexpected and enchanting novel--the culmination of his life's work that is a hymn to friendship and an original and humorous commentary on our era and how we live Casting light on the most serious of problems and at the same time saying not one serious sentence; being fascinated by the reality of the contemporary world and at the same time completely avoiding realism--that's *The Festival of Insignificance*. Readers who know Milan Kundera's earlier books know that the wish to incorporate an element of the "unserious" in a novel is not at all unexpected of him. In *Immortality*, Goethe and Hemingway stroll through several chapters together talking and laughing. And in *Slowness*, Vera, the author's wife, says to her husband: "you've often told me you meant to write a book one day that would have not a single serious word in it...I warn you: watch out. Your enemies are lying in wait." Now, far from watching out, Kundera is finally and fully realizing his old aesthetic dream in this novel that we could easily view as a summation of his whole work. A strange sort of summation. Strange sort of epilogue. Strange sort of laughter, inspired by our time, which is comical because it has lost all sense of humor. What more can we say? Nothing. Just read.

**The Art of the Novel** - Milan Kundera 2003-04-01

Kundera brilliantly examines the work of such important and diverse figures as Rabelais, Cervantes, Sterne, Diderot, Flaubert, Tolstoy, and Musil. He is especially penetrating on Hermann Broch, and his exploration of the world of Kafka's novels vividly reveals the comic terror of Kafka's bureaucratized universe. Kundera's discussion of his own work includes his views on the role of historical events in fiction, the meaning of action, and the creation of character

in the post-psychological novel.

**The Unbearable Lightness of Being** - Milan Kundera 2023-03-28

"Far more than a conventional novel. It is a meditation on life, on the erotic, on the nature of men and women and love . . . full of telling details, truths large and small, to which just about every reader will respond." -- People In *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Milan Kundera tells the story of two couples, a young woman in love with a man torn between his love for her and his incorrigible womanizing, and one of his mistresses and her humbly faithful lover. In a world in which lives are shaped by irrevocable choices and by fortuitous events, a world in which everything occurs but once, existence seems to lose its substance, its weight. Hence, we feel "the unbearable lightness of being" not only as the consequence of our pristine actions but also in the public sphere, and the two inevitably intertwine. This magnificent novel is a story of passion and politics, infidelity and ideas, and encompasses the extremes of comedy and tragedy, illuminating all aspects of human existence.

**The Art & Craft of Novel Writing** - Oakley M. Hall 1994

Like a muse for the writer, Oakley Hall thoughtfully leads us past the sinkholes of cliches, flat prose, and self-conscious writing and guides us toward the magic of vivid and original storytelling. . . .An essential resource for any writer -- beginning, published, or just plain stuck. -- Amy Tan Oakley Hall cites the works and methods of such great novelists as John Steinbeck, Joyce Carol Oates, Leo Tolstoy, Agatha Christie and Milan Kundera to show readers what works in the novel, and why. This book features advice on taking a novel through each of its stages, from the beginning of an idea to *The End*, and guides writers through the process of writing a novel.

**Jacques and His Master** - Milan Kundera 2013-01-29

*Jacques and His Master* is a deliciously witty and entertaining play by Milan Kundera, the acclaimed Franco-Czech author of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*. A highly original variation on Enlightenment philosopher Denis Diderot's novel *Jacques le Fataliste*, *Jacques and His Master* has been successfully staged all over the world. This new translation by Simon Callow has been authorized by Kundera as the definitive edition. *the art of memory in exile vladimir nabokov & milan kundera* - hana pichova In their virtuoso displays of literary talent, Nabokov and Kundera showcase the strategies that allow their protagonists to succeed as emigres: a creative fusing of past and present through the prism of the imagination."

**Ignorance** - Milan Kundera 2003-09-30

A New York Times Notable Book Irena and Josef meet by chance while returning to their homeland, which they had abandoned twenty years earlier. Will they manage to pick up the thread of their strange love story, interrupted almost as soon as it began and then lost in the tides of history? The truth is that after such a long absence "their memories no longer match."

