

Image Gallery

The long awaited release of Leander Jackie Grogan's new novel, King Juba's Chest, has proven to be well worth the wait. Hold on to the handrails for a very unorthodox ride.

Online PR News "15-April-2013" Getting ready for Leander Jackie Grogan's new spellbinding novel requires at least three things: a disregard for traditional genres, a palate for provocative thought and a pair of strong arms to hold up the 626 page, James A Michener type block of paper concrete, while reading late at night.

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King Juba's Chest a thundering, globetrotting American saga on the raw and dirty side of the tracks. From Jurez, the City of Dead Girls, an improbable young illegal Mexican immigrant eludes the spray of bullets from the ruthless Zetas cartel, claws her way through the choking dust of a collapsing smuggler's tunnel, survives the ICE raids of the rat-infested colonias of New Mexico and the abusive blows of a carjacking, paint-sniffing boyfriend in Amarillo, finally, rising up from the ashes of poverty to become the CEO of a major American corporation.

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Yet, all is not what it appears to be. In the dark corridors of her mind is a secret place, a horrible place where prisoners of desperation abound and unwieldy miracles take flight. The cost of each visit is astronomical and nonnegotiable. The ultimate life-and-death exchange rate is hidden in the seams of a mysterious invisible world.

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Indeed this new fiction is James A. Michener on steroids, a sweeping tale of the miscegenation of cultures and the undeniable quest to scale the purple mountains and alabaster cities in the land of the free. Immigration has a face ... your face. And if you can avoid the scorching heat and desert rattlesnakes, the patriotic crazies that roam the border with shotguns and baseball bats, and the rape camps outside of San Diego where they hang your panties in the trees, then you are ready to embrace the darkness of the drug smugglers cave. Crawl to the light of freedom, my innocent one. Crawl to America.

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Most gratifying to me is the idea I might be contributing to the effort to reduce the horrendous void in insightful reading choices for Hispanic women, says Grogan, the bestselling author of Exorcism At Midnight and Black Church Blues. The giant has awakened. With this new generation of Latina consumers, literacy is not an obstacle. They want to read books about America that include their historical roots.

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King Jubas Chest is by no means limited to the Hispanic experience. It is multicultural fiction at its best. One

moment we find ourselves embroiled in the religious sanctity and rigid moral codes of Pokhava, Nepal, a city thoroughly polished by centuries of Tantric meditation, sacred Hindu rituals and soothing Sanskrit Mantras. The next moment were landing in Taipei City, Taiwan, a bustling, highly industrialized metropolis on the banks of the famous Danshui River, where the streets crawl with scooters and bicycles and makeshift taxis, and high speed trains rumbled in the distance, drowning out sweltering thoughts that any day, nuclear missiles from China or North Korea might fill the morning skies.

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In the final chapters the ancient mysteries envelop us, their secrets, too precious to discuss in this writing. Yet, they make main character Lola Salinas quest to find her destiny in America all the more difficult ... and rewarding ... a bittersweet reward.

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Survival on the raw and dirty side of the tracks has never been more engaging and unraveling and malignant. Do pull up a seat. Prepare for a very unorthodox ride.

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