



Resonances: Contemporary Writers on the Classics

Participants: Nadeem Aslam (Pakistan), Eduardo Halfon (Guatemala), James Kelman (Scotland), and Genichiro Takahashi (Japan)

Moderated by Professor **Eva S. Chou**, Baruch College

Before the flame, a spark.

Each year, a group of PEN World Voices Festival authors are invited by Baruch College's Great Works program to comment on a classic work of literature that influenced their own work. Panelists speak about the great works that affected them, read from their own work or their chosen classic text, and discuss questions with the audience.

Thursday, May 2: 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Engelman Recital Hall, Baruch Performing Arts Center

Free and open to the public.

At age 13, **Nadeem Aslam** published his first short story in Urdu in a Pakistani newspaper. His debut novel, *Season of the Rainbirds* (1993), set in rural Pakistan, won the Betty Trask and the Author's Club First Novel Awards. His subsequent novels include *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) which won the Kiriyama Prize, and *The Wasted Vigil* (2008), which is set in Afghanistan.

Eduardo Halfon, born in Guatemala, is the author of several novels and collections of short fiction, including *Esto no es una pipa*, *Saturno* (2003), *La Pirueta* (winner of the José María de Pereda Prize) and *El boxeador polaco* (*The Polish Boxer* 2012). *Polish Boxer* has been translated into English and is described by the *Los Angeles Times* as “deeply accessible, yet elusive, like reality.”

James Kelman was born in Glasgow, Scotland and this, he says, may have had a bearing on his writings and political activism. His first story collection appeared in 1973; his latest novel is *Mo Said She Was Quirky* (2012). During this forty year period his many story collections, novels, plays and essays have won him readers, awards, and much literary influence.

Genichiro Takahashi was arrested while in college in the 1960s for his political activities. After nearly a year's imprisonment, he found he had, as he said, “trouble using my words.” Doctors encouraged him to write, and he has since written eighteen novels and four essay collections. His first novel *Sayonara, Gangsters* won the Gunzo Literary Award and has been published in English, Italian and Brazilian Portuguese.

Eva S. Chou, moderator, has published a study of the Tang dynasty poet Tu Fu. She now writes on modern Chinese literature and its connections to the culture, politics, and history of China. Her most recent work is *Memory, Violence, Queues: Lu Xun Interprets China* (2012).

Co-sponsored by The Great Works Program, Weissman School of Arts and Sciences - Baruch College, the Asia Society, Monkey Business, and A Public Space