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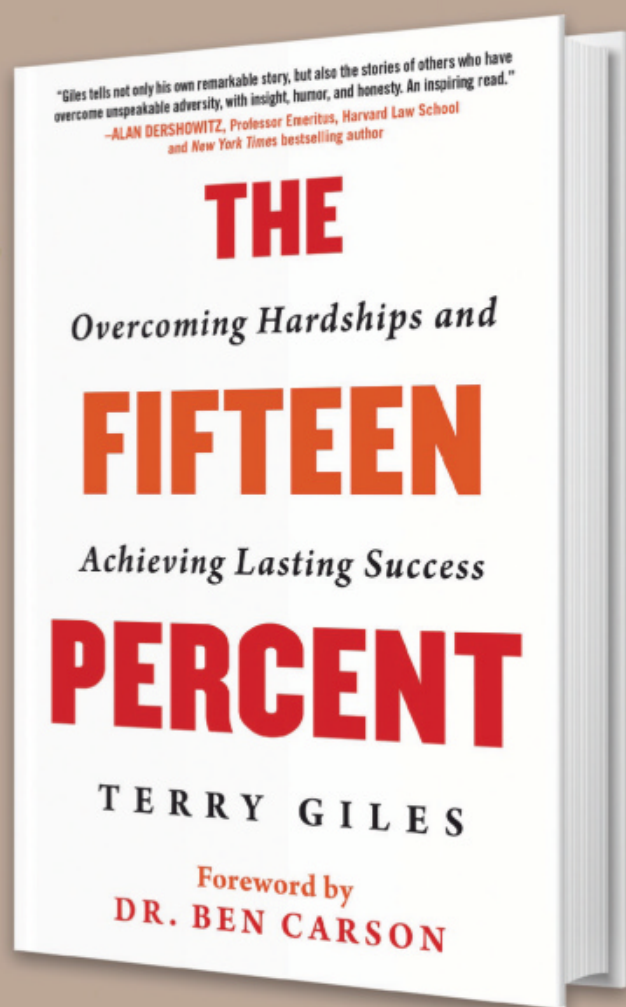
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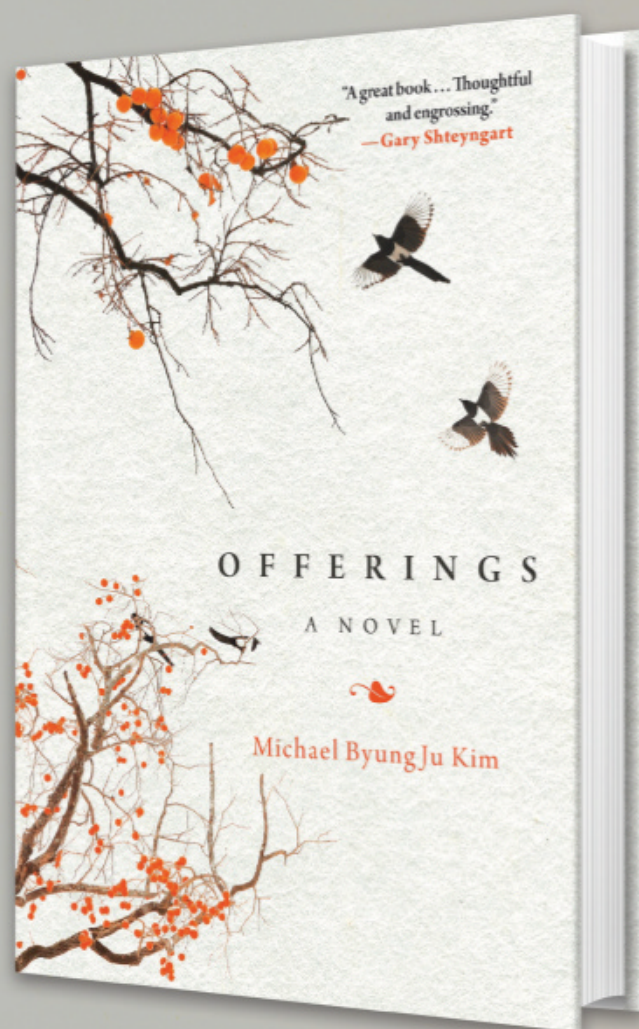
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"In clean, elegant prose, Michael Kim plumbs the complicated world of international finance—and the universal longing of fathers and sons not to disappoint one another. *Offerings* is the engrossing tale of an immigrant's troubled return home."

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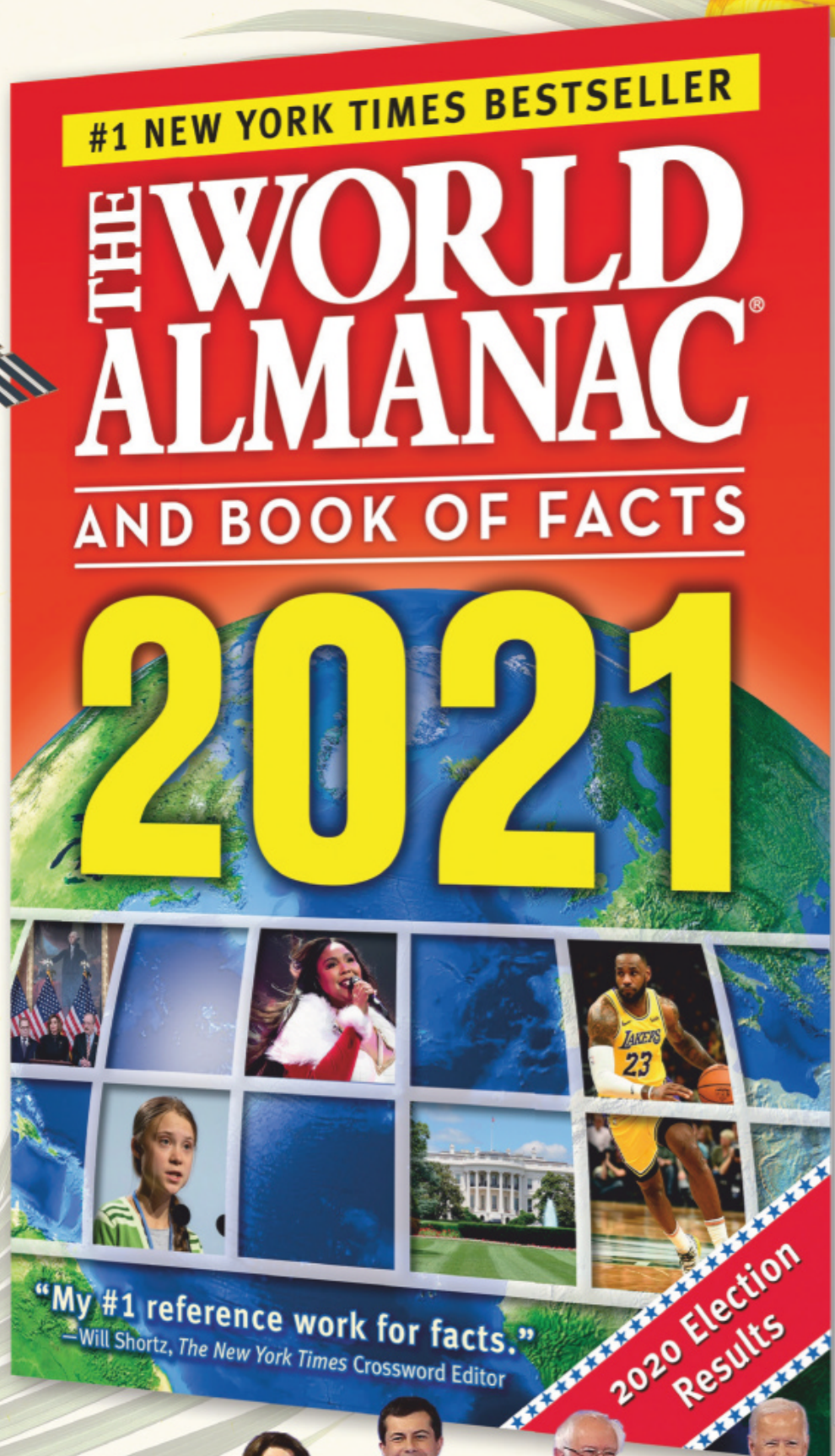
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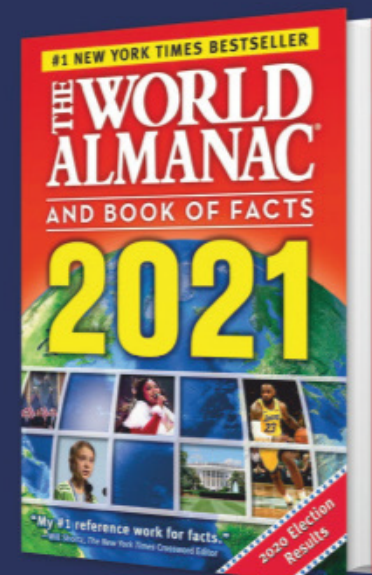


