

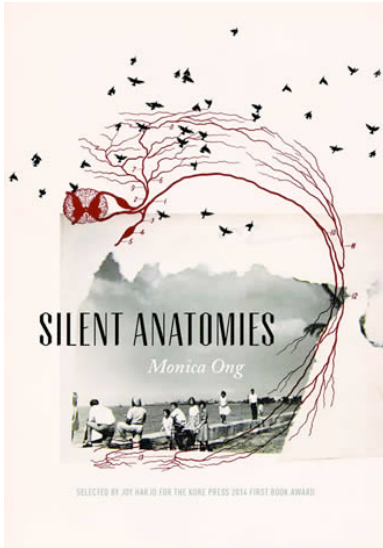
LITERATURE

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Silent Anatomies By Monica Ong

Winner of the 2014
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Award, selected by
Joy Harjo



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monica Ong gives voice to cultural silences in debut collection *Silent Anatomies*

"There are no fireworks when girls are born."—Grandma Ong

TUCSON, AZ, February 2015: The body as cultural battlefield is where Kundiman fellow [Monica Ong](#) debuts with her bold, first collection [Silent Anatomies](#), a poetic-visual hybrid to be released on March 1, 2015 from the award-winning nonprofit Kore Press. Guggenheim fellow Joy Harjo selected the stunning new work as winner of the Press' 2014 [First Book Award in Poetry](#), noting, "This collection is highly experimental and exciting."

The daughter of an immigrant physician, Ong grew up among whispers, haunted by familial ghosts, as well as the trauma of those who sought her father's medical advice, mostly in secret for fear of losing face. Her work scrutinizes the phenomena of cultural silences—shame that obscures the female body, the social stigma shrouding certain illnesses, as well as the cryptic stories of her ancestors—and seeks to reclaim the narratives written against the *Other*, from their bodies to their sense of belonging.

Emerging from art installations, these poems push the boundaries of text and image, employing a range of medical ephemera to frame the power struggles and fictions of multi-cultural identity. *Silent Anatomies* is Ong's contribution to the Asian-American Avant-Garde, and exists at the intersection of visual art and the medical humanities.

"Ong brilliantly skewers the marking of surfaces" [Douglas Kearney](#) says. "Writing—yes—but also defacement/effacement, surgical incision, racism.... You may not believe your eyes or ears, but read this astonishing debut, and you'll believe Ong's."

New England Review's [Rick Barot](#) praises "In lush visual assemblages and poems that are ironic and moving, Ong delves into the often-silent selves that every self carries. . . the ghosts and demons of familial and cultural history, and the present American self grappling with race and identity. . . This book is as ambitious and thrilling as they come."

The book launch will be Friday, March 13 at 7:00 pm at the Silk Road Art Gallery, in New Haven, Connecticut, co-sponsored by the Asian Network at Yale. Ong will read in New York City at Word Up Books on March 7 at 4:00 pm, and with other Kundiman fellows on March 8 at 5:00 pm at Verlaine. April events include exhibits, speaking, and multimedia readings in Minneapolis and Tucson.