**Identity** - Milan Kundera 1999-04-21

There are situations in which we fail for a moment to recognize the person we are with, in which the identity of the other is erased while we simultaneously doubt our own. This also happens with couples--indeed, above all with couples, because lovers fear more than anything else "losing sight" of the loved one. With stunning artfulness in expanding and playing variations on the meaningful moment, Milan Kundera has made this situation--and the vague sense of panic it inspires--the very fabric of his new novel. Here brevity goes hand in hand with intensity, and a moment of bewilderment marks the start of a labyrinthine journey during which the

reader repeatedly crosses the border between the real and the unreal, between what occurs in the world outside and what the mind creates in its solitude. Of all contemporary writers, only Kundera can transform such a hidden and disconcerting perception into the material for a novel, one of his finest, most painful, and most enlightening. Which, surprisingly, turns out to be a love story.

**The Darling** - Russell Banks 2011-10-11

"Russell Banks's work presents without falsehood and with tough affection the uncompromising moral voice of our time. You find the craziness of false dreams, the political inequalities, and somehow the sliver of redemption."—Michael Ondaatje Set in Liberia and the United States from 1975 through 1991, *The Darling*, from acclaimed author Russell Banks, is the story of Hannah Musgrave, a political radical and member of the Weather Underground. Hannah flees America for West Africa, where she and her Liberian husband become friends of the notorious warlord and ex-president, Charles Taylor. Hannah's encounter with Taylor ultimately triggers a series of events whose momentum catches Hannah's family in its grip and forces her to make a heartrending choice.

**The Art of the Novel** - Milan Kundera 2003-04-01

Kundera brilliantly examines the work of such important and diverse figures as Rabelais, Cervantes, Sterne, Diderot, Flaubert, Tolstoy, and Musil. He is especially penetrating on Hermann Broch, and his exploration of the world of Kafka's novels vividly reveals the comic terror of Kafka's bureaucratized universe. Kundera's discussion of his own work includes his views on the role of historical events in fiction, the meaning of action, and the creation of character in the post-psychological novel.

**The Death of King Arthur** - Simon Armitage 2012

A new translation of the Middle English classic follows Arthur into battle and describes the death of his knights and his own poignant last moments.

*Agnes's Final Afternoon* - Francois Ricard 2003-09-30

A model of clarity, grace, and intelligence, François Ricard's book joins the great French tradition of the literary essay as a meditation on the writing of Milan Kundera. Agnès's *Final Afternoon* imitates the protagonist of Kundera's novel *Immortality* on the last afternoon of her life. Like all readers of fiction, Agnès steps out of her car -- out of the world of planned routes, responsibilities, and social self -- and gives herself up to the discovery of a new landscape, an experience that will transform her. François Ricard's essay enters into the writings of Milan Kundera in much the same way. The landscape he explores includes a chain of ten novels, composed between 1959 and 1999, and two books containing one of the most lucid reflections on the novel. From *The Joke* to *Ignorance*, Ricard uncovers the richness of theme and character in the novels, their structural composition, polyphony of voices, and innovations of form and subject matter that stretch the boundaries of the novel to a breaking point. Readers need not be familiar with all of Milan Kundera's oeuvre to appreciate this unusual and original book. Agnès's *Final Afternoon* will inspire a sense of wonder and lead you to appreciate the beauty and profundity of Kundera's art.

*The Art of the Novel* - Milan Kundera 1988-01-01

Every novelist's work contains an implicit vision of the history of the novel, an idea of what the novel is. I have tried to express here the idea of the novel that is inherent in my own novels. -- Milan Kundera Kundera brilliantly examines the work of such important and diverse figures as Rabelais, Cervantes, Sterne, Diderot, Flaubert, Tolstoy, and Musil. He is especially penetrating on Hermann Broch, and his exploration of the world of Kafka's novels vividly reveals the

comic terror of Kafka's bureaucratized universe. Kundera's discussion of his own work includes his views on the role of historical events in fiction, the meaning of action, and the creation of character in the post-psychological novel.

**Farewell Waltz** - Milan Kundera 1998-04-21

In this dark farce of a novel, set in an old-fashioned Central European spa town, eight characters are swept up in an accelerating dance: a pretty nurse and her repairman boyfriend; an oddball gynecologist; a rich American (at once saint and Don Juan); a popular trumpeter and his beautiful, obsessively jealous wife; an disillusioned former political prisoner about to leave his country and his young woman ward. Perhaps the most brilliantly plotted and sheer entertaining of Milan Kundera's novels, *Farewell Waltz* poses the most serious questions with a blasphemous lightness that makes us see that the modern world has deprived us even of the right to tragedy. Written in Bohemia in 1969-70, this book was first published (in 1976) in France under the title *La valse aux adieux* (*Farewell Waltz*), and later in thirty-four other countries. This beautiful new translation, made from the French text prepared by the novelist himself, fully reflects his own tone and intentions. As such it offers an opportunity for both the discovery and the rediscovery of one of the very best of a great writer's works.