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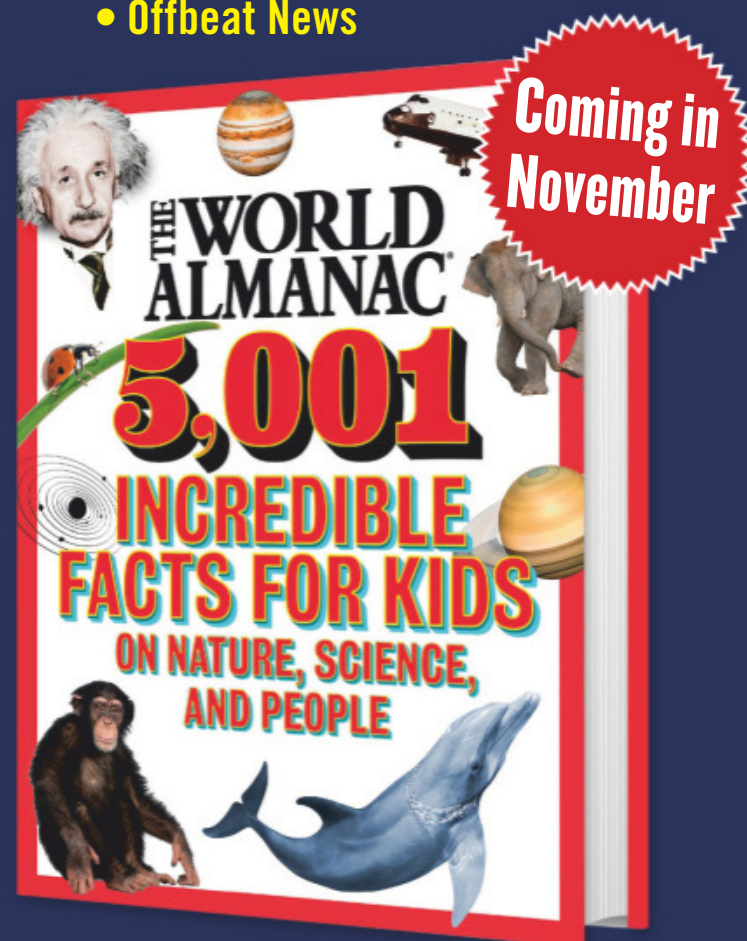
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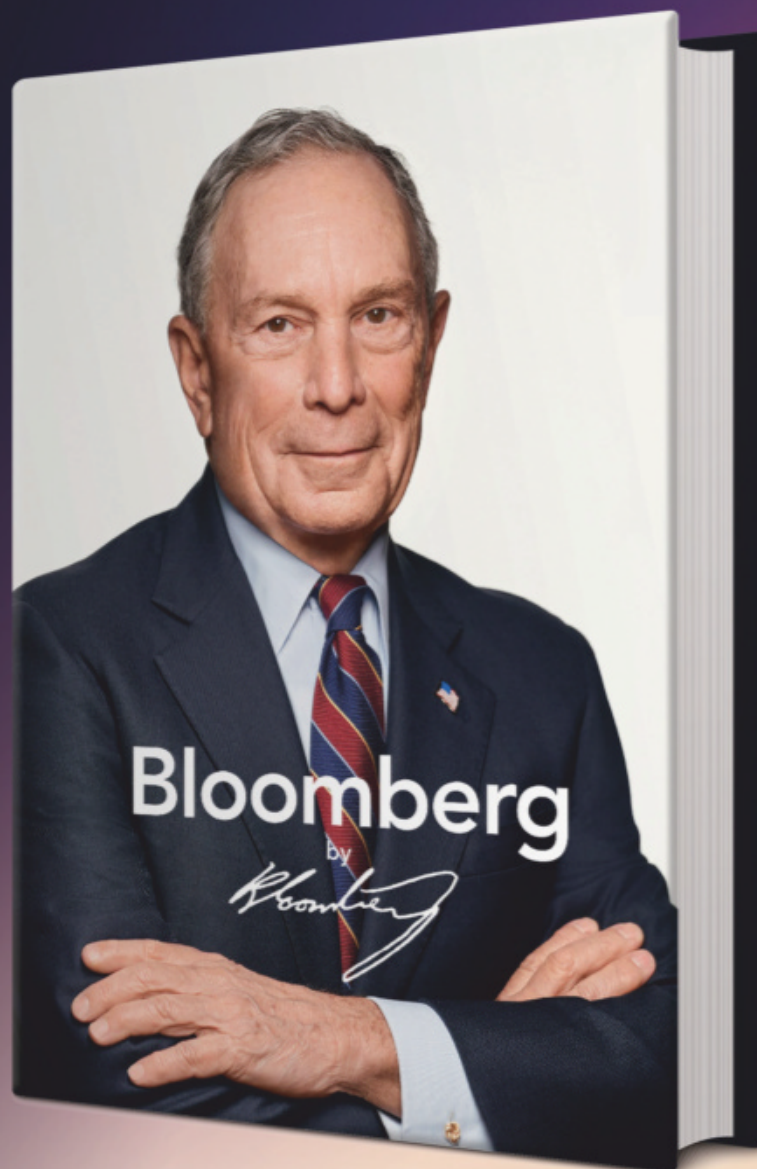


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Qualifying books must have been self-published between January 2019 and December 2019 and written in English. Authors must live in the U.S.

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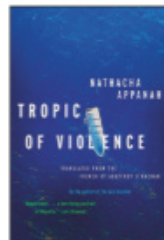
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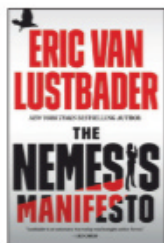
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The Week in Publishing



Three Wayne State University Press employees

who were fired in mid-February—editor-in-chief Annie Martin; editorial, design, and production editor Kristin Harpster; and marketing and sales manager Emily Nowak—have been rehired.



COURTESY OF WAYNE STATE

Hachette Book Group profits rose last year over 2018 despite a 1% decline in revenue. The earnings increase was attributed to improved operating efficiencies in the year and higher sales of digital audiobooks.



Regina Hayes

has retired from Viking Children's Books, where she served as publisher for 30 years and editor-at-large since stepping down from that role in 2012.



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revenue fell 9.9% and the division had a net loss of \$8.1 million in 2019, compared to a net income of \$2.4 million in 2018. A decline in licensing income was cited as the main reason for the drop.

Lightning Source, in a bid to uphold the quality of its content and to protect copyright, sent a notice to publishers who use Ingram's POD service informing them that, as of April 27, it will remove content from its catalogue that falls within certain prohibited areas.



Online & On-Air

The Week Ahead

PW senior writer Andrew Albanese discusses how the recent coronavirus outbreak is impacting publishing conferences on a global scale.
publishersweekly.com/corona

More to Come

At DC Entertainment, the Joe Dan DiDio era has come to an end. This week, the hosts talk about his tenure as copublisher of DC and what's next for one of comics' biggest publishers.
publishersweekly.com/didio

Call for Information

Feature: Business and Personal Finance Books

Issue: May 4 **Deadline:** Mar. 16

For this feature, we'd like to hear about new titles and trends in the business and personal finance categories. Pub. dates: May–November. New titles only, please; no reprints. Please email pitches to features@publishersweekly.com by March 16 and put "Call for Info: Business and Personal Finance Books" in the subject line.

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The Coronavirus Scramble

The virus is causing lots of disruptions in the book world, from international book fairs to book manufacturing

The continuing spread of the new coronavirus is sowing uncertainty across many parts of the book world. Already, the Bologna Children's Book Fair, originally set for March 30–April 2, has been moved to May 4–7 following an outbreak of the virus in northern Italy. Reed Exhibitions issued a statement last week saying its London Book Fair will proceed as planned on March 10–12 but added that it is tracking developments.

Even as LBF moves ahead, late last week word began circulating that a growing number of Americans will skip the fair. A Simon & Schuster spokesman said that “out of concern for the health and safety of our employees,” the company has decided not to attend LBF. The spokesman added that staff that was planning to attend are “looking into alternate means to conduct meetings with their contacts in the international publishing community.”

Another major U.S. publishing player, the Ingram Content Group, said it has decided to curtail travel in light of the outbreak and will not attend LBF. Some American agents said they are staying home as well.

Several international events featuring Chinese exhibitors and guests have been canceled, but the Chinese stands at LBF will be open and staffed by employees from the exhibitors' London offices. There are also reports that some publishers, agents, and service companies from Japan and South Korea will be unable to attend LBF.

The International Toy Fair, which counts more than 30 publishers among its exhibitors, canceled its China Pavilion during the fair's February 22–25 run in New York City (see “Book-Toy Synergies,” p. 6).

At the same time North American publishers and agents consider their options for LBF, they are also working on ways to cope with the rescheduled Bologna fair. Most are working to reschedule appointments, hoping that attendees from other countries will agree to shift their existing meetings to the new dates. “It has been hectic trying to reschedule,” said Derek Stordahl, executive v-p and general manager of Holiday House. “The goal is to get everyone to move over their appointments to May and keep things routine.”

At Owlkids Books in Toronto, publisher Karen Boersma said the bigger question will be “whether publishers decide that they are not going to go at all this year given the change



Visitors on the floor of the 2019 Bologna Children's Book Fair. This year's fair has been postponed to May 4–7 because of the spread of the coronavirus.

in dates and the uncertainty around the outbreak of COVID-19 in Italy.” She added that her company is making arrangements for teleconferencing, should remote meetings become necessary: “There were already quite a few publishers and agents from Asia who had decided not to attend. We were already working on plans to set up Zoom or Skype meetings with those partners to present our new titles, and we may decide to expand those efforts. Long story short: we’re in wait-and-see mode right now.”

While publishers, editors, and agents grapple with how best to handle the London and Bologna fairs, publishers' production and supply chain teams are working on how to lessen the impact of the shutdown of printing plants in areas of China where the coronavirus originated. Interviews with several industry members confirmed that some books printed in China have been delayed, even as plants there slowly ramp back up. “Quarto, like many other toy and book manufacturers, is experiencing production delays in China,” said Ken Fund, chief operating officer of Quarto, who was at Toy Fair. Quarto is “actively looking at alternative solutions outside of China for production,” he added.

“We are reviewing the production status with our printers of each of our titles, some of which have experienced delays,” said a spokeswoman for Penguin Random House.

Michael Jacobs, CEO of Abrams, noted that some Abrams works produced in China have also been delayed.

Simon & Schuster has adjusted pub dates for a few fall titles in order to accommodate its most-impacted printers, the company spokesman said.

All publishers are frustrated about the uncertainty over when the situation will return to normal. The PRH spokeswoman said there is some optimism that things will begin to improve toward the second half of March.

Ellie Berger, executive v-p & president, Scholastic Trade Publishing, said Scholastic expects China operations to be back on track this spring, but she added that the company “will continue daily communications with vendors as well as develop contingency plans should delays continue.”

Jacobs said supply chain issues could go on for some months, “or at least until it’s clearer when workflow, labor, and freight transport” will return to their regular patterns.

