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At home and abroad

High Degree of Atrocity
Jay Scott Kanés

Island-born John Cairns (writing under the pen name Jay Scott Kanés), has published his first novel, a political thriller set in Hong Kong, entitled High Degree of Atrocity.

An astute Asia-watcher, Cairns crossed the Pacific in time to experience Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty and the aftermath. During Hong Kong's difficult 1997 transformation from a British colony into a Chinese special administrative region, Kanés worked as an insider in Hong Kong's government sector. "Among other tasks, I prepared promotional prose for overseas distribution by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council," said Kanés. "High Degree of Atrocity's plot emerges from real-life political turmoil," says Kanés. "The fictional events reflect reality, albeit a worst-case scenario." "By writing this book, I attempt to protect Hong Kong from prospects the plot may come true. Maybe explosive fiction can repel sinister forces to the north that consistently threaten Hong Kong's autonomy and freedoms."

Born in PEI Cairns began a journalism career with The Sault Star newspaper in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and then The Leader-Post in Regina, Saskatchewan. He first visited Asia in 1986. "Initially, I edited a magazine called Arts of Asia," Cairns said. Later, he supervised editorial contents for business titles like Hong Kong Trade Services, Hong Kong Electronics and Hong Kong Jewellery Collection before moving into the government sector. He divides his time between Lower Freetown, PEI, and Hong Kong. High Degree of Atrocity is initially available to Island readers at The Book Emporium, 169 Queen Street, Charlottetown.

