



‘Tony White joins a handful of contemporary writers who are proving that the novel has never been more alive. He is a serious, engaging voice of the modern city’

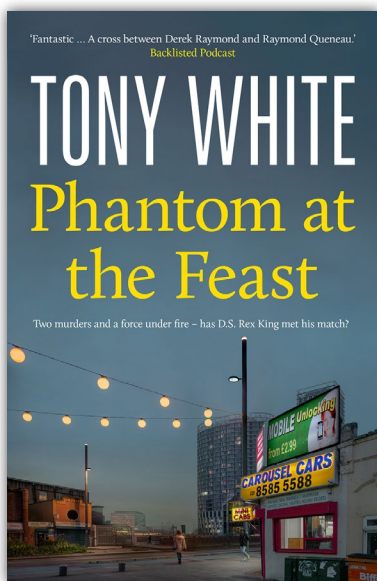
Michael Moorcock, *The Guardian*

PHANTOM AT THE FEAST

TONY WHITE

18 JUNE 2026 | NO EXIT PRESS | PAPERBACK ORIGINAL | £12.99

In the follow-up to *The Fountain in the Forest*, Tony White cements his status as one of the most exciting and ambitious writers working today. *Phantom at the Feast* is a gripping, genre-busting thriller rooted in both modern Britain and the UK Miners’ Strike of 1984–85, which brings DS Rex King’s story to a powerful conclusion. But it is also a dazzling ‘ouliplan’ literary experiment in which the chapters are shaped by the solutions to Guardian quick crosswords which Tony first completed daily between 3 April and 1 June 1985, and which day by day, chapter by chapter, play a key role in the story.



When the sole witness in a trafficking case is discovered brutally murdered, a brass horseshoe forced between his teeth, Detective Sergeant Rex King is summoned back to London and into a labyrinth of memory, music, and political unrest. From The Clash’s ragged 1985 busking tour to the fractured legacy of the anti-nuclear movement, Rex follows threads that tug uncomfortably at his own history- echoes he can’t quite place, shadows that refuse to settle. Meanwhile his personal life has never been more tumultuous, as the daughter he’s never met, turns up on his doorstep.

When Rex’s boss, DCI ‘Lollo’ Lawrence, suddenly disappears, and long-buried papers from the Miners’ Strike surface, he must work alongside a sharp young detective, a seasoned former soul boy, and the National Crime Agency’s unsettlingly brilliant new AI. Yet the deeper he travels, the more he finds the investigation folding back on him: professional loyalties strained, personal relationships tested, and accusations from his undercover past threatening to unmake him.

Tony White is an acclaimed novelist and short-story writer. His novels include *Foxy-T* (Faber, 2003), and *The Fountain in the Forest* (Faber, 2018), the first in a series using the detective genre to explore the legacy of social and political transformations in the aftermath of the UK Miners’ Strike of 1984–85. A former writer in residence at the Science Museum, he has reviewed for the *Guardian*, *Irish Times*, and *The Idler*. He is currently a Fellow of the Royal Literary Fund attached to Royal Holloway University of London, and an Associate Lecturer on the Creative Writing MA at Birkbeck. White also presents the radio show Literature Live on Resonance FM which returns for a new season in spring 2026. He lives in London and is a member of the Crime Writers’ Association.

The Fountain in the Forest by Tony White will be reissued in paperback by No Exit Press on 3 December 2026.



Praise for *The Fountain in the Forest*

‘White is always convivial company. His books are characterised by stylistic innovation, a feeling for place, and a love of rogues and rebels’

Guardian

‘Daring, fascinating and scintillating’

Bernardine Evaristo

‘Fascinating, beautifully written and really original’

Literary Review

‘Fantastic . . . A cross between Derek Raymond and Raymond Queneau.’

Backlisted Podcast

‘A gripping police procedural . . . Sets the author and his readers a bracingly high bar’

Times Literary Supplement

‘A formally daring novel . . . That all these stylistic fireworks can illuminate several rich plot lines, each with multiple twists, which an attentive reader will enjoy disentangling, is the best vindication of experimental prose’

Financial Times

‘Tony White’s latest novel begins for all the world like a police procedural, following the delightfully named sleuth Rex King as he investigates the grisly murder of man in a Covent Garden theatre. White lulls the reader into absorbed bewilderment before weaving the strands together with all the deftness of a seasoned crime writer.’

Spectator