As Jacobs alluded to, printing is only one part of the problem for publishers that manufacture in China—getting books to the U.S. is the other. Ray Ambriano of Meadows Wye & Co., an international logistics company specializing in the publishing industry, said shipping loads since early February have been light, suggesting that factories are having difficulty getting back up to full speed. He—and others—expect a surge in demand for ships when production returns to normal, which could cause problems. Publishers are worried, Ambriano said, about whether ships will be in the right positions to carry full loads.

The PRH spokeswoman said that due to some canceled sailings, finding reliable transportation is a “fluid situation, which we are monitoring closely.”

The fact that the outbreak of the coronavirus occurred so shortly after the increase in tariffs on books made in China has resulted in some printing returning to the U.S., though it’s unclear how much has returned. Jacobs noted that Abrams has been shifting more of its book production out of China over the past three years, explaining that the country now represents “considerably less” of the publisher’s overall volume than it did five years ago. “The tariffs and now the coronavirus scare have only solidified our strategic plan and accelerated our tactics to move the proportions of our production sourcing to North America where and when we can,” he added.

Both PRH and Scholastic have also transferred titles out of China when necessary. “We have had very few supply chain disruptions to date, which we have managed through moving work domestically,” Berger said.

Despite the various uncertainties over book printing in China, Ambriano said it is not time to panic: “There are concerns, but it is too early to predict if this is an extreme crisis or just an issue to be managed.” —**Jim Milliot**, with reporting from Ed Nawotka and Karen Raugust

The Weekly Scorcard

Print Unit Sales Inched up in Late February

Unit sales of print books rose 0.9% in the week ended Feb. 22, 2020, over the comparable week in 2019, at outlets that report to NPD BookScan. The juvenile fiction category had the largest increase over the week ended Feb. 23, 2019, posting a 5.5% gain. The annual Dr. Seuss promotion began to kick in during the week, and five of the top 10 books in the category were by the popular author, led by *Green Eggs and Ham*, which sold more than 14,000 copies, placing it second on the category list, trailing Dav Pilkey’s *Fetch-22 (Dog Man #8)*, which sold nearly 19,000 copies in the week. Print unit sales rose 1.4% over 2019 in the adult nonfiction category. *Mamba Mentality* by Kobe Bryant was #1 on the adult nonfiction list. Originally released in October 2018, the title returned to the bestseller list following the death of the former Lakers star in a helicopter accident in late January. A new release, *Dark Towers* by David Enrich, was second on the adult nonfiction list, selling nearly 15,000 copies. Adult fiction unit sales dipped 0.8% in the most recent week compared to 2019. *Where the Crawdads Sign* by Delia Owens stayed number #1 in the category, selling more than 17,000 copies. The bestselling new release was *Chasing Cassandra: The Ravenels* by Lisa Kleypas, a mass market paperback that landed in fourth place, selling more than 12,000 copies. Units fell 8.6% in the YA category. Last year at this time, Angie Thomas had two books (*On the Come Up* and *The Hate U Give*) atop the category list, and they sold a combined 16,500 copies; in the most recent week, the top two titles combined to sell about 7,400 copies.

TOTAL SALES OF PRINT BOOKS (IN THOUSANDS)				
	FEB. 23, 2019	FEB. 22, 2020	CHGE WEEK	CHGE YTD
Total	11,406	11,512	0.9%	2.8%

UNIT SALES OF PRINT BOOKS BY CATEGORY (IN THOUSANDS)				
	FEB. 23, 2019	FEB. 22, 2020	CHGE WEEK	CHGE YTD
Adult Nonfiction	4,980	5,048	1.4%	3.1%
Adult Fiction	2,166	2,148	-0.8%	2.6%
Juvenile Nonfiction	942	947	0.4%	6.2%
Juvenile Fiction	2,715	2,861	5.5%	2.7%
Young Adult Fiction	326	298	-8.6%	-5.9%
Young Adult Nonfiction	35	36	3.2%	9.0%

UNIT SALES OF PRINT BOOKS BY FORMAT (IN THOUSANDS)				
	FEB. 23, 2019	FEB. 22, 2020	CHGE WEEK	CHGE YTD
Hardcover	3,290	3,206	-2.6%	2.5%
Trade Paperback	6,146	6,362	3.5%	4.6%
Mass Market Paperback	790	741	-6.2%	-7.8%
Board Books	763	851	11.5%	-0.2%

 SOURCE: NPD BOOKSCAN AND PUBLISHERS WEEKLY. NPD'S U.S. CONSUMER MARKET PANEL COVERS APPROXIMATELY 80% OF THE PRINT BOOK MARKET AND CONTINUES TO GROW.

Book-Toy Synergies Abound at Toy Fair

For toy makers and publishers alike, the potential impact of the new coronavirus on their respective industries was one of the main topics of conversation at the 117th edition of Toy Fair New York, which ran February 22–25 at the Javits Center in Manhattan. The number of attendees, which is generally about 25,000 (final figures weren't available at press time), was also expected to be down somewhat, as the U.S. has been denying entry to anyone who has been in China during the previous 14 days.

Despite the lack of Chinese visitors, traffic on the show floor did not seem significantly lighter than in a typical year. When the fair opened, the booth displays of the approximately 30 publishers and authors exhibiting their books and side-lines illustrated how the children's book industry is testing new strategies and tactics. Many of the initiatives reflect growing synergies between books and toys as a means of succeeding in a changing landscape.

Phoenix International Publications (PI Kids) devoted half of its booth to its new toy division, announced at Toy Fair last year. It has also been expanding beyond its core interactive sound books into traditional children's formats such as board books, storybooks, and picture books. Among the new programs PI Kids was highlighting with longtime partner Disney was a line of books under the Disney My First Stories banner, a repackaging of a Hachette series from France. "We're not going after new one-off licenses, but we're doing more with our big licensors, including Disney," explained PI Kids marketing director Lynn Sikora. PI Kids also showed three coloring and activity titles, its first ever, with longtime partner Baby Einstein.

Like PI Kids, Carson Dellosa Education added toys to its display this year, with about half of its booth devoted to a new line of musical instruments under Mattel's Fisher-Price license. "It's not a flash card or a workbook, but it's still education," said William Harris, director of inside sales. The company also introduced a new line of licensed Disney Learning workbooks, flash cards, and other core formats.

Fox Chapel's Happy Kids imprint, launched in 2018, is making a foray into picture books with artist Jim Shore's *Magic in the Attic*, based on a line of gift figurines from another Toy Fair exhibitor, Enesco. "Picture books is a new direction for us," said Michele Sensenig, v-p sales. Another first for Happy Kids is publishing translated books, and at the fair it showed two titles acquired through foreign rights deals—from the Czech Republic and Italy. Fox Chapel's initial



Visitors at this year's Toy Fair New York, which ran February 22–25 at the Javits Center in Manhattan.

joke books, done with educational activities specialist Kid Scoop, were also on display.

Chronicle Books and its siblings Mudpuppy and Galison, as well as Quarto and its SmartLab division, featured 50/50 mixes of books and products in their respective joint booths. To achieve that balance, both Chronicle and Quarto significantly increased the booth space devoted to books compared to previous Toy Fairs.

The connection between books and toys carried over into toy company assortments as well, from plush specialist Fiesta to educational toy maker Manhattan Toy, both of which offered board and bath books tied to many of their toys. The books typically have ISBNs but are sold primarily in channels that carry the related toys. Specialty toy company Melissa and Doug highlighted an extensive range of books—it launched a publishing effort in August 2019 after its acquisition of Innovative Kids.

Publishers were also connecting with new customers and exploring new distribution channels. First-time exhibitor Kidsbooks sells its titles mainly in school book fairs but participated in the show to expand into the toy and gift markets, according to Lynn Phillips, specialty sales manager. And Happy Fox's new deal with YouTube ukulele influencer Emily Arrow, for a book called *Kids Guide to Learning the Ukulele*, has gotten the publisher into music stores, thanks to Arrow's relationship with instrument maker Kala, which was at the fair and is helping the publisher secure placement.

"At Toy Fair, return customers come in ready to write orders," said Barbara Peacock, managing director of School Zone. "But every year we see quite a few brand-new customers as well."

—Karen Raugust

Lil' Libros Lands Bilingual Children's Cookbook

Lil' Libros, a Latina-led independent press, has signed a deal to publish a children's cookbook by Marcela Valladolid. Valladolid is a celebrity chef, bestselling author, designer, mother, and businesswoman. She has also hosted two TV series (*Mexican Made Easy* and *Relatos Con Sabor*) and cohosted the Emmy-nominated Food Network show *The Kitchen*, as well as appearing as a celebrity judge for three seasons on Food Network's *Best Baker in America*. Valladolid's fourth adult cookbook, *Fiestas: Tidbits, Margaritas & More*, was published last year by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Lil' Libros is a bilingual children's book publisher in Los Angeles, started by Patty Rodriguez and Ariana Stein in 2014 with the mission of publishing books that celebrate Latin American culture and important figures in its history. To date, the company has published 23 titles and will release 10 in 2020.

PW spoke with Valladolid, Rodriguez, and Stein about the partnership.



Marcela Valladolid



Patty Rodriguez



Ariana Stein

What does this partnership mean to you?

Marcela Valladolid: I am super excited about this partnership! This will be my fifth book, but it's my first children's book, and I hope it's the first of many. I love Lil' Libros' books, and my three- and four-year-olds are obsessed with their books. I completely identify with their stories, and they remind me of my childhood in Tijuana. I'm also a bit nervous because I have never done a children's book, but I'm confident that with Patty and Ariana's guidance we will publish a great book.

Due out in the fall of 2021, this will be more than a cookbook. It will also teach vocabulary, culture, and how food is an avenue for connecting generations and transmitting our

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cultural heritage. I want children to feel proud of their heritage.

Patty Rodriguez: This is an exciting time for Lil' Libros. Since we started this company, our dream has always been to create beautiful books for all children, focusing on stories and creators that are constantly being overlooked. Marcela has all the ingredients you want in a storyteller: she is passionate about her art, and her mission is aligned with ours.

Ariana Stein: We are absolutely thrilled to welcome Marcela Valladolid to our family. Marcela is an inspiration to many, and we are honored that she's given us the opportunity to publish her first children's book. This partnership helps us deliver on our promise to bring talented voices to Lil' Libros.