**Immortality** - Milan Kundera 1999-10-20

Milan Kundera's sixth novel springs from a casual gesture of a woman to her swimming instructor, a gesture that creates a character in the mind of a writer named Kundera. Like Flaubert's *Emma* or Tolstoy's *Anna*, Kundera's *Agnes* becomes an object of fascination, of indefinable longing. From that character springs a novel, a gesture of the imagination that both embodies and articulates Milan Kundera's supreme mastery of the novel and its purpose; to explore thoroughly the great, themes of existence.

**Life Is Elsewhere** - Milan Kundera 2000-07-25

The author initially intended to call this novel *The Lyrical Age*. The lyrical age, according to Kundera, is youth, and this novel, above all, is an epic of adolescence; an ironic epic that tenderly erodes sacrosanct values: childhood, motherhood, revolution, and even poetry. Jaromil is in fact a poet. His mother made him a poet and accompanies him (figuratively) to his love bed and (literally) to his deathbed. A ridiculous and touching character, horrifying and totally innocent ("innocence with its bloody smile!"), Jaromil is at the same time a true poet. He's no creep, he's Rimbaud. Rimbaud entrapped by the communist revolution, entrapped in a somber farce.

**Phenomenology and Aesthetics** - M. Kronegger 2012-12-06

and the one in the middle which judges as he enjoys and enjoys as he judges. This latter kind really reproduces the work of art anew. The division of our Symposium into three sections is justified by the fact that phenomenology, from Husserl, Heidegger, Moritz Geiger, Ingarden, in Germany and Poland, Merleau-Ponty, Paul Ricoeur, E. Levinas in France, Unamuno in Spain, and Tymieniecka, in the United States, have revealed striking coincidences in trying to answer the following questions: What is the philosophical vocation of literature? Does literature have any significance for our lives? Why does the lyric moment, present in all creative endeavors, in myth, dance, plastic art, ritual, poetry, lift the human life to a higher and authentically human level of the existential experience of man? Our investigations answer our fundamental inquiry: What makes a literary work a work of art? What makes a literary work a literary work, if not aesthetic enjoyment? As much as the formation of an aesthetic language culminates in artistic creation, the formation of a philosophical language lives within the orbit of creative

imagination.

**Encounter** - Milan Kundera 2010-08-17

Encounter is the latest addition to the acclaimed body of literary criticism from beloved author Milan Kundera (*The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*). Novelist Russell Banks writes, "Not since Henry James, perhaps, has a fiction writer examined the process of writing with such insight, authority, and range of reference and allusion." In *Encounter*, Kundera brilliantly reflects on some of his signature themes and old loves (Rabelais, Fellini, Janacek, Malaparte), on literature, on morality, and on the transformation of civilization as we know it.

**The JOKE** - Milan Kundera 1993-02-26

All too often, this brilliant novel of thwarted love and revenge miscarried has been read for its political implications. Now, a quarter century after *The Joke* was first published and several years after the collapse of the Soviet-imposed Czechoslovak regime, it becomes easier to put such implications into perspective in favor of valuing the book (and all Kundera's work) as what it truly is: great, stirring literature that sheds new light on the eternal themes of human existence. The present edition provides English-language readers an important further means toward reevaluation of *The Joke*. For reasons he describes in his Author's Note, Milan Kundera devoted much time to creating (with the assistance of his American publisher-editor) a completely revised translation that reflects his original as closely as any translation possibly can: reflects it in its fidelity not only to the words and syntax but also to the characteristic dictions and tonalities of the novel's narrators. The result is nothing less than the restoration of a classic.

**The Joke** - Milan Kundera 2023-03-28

"A thoughtful, intricate, ambivalent novel with the reach of greatness in it."  
—John Updike "It is impossible to do justice here to the subtleties, comedy, and wisdom of this very beautiful novel. Milan Kundera is an artist, clearly one of the best to be found anywhere, who says that the good (and evil) that issues from men's souls matters much more than the deeds of a State. And he says it with passion, with good humor, and with love." —Salman Rushdie  
All too often, this brilliant novel of thwarted love and revenge miscarried has been read for its political implications. Now, more than a quarter century after *The Joke* was first published and several years after the collapse of the Soviet-imposed Czechoslovak regime, it becomes easier to put such implications into perspective in favor of valuing the book (and all Milan Kundera's work) as what it truly is: great, stirring literature that sheds new light on the eternal themes of human existence. This edition provides English-language readers an important further means toward reevaluation of *The Joke*. For reasons he describes in his Author's Note, Milan Kundera devoted much time to creating a completely revised translation that reflects his original as closely as any translation possibly can: reflects it in its fidelity not only to the words and syntax but also to the characteristic dictions and tonalities of the novel's narrators. The result is nothing less than the restoration of a classic.

