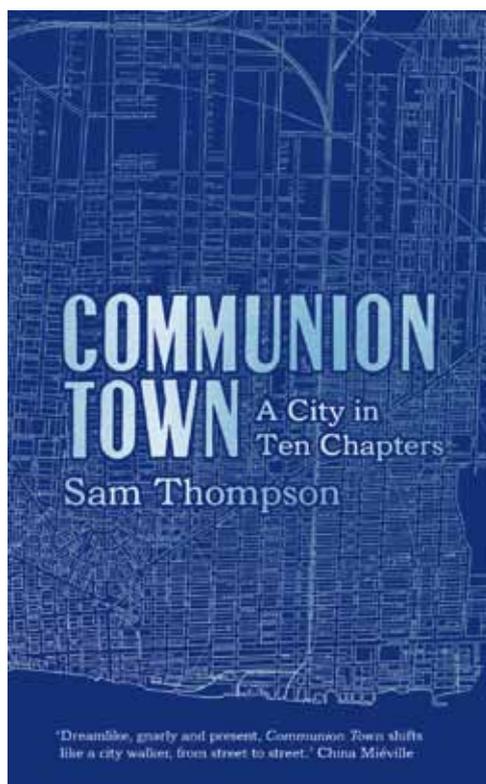




# Reader's Guide



*Communion Town*  
is Sam Thompson's first novel

# Communion Town Sam Thompson

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## About the author

Sam Thompson was born in 1978. He teaches English at St Anne's College, Oxford, and writes for *Times Literary Supplement*, the *London Review of Books* and *The Guardian*. He lives in Oxford.

## Communion Town

Every city is made of stories: stories that meet and diverge, stories of the commonplace and the strange, of love and crime, of ghosts and monsters.

This is the story of a place that never looks the same way twice: a place imagined anew by each citizen who walks through the changing streets, among voices half-heard, signs half-glimpsed and desires half-acknowledged. This is the story of a city.

## Discussion points

Sam Thompson's imagined city in *Communion Town* is mapped out in 10 stories, each told from the perspective of a different character. Which stories do you think most effectively capture the experience of city life?

Do you agree with the reviewer who said:

'Perhaps it isn't surprising that one of his best stories involves a boy who constructs a model town on the floor of his sitting room, allowing his imagination to stretch out and discover what it can do. He could be a figure of the young novelist at work. Turning the pages of *Communion Town* you become aware that here is a new writer working out what he can do, and realising that he can do anything.' Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, *Daily Telegraph*

*Communion Town* is classed as a novel but does its subtitle, *A City in Ten Chapters*, more accurately describe what Sam Thompson is trying to achieve?

It has been suggested that Sam Thompson's writing is 'incredibly intelligent' and that he assumes his readers are too. Does this chime with your reading of the book?

Do you agree that this book isn't for the reader who likes a comfortable beginning, middle and end?

## Themed reading

David Mitchell *Ghostwritten*  
Italo Calvino *Invisible Cities*  
China Miéville *Kraken*

## Useful links

### Publisher's website

<http://www.4thestate.co.uk/>

### Facebook link

<http://www.facebook.com/CommunionTown/timeline>