Marcela, you have published all of your cookbooks with major publishers. Why did you choose a small independent publisher for this book?

M.V.: I could have gone to the major houses but felt this was the right fit and the right time for me. And who better for me to partner with than a Latina-led publisher? I love their books, and I'm a great admirer of their work and mission, so when Patty approached me, I knew it was right.

What's new for spring and summer from Lil' Libros?

A.S.: In late March, we are releasing *The Solar System with Ellen*, a bilingual astronomy board book inspired by Dr. Ellen Ochoa, the first Latina to go to space. We are also accepting submissions, because we know our community is full of storytellers and creators. Our doors are wide open.

—Leylha Ahuile

DEALS

By Rachel Deahl

DEAL OF THE WEEK

■ SMP Goes Big for Gramont's 'Mystery'

In a rumored seven-figure deal, **Jennifer Enderlin** at St. Martin's Press preempted **Nina de Gramont's** novel *The Mystery Writer*. The world rights agreement was brokered by **Peter Steinberg** at Foundry Literary + Media. The work, SMP said, centers on the real-life disappearance of Agatha Christie, who went missing for 11 days in 1926. The publisher explained that the novel "is told through the point of view of husband Archie Christie's mistress." Gramont, who teaches creative writing at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, is the author of numerous books for teens and adults; her 2001 debut, the short story collection *Of Cats and Men*, won a Discovery Award from the New England Booksellers Association. Film rights to the work are being handed by Rich Green at the Gotham Group.



Gramont

■ Yovanovitch Sells Memoir to HMH

Marie Yovanovitch, the former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, sold a currently untitled memoir to **Alex Littlefield** at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Littlefield preempted world rights to the book, for a reported seven figures, from **Matt Latimer** and **Keith Urbahn** at Javelin. HMH said the book, slated for spring 2021, "will recount Yovanovitch's long career in the U.S. foreign service, which took her from Mogadishu to Moscow to Kiev and finally back to Washington, D.C.—where, to her dismay, she found a political system beset by many of the same challenges she had spent her career combating overseas."



Yovanovitch

■ Goodall Brings 'Hope' to Celadon

Doug Abrams at Idea Architects sold *The Book of Hope*, which he's cowriting with **Jane Goodall**, to Celadon Books. **Jamie Raab** took North American rights to the title, which is set for fall 2021, and will, the publisher said, "celebrate the 60th anniversary of Jane's pioneering research" and "show how, even in the face of great adversity, hope can be found in human nature and in nature itself." Abrams, who founded the Idea Architects agency, also cowrote *The Book of Joy*, a 2016 bestseller by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. Goodall was represented in the agreement by **Adrian Sington** at Kruger Cowne.



Goodall

■ 'The Ballerinas' Pirouette at SMP

In a six-figure acquisition, **Sarah Cantin** at St. Martin's Press nabbed world rights to **Rachel Kapelke-Dale's** debut novel, *The Ballerinas*. SMP said the book, which Cantin preempted from **Sarah Phair** at Sanford J. Greenburger

In Memoriam

HOPE DELLON

1952-2020

“But for my own part,
if a book is well written,
I always find it too short.”

—JANE AUSTEN



ST. MARTIN'S
PUBLISHING GROUP



COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

Kapelke-Dale

Associates, follows three dancers who are reunited in adulthood after meeting at the Paris Opera Ballet School as teenagers and must “reckon with old betrayals and new secrets.” Kapelke-Dale is the coauthor of a 2014 memoir about female friendships called *Graduates in Wonderland* and trained as a ballet dancer for years. She has an MA from the Université de Paris VII and currently lives in France.

■ Charles Gets ‘Muted’ for Scholastic

After an auction, Scholastic’s **Amanda Maciel** and **David Levithan** won North American rights to **Tami Charles’s** YA novel *Muted*. The six-figure deal for the novel in verse was brokered by **Lara Perkins** at Andrea Brown Literary Agency. Charles (*Like Vanessa*) was inspired to write the book, Scholastic said, by the #MeToo movement and her experience being in an all-girl R&B group. The publisher added that the novel is “a fearless exploration of the dark side of the music industry, the business of exploitation, and how a girl’s dreams can be used against her—and what it takes to fight back.” *Muted* is set for a 2021 release.



© KRISANN BINETTI

Charles

■ Benedict Re-ups at Sourcebooks

Shana Drehs at Sourcebooks signed her current author **Marie Benedict** (*Lady Clementine*) to a new two-book, North American rights deal. The six-figure agreement was handled by **Laura Dail** at Laura Dail Literary Agency. Sourcebooks said the novels, like Benedict’s previous work, will tell stories of “women in the shadows of history.” The first book will be about Rose Vallard, a Paris museum curator who, the publisher explained, “passed information about art stolen from Jewish collectors to the French Resistance during the Nazi occupation.” The second book is about British scientist Rosalind Franklin.



Benedict

■ Mundy’s ‘Sisterhood’ to Crown

Liza Mundy (*Code Girls*) sold two new books to Crown in a North American rights deal. **Paul Whitlatch** acquired the books—*The Sisterhood* and a currently untitled work—from **Todd Shuster** and **Justin Brouckaert** at Aevitas Creative Management. *The Sisterhood*, Crown said, was pitched “in the tradition” of books like *Legacy of Ashes* and *The Looming Tower*, and is “a narrative-driven history of women in the CIA.” In it, the publisher went on, Mundy offers “the most comprehensive account yet of women



© ANNA CARSON DEWITT

Mundy

intelligence officers’ crucial contributions to American history.” *The Sisterhood* is set for a 2022 publication; the release date and topic of the second book has not yet been determined.

MOVIE DEALS

● **Rebecca Roanhorse’s** short story “Welcome to Your Authentic Indian Experience™” has been optioned by Amazon Studios. Roanhorse’s literary agent, Sara Megibow at KT Literary, said the story “follows a Native man working for a virtual reality company that offers ‘authentic’ Indian experiences to dark ends.”

● *The Residence* by **Andrew Pyper** (Skybound, Sept.) has been optioned for series development by Skybound Entertainment and RadicalMedia. Skybound called the work a “haunted White House novel” that follows the loss of President Franklin Pierce’s child in a tragic accident.

INTERNATIONAL DEALS

● The Spanish book *El infinito en un junco* (Infinity in a reed) by **Irene Vallejo** has been acquired in Denmark, France, and Russia, with, at press time, offers in from publishers in several other countries. Sandra Pareja at Casanovas & Lynch Literary Agency, who’s handling foreign rights for the narrative nonfiction title, said it is about the history of the book and is “a journey through the life of this fascinating artifact.” She added that Vallejo takes readers “on a hypnotic journey... through time and space, bringing exciting life to ancient Rome and Greece.” The title, first published in Spain in September 2019, is on its ninth 15,000-copy print run there, according to Pareja.



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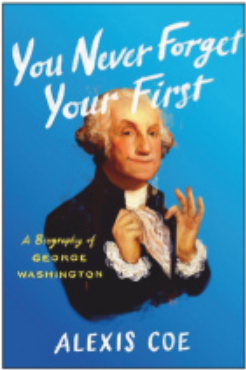
By Carolyn Juris

First Dibs

You Never Forget Your First by historian Alexis Coe debuts at #17 in hardcover nonfiction. Our review called it a “breezy yet fact-filled revisionist biography” of

the first U.S. president, and it’s garnered a fair bit of attention for the way, as our review wrote, it “takes George Washington’s previous—predominantly male—biographers to task for obsessing over his virility, enshrining myths

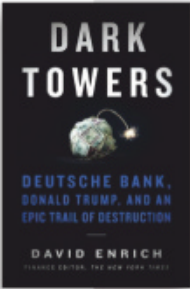
about his military prowess and moral exactitude, and mischaracterizing his relationship with his mother.”



NEW & NOTABLE

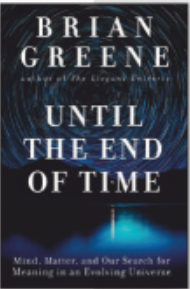
DARK TOWERS

David Enrich
#1 Hardcover Nonfiction, #6 overall
In this “propulsive, richly detailed account,” our review said, Enrich chronicles Deutsche Bank’s “outright frauds,” such as laundering money for Russian oligarchs, and “a laundry list of poor decisions, including lending millions of dollars to serial defaulter Donald Trump when no other mainstream financial institution would do so.”



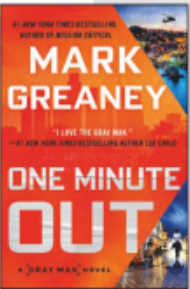
UNTIL THE END OF TIME

Brian Greene
#8 Hardcover Nonfiction
Greene, director of Columbia University’s Center for Theoretical Physics, “translates sophisticated science topics into an accessible and illuminating survey,” our starred review said. “Curious readers interested in some of the most fundamental questions of existence, and willing to invest some time and thought, will be richly rewarded.”



ONE MINUTE OUT

Mark Greaney
#4 Hardcover Fiction
“In bestseller Greaney’s remarkable ninth Gray Man novel,” our starred review said, “Courtland Gentry (aka the Gray Man) takes on the Consortium, an international sex slave cartel.” The upshot? “Spy thriller fans will be enthralled.”



Checking In

Simone St. James lands at #20 in hardcover fiction with *The Sun Down Motel*, an “engrossing supernatural thriller,” our review said, with a “shocking, satisfying denouement.” St. James debuted in 2012 with the paranormal historical *The Haunting of Maddy Clare* and followed with three more trade paper originals set in 1920s England. She moved into hardcover and a U.S. setting with 2018’s *The Broken Girls*, set in the present with flashbacks to the 1950s. With her latest contemporary release, first-week print unit sales continue to rise.

FIRST-WEEK PRINT UNIT SALES FOR SIMONE ST. JAMES



Paper Chase

The #10 book in the country is the Victorian romance *Chasing Cassandra* by Lisa Kleypas. It’s the sixth book in her Ravenels series and the first to receive a starred *PW* review; we called it a “refreshing romance” in which “opposites attract in spectacular fashion.” Together, the five previous books in the mass market original series have sold 330K print copies.



