



## Sonata /

Bowden, Charles (1945-2014), author

Creative nonfiction.

Monografía

"I believe every sunrise and I remember the smell of wet grass, the color of robins, and rustle of leaves on the big oaks that outlive nations, all this comes with each sunrise." Sonata marks the sixth and final installment of Charles Bowden's towering "Unnatural History of America" series. While his earlier volumes were suffused with violence and war, Bowden offers here a celebration of rebirth and regrowth. Rendered in Bowden's inimitable style, more prose poetry than reportage, he evokes panoramas that contain the potential for respite and offer a state of grace all but lost in the endless wars of man. Bowden travels back in time to the worlds of artists Francisco Goya and Vincent van Gogh, the latter painting furiously against encroaching madness. "Van Gogh tries to dream a life of color," writes Bowden. "Powder blue sheds, yellow stubble, pink skies-but the fears and dark things drag him down." As Bowden's vivid prose wrestles with the madness of the world, van Gogh's paintings represent an act of resistance, ultimately unsuccessful, against depression and suicide. Moving from the vibrant hues of van Gogh's painted gardens to America's southern border, Bowden returns once more to the Mexican asylum run by "El Pastor," Jose Antonio Galvan, who was first introduced to readers of the sextet in Jericho. Here, too, is the dream of a garden that will be planted in the desert, a promise of regeneration in a world gone mad. Poetic, elegiac, and elliptical, Sonata is the final, captivating book of Bowden's monumental career

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