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New crime novel noire recounts lost journal's horrors of Unit 731

Revenge plot crime novel, 'Itoh's Ghost,' recalls black, white Kurosawa-style films

WESTERVILLE, Ohio – Author Eric Rentschler plots a crime noir against the backdrop of human experimentations carried out by the Japanese during World War II in his intriguing debut novel, “Itoh's Ghost” ([published by iUniverse](#)).

“Itoh's Ghost” is the story of a soldier, whose suicide remains a mystery, and his daughter, who refuses to accept the truth of his disappearance. Itoh's daughter, Akiko, is betrothed to a celebrated scientist, but disturbances in the yakuza underworld unsettle her plans. The Old Cop investigates a city park murder. Across the Yellow Sea a woman finds a journal which recounts the final horrors of Unit 731. She says Itoh's ghost is to blame.

When asked about what drove the writing of the novel, Eric Rentschler responded, “The end of WWII and the post-WWII period in Japan was utterly captivating to me, especially given the excellent historical writing that set the standard, starting with Ruth Benedict's ‘Chrysanthemum and the Sword’ to the controversial ‘Imperial Conspiracy,’ which was handed to me by an old Japan hand my first week on the job. Ultimately, there had to be some fictional rendering much like the films of the same era.”

Praise for “Itoh's Ghost”:

“Itoh's Ghost is a fast-paced, modern, mystery novel that flawlessly mixes murder with one of WWII's darkest and least-known episodes—the story of Japan's notorious Unit 731. Author Eric Rentschler's gritty prose, engaging style, and disturbing talent for bringing this grizzly history to life, makes this an unforgettable read.”

—Jeff Lyons, author, “Anatomy of a Premise Line”

“Itoh's Ghost”

By Eric Rentschler

Softcover | 6 x 9 in | 288 pages | ISBN 9781450210461

E-Book | 288 pages | ISBN 9781450210454

Available at Amazon and Barnes & Noble

About the Author

Eric Rentschler won the Garst Prize and the Lane Prize for poetry at Cornell College. He received a master's degree in literature from Ohio State University and has worked with writers at Coffee House Press and the Loft in Minneapolis. He taught English for four years in Japan and traveled extensively throughout Japan and China. More information is available at www.ericrentschler.com

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