TOP 10 OVERALL

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	UNITS
1	The Mamba Mentality	Kobe Bryant	MCD	40,586
2	Fetch-22 (Dog Man #8)	Dav Pilkey	Graphix	18,766
3	Where the Crawdads Sing	Delia Owens	Putnam	17,550
4	American Dirt	Jeanine Cummins	Flatiron	16,724
5	The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse	Charlie Mackesy	HarperOne	16,066
6	Dark Towers	David Enrich	Custom House	14,759
7	Green Eggs and Ham	Dr. Seuss	Random House	14,607
8	Wrecking Ball (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #14)	Jeff Kinney	Amulet	13,090
9	One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish	Dr. Seuss	Random House	12,962
10	Chasing Cassandra	Lisa Kleypas	Avon	12,193

ALL PRINT UNIT SALES PER NPD BOOKSCAN EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

Hardcover Frontlist Fiction

RANK	LW	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	2	American Dirt	Jeanine Cummins	Flatiron	9781250209764	16,724
2	1	The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse	Charlie Mackesy	HarperOne	9780062976581	16,066
3	3	Golden in Death	J.D. Robb	St. Martin's	9781250207203	8,321
4	–	One Minute Out	Mark Greaney	Berkley	9780593098912	7,822
5	6	Lost	Patterson/Born	Little, Brown	9780316420327	5,666
6	9	The Dutch House	Ann Patchett	Harper	9780062963673	5,227
7	8	The Guardians	John Grisham	Doubleday	9780385544184	5,056
8	5	Crooked River	Preston/Child	Grand Central	9781538747254	5,021
9	11	Such a Fun Age	Kiley Reid	Putnam	9780525541905	4,816
10	13	A Long Petal of the Sea	Isabel Allende	Ballantine	9781984820150	4,769
11	10	When You See Me	Lisa Gardner	Dutton	9781524745004	4,717
12	15	The Giver of Stars	Jojo Moyes	Viking/Dorman	9780399562488	3,989
13	7	Strange Planet	Nathan W. Pyle	Morrow Gift	9780062970701	3,583
14	–	The Other Mrs.	Mary Kubica	Park Row	9780778369110	3,534
15	17	Dear Edward	Ann Napolitano	Dial	9781984854780	3,354
16	16	Moral Compass	Danielle Steel	Delacorte	9780399179532	3,276
17	4	Snug	Catana Chetwynd	Andrews McMeel	9781524854638	3,223
18	19	The Museum of Desire	Jonathan Kellerman	Ballantine	9780525618522	3,185
19	–	The Last Passenger	Charles Finch	Minotaur	9781250312204	3,176
20	–	The Sun Down Motel	Simone St. James	Berkley	9780440000174	3,059

Hardcover Frontlist Nonfiction

RANK	LW	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	–	Dark Towers	David Enrich	Custom House	9780062878816	14,759
2	1	Open Book	Jessica Simpson	Dey Street	9780062899965	12,172
3	2	A Very Stable Genius	Philip Rucker	Penguin Press	9781984877499	11,663
4	–	Un-Trumping America	Dan Pfeiffer	Twelve	9781538733554	9,098
5	5	Built, Not Born	Tom Golisano	HarperCollins Leadership	9781400217557	8,198
6	3	Profiles in Corruption	Peter Schweizer	Harper	9780062897909	8,151
7	4	Get Out of Your Head	Jennie Allen	WaterBrook	9781601429643	7,315
8	–	Until the End of Time	Brian Greene	Knopf	9781524731670	7,200
9	–	Mastering Diabetes	Khambatta/Barbaro	Avery	9780593189993	6,330
10	6	Floret Farm's A Year in Flowers	Erin Benzakein	Chronicle	9781452172897	4,157
11	–	See You on Sunday	Sam Sifton	Random House	9781400069927	4,152
12	7	Talking to Strangers	Malcolm Gladwell	Little, Brown	9780316478526	3,855
13	13	The Walk	Adam Hamilton	Abingdon	9781501891182	3,744
14	–	EMF*d	Joseph Mercola	Hay House	9781401958756	3,713
15	12	Leadership Strategy and Tactics	Jocko Willink	St. Martin's	9781250226846	3,700
16	23	Tiny Habits	B.J. Fogg	HMH	9780358003328	3,446
17	–	You Never Forget Your First	Alexis Coe	Viking	9780735224100	3,316
18	10	Becoming: A Guided Journal for Discovering...	Michelle Obama	Clarkson Potter	9780593139127	3,306
19	–	Know My Name	Chanel Miller	Viking	9780735223707	3,082
20	15	Brother & Sister	Diane Keaton	Knopf	9780451494504	3,058

LW: rank last week

Mass Market Frontlist

RANK	LW	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	–	Chasing Cassandra	Lisa Kleypas	Avon	9780062371942	12,193
2	1	Blessing in Disguise	Danielle Steel	Dell	9780399179341	7,425
3	2	Ambush	Patterson	Grand Central	9781538713860	6,934
4	4	Unspoken	Lisa Jackson/Born	Zebra	9781420149630	5,195
5	–	The Cliff House	RaeAnne Thayne	HQN	9781335080455	5,116
6	3	The Oysterville Sewing Circle	Susan Wiggs	Avon	9780062425591	4,792
7	5	Country Strong	Linda Lael Miller	HQN	9781335474599	4,496
8	–	The Amish Teacher's Dilemma	Patricia Davids	Love Inspired	9781335487995	3,802
9	7	The Night We Met	Macomber/McClain	Mira	9780778309352	3,790
10	9	Hunting for a Highlander	Lynsay Sands	Avon	9780062855374	3,640
11	6	Vendetta Road	Christine Feehan	Berkley	9781984803566	3,536
12	11	Pieces of Her	Karin Slaughter	Morrow	9780062430281	3,395
13	10	Vendetta in Death	J.D. Robb	St. Martin's	9781250207197	3,304
14	8	Shot to Hell	William W. Johnstone	Pinnacle	9780786043682	3,252
15	13	The Coming Storm	Nora Roberts	Silhouette	9781335832221	3,234
16	–	Healing Their Amish Hearts	Leigh Bale	Love Inspired	9781335488008	3,222
17	14	Wolf Pack	C.J. Box	Putnam	9780525538219	3,221
18	–	Mysterious Abduction	Rita Herron	Harlequin Intrigue	9781335136343	3,183
19	16	The Boy	Tami Hoag	Dutton	9781101985427	3,158
20	–	Before He Vanished	Debra Webb	Harlequin Intrigue	9781335136336	3,003

Trade Paperback Frontlist

RANK	LW	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	3	Unsolved	Patterson/Ellis	Grand Central	9781538731635	10,477
2	1	Little Fires Everywhere	Celeste Ng	Penguin Books	9780735224315	10,191
3	2	One Good Deed	David Baldacci	Grand Central	9781538750582	8,302
4	6	Summer of '69	Elin Hilderbrand	Back Bay	9780316420006	6,910
5	4	Before We Were Yours	Lisa Wingate	Ballantine	9780425284704	6,780
6	8	Official SAT Study Guide 2020 Edition	–	College Board	9781457312199	5,787
7	7	The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek	Kim Michele Richardson	Sourcebooks Landmark	9781492671527	5,548
8	–	Normal People	Sally Rooney	Hogarth	9781984822185	5,410
9	15	Neon Prey	John Sandford	Putnam	9780593085738	5,306
10	9	Outfox	Sandra Brown	Grand Central	9781478916871	5,171
11	11	The Overstory	Richard Powers	Norton	9780393356687	5,103
12	33	Instant Loss: Eat Real, Lose Weight	Brittany Williams	HMH	9780358121855	4,730
13	10	The Outsider	Stephen King	Gallery	9781982148249	4,620
14	12	Sisters by Choice	Susan Mallery	Mira	9780778309390	4,261
15	13	The River Murders	Patterson/Born	Grand Central	9781538749975	4,233
16	16	The Woman in the Window	A.J. Finn	Morrow	9780062678423	4,040
17	14	Every Breath	Nicholas Sparks	Grand Central	9781538728543	3,894
18	–	Stop Calling Me Beautiful	Phylicia Masonheimer	Harvest House	9780736978002	3,745
19	18	To Shake the Sleeping Self	Jedidiah Jenkins	Convergent	9781524761400	3,484
20	32	Daisy Jones & the Six	Taylor Jenkins Reid	Ballantine	9781524798642	3,398

LW: rank last week

Children's Frontlist Fiction

RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	Fetch-22 (Dog Man #8)	Dav Pilkey	Graphix	9781338323214	18,766
2	Wrecking Ball (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #14)	Jeff Kinney	Amulet	9781419739033	13,090
3	For Whom the Ball Rolls (Dog Man #7)	Dav Pilkey	Graphix	9781338236590	6,596
4	FGTeeV Presents: Into the Game!	FGTeeV	HarperAlley	9780062933676	5,475
5	Karen's Witch (Baby-Sitters Little Sister #1)	Martin/Farina	Graphix	9781338315196	4,831
6	Epoca: The Tree of Ecrof	Ivy Claire	Granity Studios	9781949520071	4,451
7	Legacy and the Queen	Annie Matthew	Granity Studios	9781949520033	3,850
8	Master of Disaster (Middle School #12)	Patterson/Tebbetts	LB/Patterson	9780316420495	3,807
9	The Conference of the Birds (Miss Peregrine's Peculiar Children #5)	Ransom Riggs	Dutton	9780735231504	3,617
10	The Bad Guys in the Baddest Day Ever	Aaron Blabey	Scholastic	9781338305845	3,475
11	Tales from a Not-So-Best Friend Forever (Dork Diaries #14)	Rachel Renée Russell	Aladdin	9781534427204	3,422
12	Training Camp	Wesley King	Granity Studios	9781949520019	3,309
13	The Unteachables	Gordon Korman	HC/Balzer + Bray	9780062563903	3,305
14	P.S. I Still Love You (movie tie-in)	Jenny Han	Simon & Schuster	9781534469266	2,958
15	Captain Underpants and the Terrifying Return...	Dav Pilkey	Scholastic	9781338347210	2,768
16	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	Rowling/Kay	Scholastic	9780545791427	2,763
17	A Good Girl's Guide to Murder	Holly Jackson	Delacorte	9781984896360	2,698
18	One of Us Is Next	Karen M. McManus	Delacorte	9780525707967	2,670
19	The Silver Eyes (Five Nights at Freddy's Graphic Novel #1)	Scott Cawthon	Scholastic	9781338298482	2,542
20	Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid	Jeff Kinney	Amulet	9781419740275	2,486
21	Boy-Crazy Stacey (Baby-Sitters Club #7)	Martin/Galligan	Graphix	9781338304510	2,444
22	Children of Virtue and Vengeance	Tomi Adeyemi	Holt	9781250170996	2,290
23	Ali Cross	James Patterson	LB/Patterson	9780316530415	2,057
24	The Tyrant's Tomb (The Trials of Apollo #4)	Rick Riordan	Disney-Hyperion	9781484746448	1,922
25	All the Pieces Fit (Hilo #6)	Judd Winick	Random House	9780525644064	1,849