**Slowness** - Milan Kundera 1997-04-11

Milan Kundera's lightest novel, a divertimento, an opera buffa, *Slowness* is also the first of this author's fictional works to have been written in French. Disconcerted and enchanted, the reader follows the narrator of *Slowness* through a midsummer's night in which two tales of seduction, separated by more than two hundred years, interweave and oscillate between the sublime and the comic. Underlying this libertine fantasy is a profound meditation on contemporary life:

about the secret bond between slowness and memory, about the connection between our era's desire to forget and the way we have given ourselves over to the demon of speed. And about "dancers" possessed by the passion to be seen, for whom life is merely a perpetual show emptied of every intimacy and every joy.

**The Festival of Insignificance** - Milan Kundera 2020-10-09

Casting light on the most serious of problems and at the same time saying not one serious sentence; being fascinated by the reality of the contemporary world and at the same time completely avoiding realism—that's *The Festival of Insignificance*. Readers who know Kundera's earlier books know that the wish to incorporate an element of the "unserious" in a novel is not at all unexpected of him. In *Immortality*, Goethe and Hemingway stroll through several chapters together talking and laughing. And in *Slowness*, Vera, the author's wife, says to her husband: "you've often told me you meant to write a book one day that would have not a single serious word in it... I warn you: watch out. Your enemies are lying in wait." Now, far from watching out, Kundera is finally and fully realizing his old aesthetic dream in this novel that we could easily view as a summation of his whole work. A strange sort of summation. Strange sort of epilogue. Strange sort of laughter, inspired by our time, which is comical because it has lost all sense of humor. What more can we say? Nothing. Just read.

*Translating Milan Kundera* - Michelle Woods 2006-01-01

Michelle Woods uses new archival research to view the wider cultural scope of the translation issue involving the controversies surrounding Milan Kundera's novels. She focuses on the language of the novels, his 'lost' works, writing as translation, interpretation and censorship.

**Silhouetted by the Blue** - Traci L. Jones 2011-07-19

Seventh-grader Serena Shaw is trying to keep up at school while rehearsing for the lead role in the spring musical and dealing with a father so "blue" he is nearly catatonic. With the aid of a not-so-secret admirer as well as a growing sense of self-confidence, she faces the challenges of caring for herself and her ball-of-charm younger brother, all while attempting to lead the life of a normal pre-teen. Readers will be drawn into this convincing portrait of a vivacious young person who is on a path to discovering that taking on responsibility sometimes means finding the best way to ask for help.

**Let the Old Dead Make Room for the Young Dead** - Milan Kundera 2019-10-15

Faber Stories, a landmark series of individual volumes, presents masters of the short story form at work in a range of genres and styles. A chance encounter leads a man to spend the afternoon with an older woman, now a widow, who escaped him fifteen years earlier. Neither of them doubts that the day will end in disgust, but for one intimate moment each finds a way to overcome mortality. Written in 1969, before Milan Kundera was known to English-speaking readers, this story renders male and female characters painful equals, and prompted Philip Roth to admire its 'detached Chekhovian tenderness'.

*The Art & Craft of Novel Writing* - Oakley M. Hall 1994

Like a muse for the writer, Oakley Hall thoughtfully leads us past the sinkholes of clichés, flat prose, and self-conscious writing and guides us toward the magic of vivid and original storytelling. ...An essential resource for any writer -- beginning, published, or just plain stuck. -- Amy Tan  
Oakley Hall cites the works and methods of such great novelists as John Steinbeck, Joyce Carol Oates, Leo Tolstoy, Agatha Christie and Milan Kundera to show readers what works in the novel, and why. This book features advice on taking a novel through each of its stages, from the beginning of an idea to The End, and guides writers through the

process of writing a novel.

