

Known and Strange Things: Essays



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Reviews

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(Ivah West)

KNOWN AND STRANGE THINGS: ESSAYS



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Random House Trade, United States, 2016. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 201 x 130 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. A blazingly intelligent first book of essays from the award-winning author of *Open City* and *Every Day Is for the Thief*. With this collection of more than fifty pieces on politics, photography, travel, history, and literature, Teju Cole solidifies his place as one of today's most powerful and original voices. On page after page, deploying prose dense with beauty and ideas, he finds fresh and potent ways to interpret art, people, and historical moments, taking in subjects from Virginia Woolf, Shakespeare, and W. G. Sebald to Instagram, Barack Obama, and Boko Haram. Cole brings us new considerations of James Baldwin in the age of Black Lives Matter; the African American photographer Roy DeCarava, who, forced to shoot with film calibrated exclusively for white skin tones, found his way to a startling and true depiction of black subjects; and (in an essay that inspired both praise and pushback when it first appeared) the White Savior Industrial Complex, the system by which African nations are sentimentally aided by an America "developed on pillage." Persuasive and provocative, erudite yet accessible, *Known and Strange Things* is an opportunity to live within Teju Cole's wide-ranging enthusiasms, curiosities, and passions, and a chance to see the world in surprising and affecting new frames. Praise for *Known and Strange Things* "On every level of engagement and critique, *Known and Strange Things* is an essential and scintillating journey." Claudia Rankine, *The New York Times Book Review* (Editors' Choice) "Cole has fulfilled the dazzling promise of his novels *Every Day Is for the Thief* and *Open City*. He ranges over his interests with voracious keenness, laser-sharp prose, an open heart and a clear eye." *The Guardian* "We..."



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