Children's Picture Books

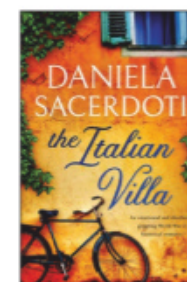
RANK	TITLE	AUTHOR	IMPRINT	ISBN	UNITS
1	Green Eggs and Ham	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780394800165	14,607
2	One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780394800134	12,962
3	Dr. Seuss's ABC	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780679882817	11,700
4	There's No Place Like Space	Rabe/Ruiz	Random House	9780679891154	9,878
5	Are You My Mother?	P.D. Eastman	Random House	9780679890478	8,716
6	Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780679882824	8,536
7	The Cat in the Hat	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780394800011	8,462
8	The Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle	Philomel	9780399226908	7,871
9	Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb	Perkins/Gurney	Random House	9780679890485	7,589
10	Hop on Pop	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780375828379	7,438
11	Go, Dog. Go! (board book)	P.D. Eastman	Random House	9780679886297	7,393
12	It's Not Easy Being a Bunny	Sadler/Bollen	Random House	9780394861029	7,353
13	Fox in Socks (board book)	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780307931801	7,305
14	The Foot Book	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780679882800	7,271
15	Fox in Socks	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780394800387	7,255
16	If Animals Kissed Good Night	Paul/Walker	FSG	9780374300210	7,142
17	Dr. Seuss's ABC (board book)	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780394800301	6,783
18	Oh, the Places You'll Go!	Dr. Seuss	Random House	9780679805274	6,783
19	Go, Dog. Go!	P.D. Eastman	Random House	9780394800202	6,621
20	Are You My Mother? (board book)	P.D. Eastman	Random House	9780394800189	6,511
21	Llama Llama I Love You	Anna Dewdney	Viking	9780451469816	6,478
22	Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?	Martin/Carle	Holt	9780805047905	6,444
23	The Biggest Valentine Ever	Kroll/Bassett	Cartwheel	9780439764193	6,176
24	Snuggle Puppy	Sandra Boynton	Workman	9780761130673	5,929
25	Love You Forever	Robert Munsch	Firefly	9780920668375	5,846



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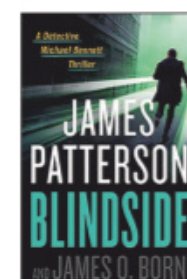
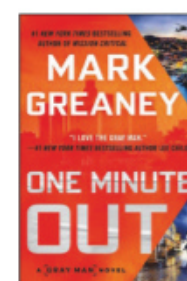
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8	Kane and Abel	Jeffrey Archer	St. Martin's	9781429953955
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10	Dear Edward	Ann Napolitano	Dial	9781984854797
11	The Italian Villa	Daniela Sacerdoti	Bookouture	9781838880095
12	World Without End	Ken Follett	Penguin Books	9781101211984
13	A Long Petal of the Sea	Isabel Allende	Ballantine	9781984820167
14	Accidental Guardian	Mary Connealy	Bethany House	9781493413669
15	Saint X	Alexis Schaitkin	Celadon	9781250219589
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17	September	Rosamunde Pilcher	St. Martin's	9781466824959
18	Harry's Trees	Jon Cohen	Mira	9781488079429
19	Before We Were Yours	Lisa Wingate	Ballantine	9780425284698
20	Olive, Again	Elizabeth Strout	Random House	9780812996555



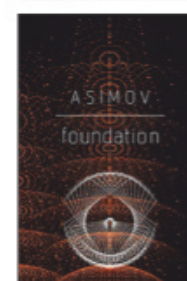
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3	The Other Mrs.	Mary Kubica	Park Row	9781488099601
4	The Silent Patient	Alex Michaelides	Celadon	9781250301710
5	Never Go Back	Lee Child	Delacorte	9780440339373
6	When You See Me	Lisa Gardner	Dutton	9781524745011
7	The Museum of Desire	Jonathan Kellerman	Ballantine	9780525618539
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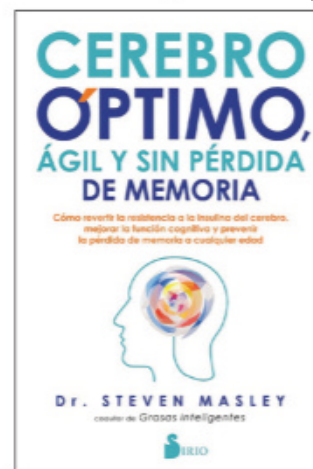
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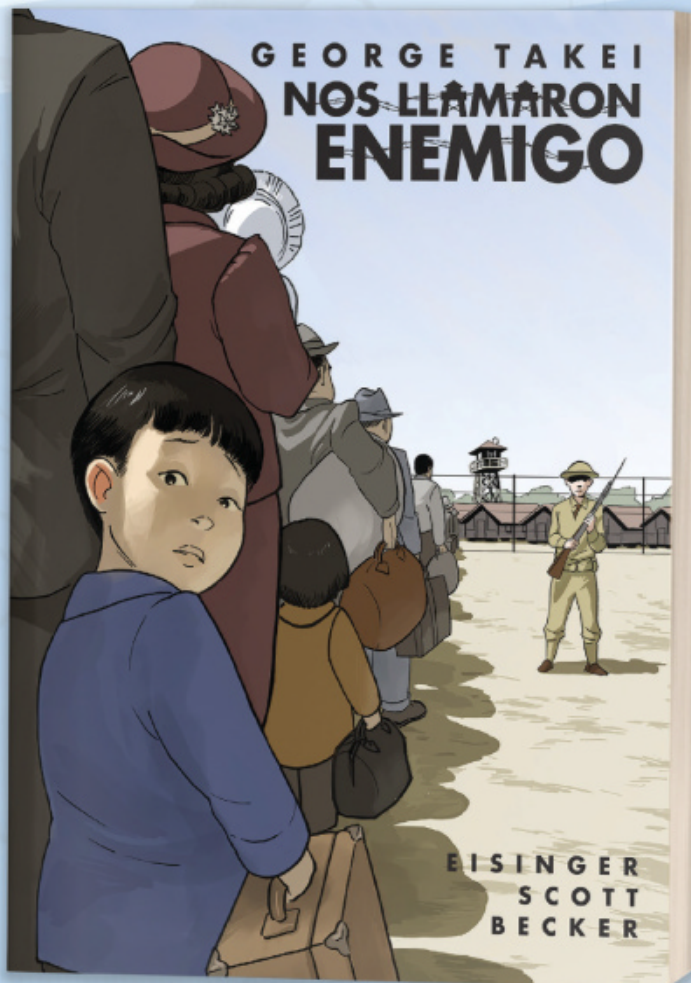
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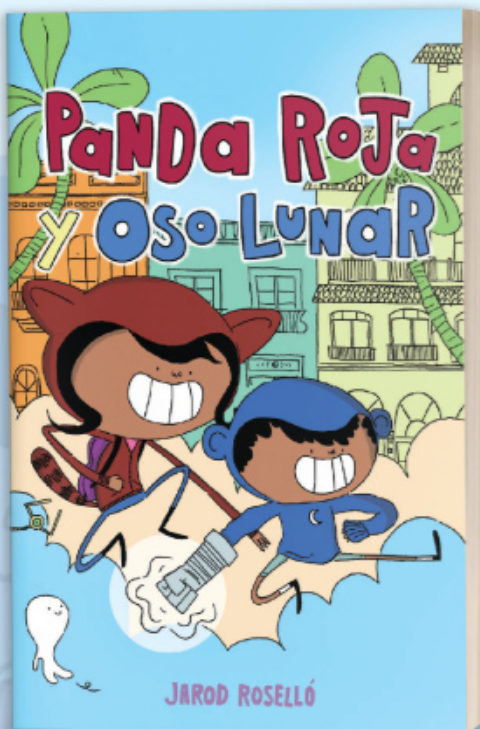
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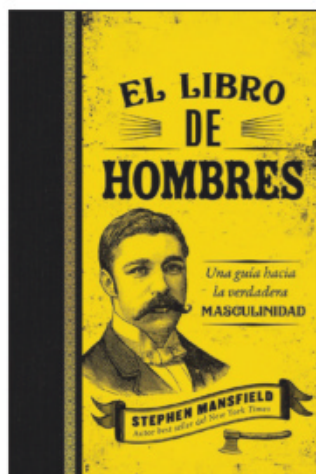
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London Calling



New programs and new opportunities await publishers at the 2020 London Book Fair

BY ANDREW RICHARD ALBANESE

For the past four years, publishers have headed to the London Book Fair amid a rather curious set of circumstances. As Faber & Faber CEO Stephen Page noted in his opening keynote at 2019's Quantum preconference, the book business has been enjoying an extended period of stability. Yet at the same time, world events have been chaotic and worrisome, including Brexit, the Trump administration's unpredictable actions, a frightening uptick in prejudice and nationalism, the proliferation of fake news and increasingly sophisticated disinformation campaigns on social media, and, in some corners of the globe, outright crackdowns on free speech.