**The Book of Laughter and Forgetting** - Milan Kundera 2020-11-09

'This book is a novel in the form of variations. The various parts follow each other like the various stages of a voyage leading into the interior of a theme, the interior of a thought, the interior of a single, unique situation the understanding of which recedes from my sight into the distance. It is a book about laughter and about forgetting, about forgetting and about Prague, about Prague and about the angels.' The Book of Laughter and Forgetting is the most secret of Kundera's novels. This new translation is the first to be fully authorized by Milan Kundera.

**The Art of Fiction** - David Lodge 2012-04-30

In this entertaining and enlightening collection David Lodge considers the art of fiction under a wide range of headings, drawing on writers as diverse as Henry James, Martin Amis, Jane Austen and James Joyce. Looking at ideas such as the Intrusive Author, Suspense, the Epistolary Novel, Magic Realism and Symbolism, and illustrating each topic with a passage taken from a classic or modern novel, David Lodge makes the richness and variety of British and American fiction accessible to the general reader. He provides essential reading for students, aspiring writers and anyone who wants to understand how fiction works.

*The Curtain* - Milan Kundera 2007-12-26

"A magic curtain, woven of legends, hung before the world. Cervantes sent Don Quixote journeying and tore through the curtain. The world opened before the knight-errant in all the comical nakedness of its prose." In this thought-provoking, endlessly enlightening, and entertaining essay on the art of the novel, renowned author Milan Kundera suggests that "the curtain" represents a ready-made perception of the world that each of us has—a pre-interpreted world. The job of the novelist, he argues, is to rip through the curtain and reveal what it hides. Here an incomparable literary artist cleverly sketches out his personal view of the history and value of the novel in Western civilization. In doing so, he celebrates a prose form that possesses the unique ability to transcend national and language boundaries in order to reveal some previously unknown aspect of human existence.

**Life is Elsewhere** - Milan Kundera 1986

The author initially intended to call this novel, "The Lyrical Age." The lyrical age, according to Kundera, is youth, and this novel, above all, is an epic of adolescence; an ironic epic that tenderly erodes sacred values: childhood,

motherhood, revolution, and even poetry. Jaromil is in fact a poet. His mother made him a poet and accompanies him (figuratively) to his love bed and (literally) to his deathbed. A ridiculous and touching character, horrifying and totally innocent ("innocence with its bloody smile"), Jaromil is at the same time a true poet. He's no creep, he's Rimbaud. Rimbaud entrapped by the communist revolution, entrapped in a somber farce.

**No Tomorrow** - Vivant Denon 2009-10-13

A Bilingual New York Review Books Original Vivant Denon's No Tomorrow is one of the masterpieces of eighteenth-century French libertine literature, a book to set beside Choderlos de Laclos' Les Liaisons dangereuses, except that where Laclos' icy novel tells of hellish depravity, Denon's ravishing novella is a paradisaical diversion. This tale of seduction is itself a seduction, with a plot that could be said to slowly unveil itself before arriving at last at an unexpected consummation. Summoned by Madame de T— to her country house, the young hero of Denon's novella is taken on a tour of the grounds, only the beginning of a night that not only will be full of unanticipated delights but will give rise to unforeseen, perhaps unanswerable, questions. Lydia Davis's definitive translation of Denon's slim masterpiece is accompanied by the French text. Peter Brooks's illuminating introduction explores the mysteries of No Tomorrow's original publication and the subtleties of Denon's ethics of pleasure.

**Arts of the Possible: Essays and Conversations** - Adrienne Rich 2002-05-17

"Adrienne Rich's new prose collection could have been titled The Essential Rich."—Women's Review of Books These essays trace a distinguished writer's engagement with her time, her arguments with herself and others. "I am a poet who knows the social power of poetry, a United States citizen who knows herself irrevocably tangled in her society's hopes, arrogance, and despair," Adrienne Rich writes. The essays in Arts of the Possible search for possibilities beyond a compromised, degraded system, seeking to imagine something else. They call on the fluidity of the imagination, from poetic vision to social justice, from the badlands of political demoralization to an art that might wound, that may open scars when engaged in its work, but will finally suture and not tear apart. This volume collects Rich's essays from the last decade of the twentieth century, including four earlier essays, as well as several conversations that go further than the usual interview. Also included is her essay explaining her reasons for declining the National Medal for the Arts. "The work is inspired and inspiring."—Alicia Ostriker "[S]o clear and clean and thorough. I learn from her again and again."—Grace Paley