As publishers prepare for the 2020 London Book Fair, set for Tuesday to Thursday, March 10–12, at Olympia London, business remains stable. In the U.K., 2019 was another solid year for publishers, with revenues for British publishers up 2.4% in 2019 over 2018, according to Nielsen BookScan—a fifth consecutive year of revenue growth. In the U.S. market, however, NPD BookScan reports that after six straight years of gains, unit sales of print books declined in 2019 compared to the previous year.

Globally, digital audio remains a bright spot for a mature publishing industry that has been searching for a path to real, organic growth. The most recent figures in the U.S. showed a 24% jump in audio sales last year over 2018, the eighth straight year of double-digit growth, with audio revenues poised to top \$1 billion in 2020.

But for publishers, forecasting the future isn't getting any easier. The growth of digital audio, for example, comes with new challenges—mainly, evolving business models and changing consumer expectations in a market where Amazon, Netflix, and Spotify are the new standards. Case in point: in Sweden, companies like Storytel are aggressively marketing their digital subscription services for audio and e-books. In a report released last month, the Swedish publishers and booksellers association revealed that revenue from digital subscription services jumped 36.2% in 2019 over 2018, which was enough to overcome declines at bookstores and supermarkets but which furthered concerns that so-called all-you-can-eat subscriptions will cannibalize publishers' traditional book sales.

Meanwhile, the political chaos show no signs of easing. Post-impeachment, and in an election year, the Trump administration continues to undermine Americans' confidence in the free press. And future trade agreements and tariffs remain uncertain for

publishers. In the U.K., Brexit has finally come—though no one is yet clear about what this means. In Europe, changes approved last year to E.U. copyright law remain a thorny subject, with the battleground now shifting to member nations' own legislatures. Across the world, a growing open access movement continues to transform scientific publishing. And, in 2020, you can add a new wild card to the list: a coronavirus pandemic is snarling international travel and potentially infecting the global economy.

But as the famous poster advises, London Book Fair organizers are keeping calm and carrying on. And for all the uncertainty in the world, the 2020 London Book Fair program is certainly a good one. Among this year's changes, the Quantum preconference has been replaced by a series of branded Quantum talks to be held throughout the fair. Also new this year is the fair's inaugural Audio Summit (Tuesday, 9:45 a.m.–1:45 p.m.), which will take place in a new dedicated Audio HQ area at Olympia. And the fair's professional program will feature a full slate of talks and panels on key issues, including rights and translations, copyright, the freedom to publish, open access and scholarly publishing, and self-publishing.

Also added to the program is a Global 50 CEO Talk featuring a timely participant: Storytel CEO Jonas Tellander, who will discuss how digital subscriptions are influencing the global book market (Tuesday, 2:30–3:30 p.m., Olympia Room Grand Hall).

For more, consult the full 2020 London Book Fair program online. And read on for *PW*'s annual roundup of some of the big properties U.S. agents will be selling at the fair. ■



The Grand Hall at Olympia London during last year's London Book Fair.

Sharjah Stars



As Market Focus

At LBF, the emirate plans a wide range of events to highlight its authors and culture

By Ed Nawotka

The emirate of Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates, stars as the Market Focus at the 2020 London Book Fair. It is the start of an extraordinary year for Sharjah, which will also be the guest of honor country at the Bologna Children's Book Fair and the Guadalajara International Book Fair. This series of professional events extends a yearlong run of initiatives that began with Sharjah's turn as UNESCO World Book Capitol in 2019.

Why has this modest-size state within a relatively small country invested so heavily in books, publishing, and reading?

"When it comes to 'why books?' the answer is simple: the direction and authority comes from the ruler of the emirate, Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al-Qasimi," says Faisal Al Nabouda of the Sharjah Book Authority, who is responsible for putting together the professional program at the London Book Fair. "He believes that reading books offers the finest conveyance of knowledge and wisdom available to man." The sheikh, a prolific author himself, will be present at the opening ceremony of this year's fair.

But why extend this support of books and publishing to the international community? "The U.A.E. has more than 200 nationalities living in it and from the beginning has been a very metropolitan place, with a lot of different communities," Al Nabouda says. "So it is natural that we share culture, not only with our fellow Emiratis and the countries around the Gulf but with all people from across the world."

The U.A.E. has a special relationship with the U.K.—one that dates back to the late 19th century, reinforced by the discovery of oil in the emirates and a partnership with British Petroleum, and that carries on to today. "Sharjah was the

location of the first regional hub for British Airways when it started flying to the region in the 1930s," Al Nabouda says.

At the LBF, visitors will be treated to a stand organized by the Sharjah Institute of Heritage, which will feature traditional clothing and crafts, a display of maps showing the evolution of the U.A.E., and samples of its cuisine, including tea and dates. Numerous other activities, such as musical performances and author readings, will take place at the LBF and throughout London.

Twelve Emirati authors are attending the fair. These include spoken-word poet Afra Atiq, who will be honored as author of the day on Wednesday, March 11; poets Khulood Al Mu'alla and Khalid Albudoor; short story writer Mohammad Al-Murr; novelist Salha Obaid; fantasy writer Dubai Abulhoul; and essayist and diplomat Omar Saif Ghobash. In addition, 60 books by Emirati authors have been translated exclusively for the fair.

"It is our hope that the authors and the books we bring to the fair will help spur interest in the Emirates and will foster more buying and selling of rights," Al Nabouda says.

As noted, the London Book Fair is just the kickoff for a big year that will see the emirate featured at fairs across the world. But for Al Nabouda and others from Sharjah, the highlight is the Sharjah International Book Fair, which takes place in November and has risen to the top tier of international events.

"When people come to Sharjah, they are amazed at what they find," Al Nabouda says. "There is the book fair, yes, but also Sharjah Publishing City Free Zone, the Emirates Publishers Association, our ongoing translation-grant program, and so much more. All of these initiatives seek to empower and support reading in the country—and now, as you can see in London, all around the world."

London Title Showcase

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Tsering Lama

Bend You to Remain

by Tsering Lama

U.S. publisher: Bloomsbury, fall 2021

A debut novel from the storytelling advisor for Greenpeace International tells the 60-year tale of a Tibetan family's journey through exile, from Nepal to North America, following three women and a fatherless boy whose fates are changed by the mysterious appearance of a statue of a nameless saint.



Ashley Nelson Levy

Immediate Family

by Ashley Nelson Levy

U.S. publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, spring 2021

Levy's debut novel, told as a letter from the narrator to her younger brother on the eve of his wedding, outlines a fracture in their relationship as she contemplates the speech she'll give on his big day and explores questions of infertility, race, adoption.



Liza Mundy

The Sisterhood by Liza Mundy

U.S. publisher: Crown, spring 2022

The newest book from the author of *Code Girls* will be an account of the multi-decade effort by a network of women CIA analysts who began tracking al-Qaeda in the 1990s, only to see their warnings of imminent threat

ignored by the CIA's male leadership until the 9/11 attacks, and who ultimately led the successful hunt for bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders.

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Morgan Rogers

Honey Girl by Morgan Rogers

U.S. publisher: Park Row, winter 2021

This #OwnVoices debut follows a young black woman just finishing her PhD in astronomy, who impulsively gets married in Las Vegas and decides to leave her perfectly ordered life for a summer in New York City with the wife she barely knows.

Moon Fall by James Rollins

U.S. publisher: Tor, summer 2021

Sigma series author Rollins switches from thriller to fantasy with the launch of a new series set in a twilight land between burning brightness and frozen darkness, where a girl foretells a new apocalypse approaching and is charged with heresy, punishable by death.



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Sarah Stewart Johnson

The Sirens of Mars

by Sarah Stewart Johnson

U.S. publisher: Crown, June

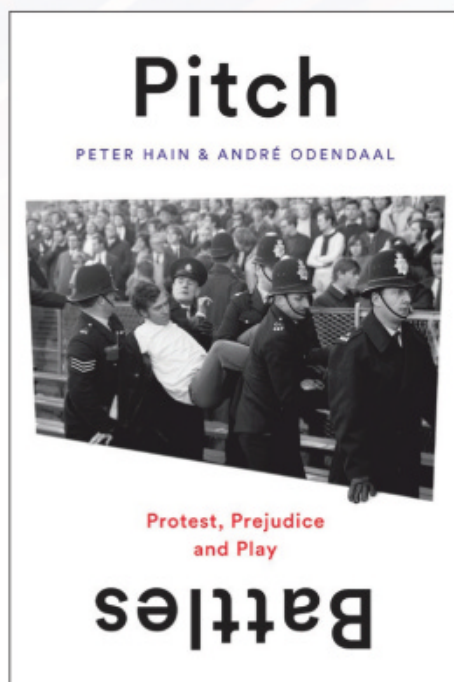
In this book, timed to release with the next NASA rover mission to Mars, Johnson, an assistant professor of planetary science at Georgetown University, tells the story of scouring Mars for signs of life.

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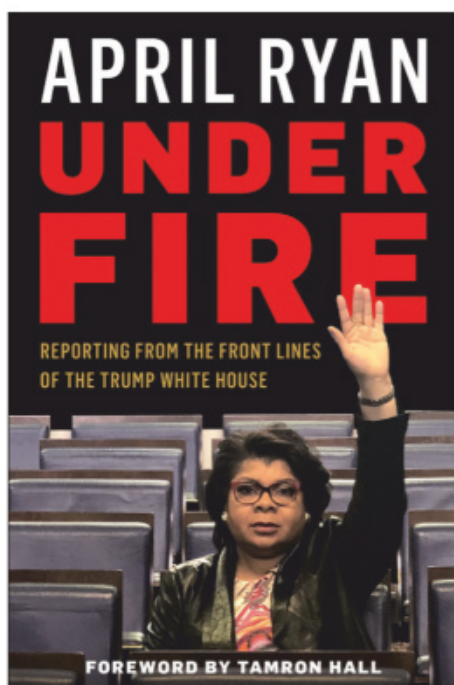
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London Book Fair Preview

Creative Artists Agency

Dwyane by Dwyane Wade

U.S. publisher: Morrow, fall 2020

This photographic memoir from former NBA superstar Wade offers more than 100 photos from his life on and off the court.

I Had a Vision for Love: A Memoir by Mariah Carey

U.S. publisher: Holt/Cohen, Sept.

Grammy-winner Carey chronicles her tumultuous journey to superstardom, recounting her humble beginnings, divorces, struggles with bipolar disorder, and her success.

Untitled nonfiction book by Jerry Seinfeld

U.S. publisher: Simon & Schuster, Oct.

Seinfeld looks back on his career, from his start in stand-up to his hit television show, *Seinfeld*, to his more recent ventures such as *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*.

The Cheney Agency



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Destination Wedding: A Novel

by Diksha Basu

U.S. publisher: Ballantine, June

Basu's novel tells the tale of a young Indian-American woman who, with her best friend and entire family, travels to Delhi for her cousin's lavish weeklong wedding celebration, where she is forced to grapple with challenges

of work, love, and finding a place to call home.



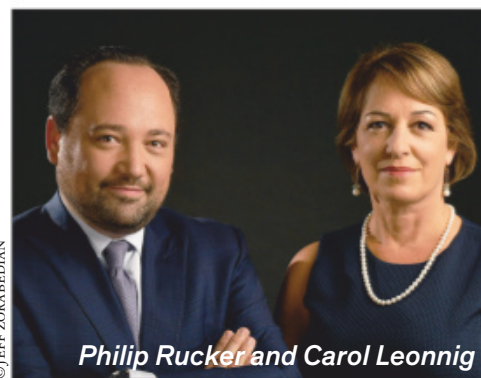
© LENA DI

Surviving Autocracy

by Masha Gessen

U.S. publisher: Riverhead, June

Gessen, a staff writer for the *New Yorker* and the author of the National Book Award-winning *The Future Is History*, offers an analysis of what the author views as the destruction the Trump administration has inflicted on institutions, cultural norms, and the meaning of truth.



© JEFF ZORABEDIAN

A Very Stable Genius: Donald J. Trump's Testing of America

by Carol Leonnig and Philip Rucker

U.S. publisher: Penguin Press, out now

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists from the *Washington Post* provide an insider narrative of Donald Trump's presidency, with new reporting and insight on the implications of the administration's actions and policies.



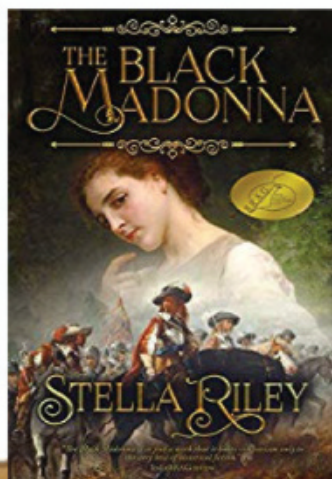
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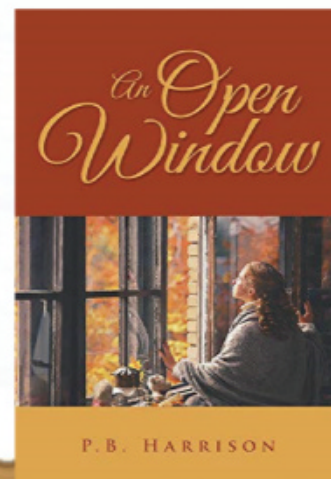
The Forgotten Duke
By Sophie Barnes
Historical Romance



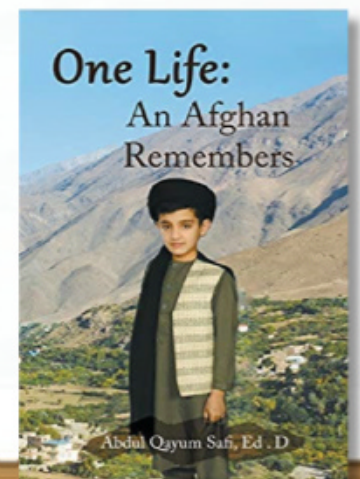
The Black Madonna
By Stella Riley
Historical Fiction



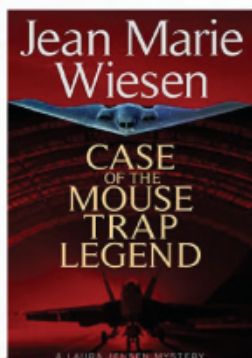
The Haunted Hanging Tree
By David and Michael Krumboltz
YA Historical Fiction



An Open Window
By P. B. Harrison
Fiction



One Life: An Afghan Remembers
By Abdul Qayum Safi
Memoir



Case of the Mouse Trap Legend
By Jean Marie Wiesen
Mystery/Thriller



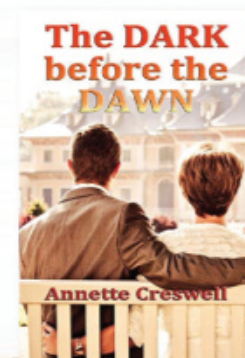
Last Man Out
Anniversary Edition
By Isabella Adams



The Secrets of Westborough Hall
By Felicity Knight
Historical Saga



No Long Goodbyes
By Pauline Hayton
WWII Fiction



The Dark Before the Dawn
By Annette Creswell
Fiction



So Long Earth
By Michael Bienenstock
Science Fiction



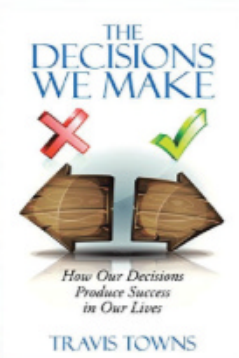
Outpost Gypsy Tree
The North Portal
By Dr. Dottie Graham
YA Fantasy



Building 8
You Know If You've Been There
By Anthony C. Mazzella
Flash Fiction



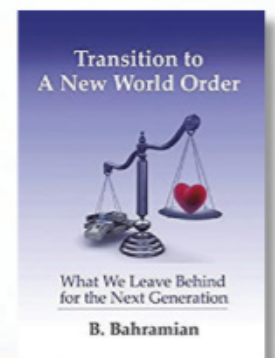
As Far As You Can
By David A. Fiensy
Historical Fiction



The Decisions We Make
By Travis Towns
Self-Help



I Have Come A Long Way
By David Peterson
Memoir



Transition to A New World Order
By B. Bahramian
Political / Social

With Dark Understandings - By Fazle Chowdhury - Published: February 1, 2020 - ISBN: 978-8194266525
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Everyone Knows Your Mother Is a Witch

by Rivka Galchen

U.S. publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux,
no pub date yet

Katharina Kepler, the eccentric, elderly mother of 17th-century German astronomer and polymath Johannes Kepler, finds both her reality and moral certainty challenged when she's accused of witchcraft by a neighbor, as the region begins to succumb to a growing depravity.

The Mysterious Disappearance of Aidan S. (as Told to His Brother)

by David Levithan

U.S. publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers, Feb. 2021

When Lucas's brother, Aidan, returns from being missing with an explanation for his absence that nobody believes, Lucas, his family, and their community must discern whether he's lost in a fantasy world of his own making or if he's actually telling the truth.



© MARZENA POGORZALY

Vesper Flights by Helen Macdonald

U.S. publisher: Grove Atlantic, Aug.

The author of *H Is for Hawk* offers a collection of essays about the natural world, including accounts of her experiences and wider meditations on love and loss.

DeFiore and Company

Humans by Brandon Stanton

U.S. publisher: St. Martin's, Oct.

In his new book, the photographer and author of *Humans of New York* widens his range with interviews and photographs of people from more than 40 countries around the world.

Milk Blood Heat by Dantiel Moniz

U.S. publisher: Grove, Feb. 2021

The stories in this debut collection from the winner of the 2018 Alice Hoffman Prize for Fiction, thematically linked by the ancient Egyptian symbol of Ouroboros, explore human connection and the nature of good and evil.

Mother Daughter Widow Wife by Robin Wasserman

U.S. publisher: Scribner, June

The new psychological novel from the author of *Girls On Fire* centers on a woman with no memory struggling to construct a new self, the scientists invested in studying her, and the woman's daughter, who longs to understand her mother's condition and identity.



© REID YALMON

Sandra Dijkstra Literary Agency

Innocent Witnesses: World War II Viewed by Children by Marilyn Yalom

U.S. publisher: Stanford Univ., Jan. 2021

Yalom's final book, which will be completed by the acclaimed late cultural historian's son, is a collection of six accounts by Yalom's longtime friends of their childhood memories of how war transformed their lives. Also included are Yalom's own



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London Book Fair Preview

wartime memories—those of an American girl safely protected in Washington, D.C., as her friends in Europe fought. To honor Yalom, who passed away recently, the agency submitted only her title for *PW* to highlight for London.

Dystel, Goderich & Bourret



Meet Me in Paradise

by Libby Hubscher

U.S. publisher: Berkley, spring 2021

In this novel from Hubscher, who holds a PhD in molecular toxicology, Marin's wild child sister Sadie bails on their tropical weekend getaway, and play-it-safe Marin finds herself on an adventure with her arrogant but dreamy seatmate.



They Never Learn

by Layne Fargo

U.S. publisher: Scout, Oct.

Thriller writer Fargo serves up a tale about a college professor's secret life murdering the worst men on campus. Her actions start to catch up with her when she picks her sexist boss as her next victim.

The Unmaking

by Stephanie Foo

U.S. publisher: Ballantine, no pub date yet

This American Life producer Foo investigates the science behind PTSD and how it has shaped her own life, culminating in a narrative of reckoning and healing.

Fletcher & Company

The Anti-bucket List

by Kate Bowler

U.S. publisher: Random House, spring 2022

The author of *Everything Happens for a Reason* examines what she sees as the biggest existential question: how should one spend one's time?

Lights Out: Pride, Delusion, and the Fall of General Electric

by Thomas Gryta and Ted Mann

U.S. publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Apr.

Wall Street Journal reporters Gryta and Mann chronicle the decline of GE, one of America's most storied and revered corporations—a saga of hubris, myth-making, and deceptive finances.

The Perfectionist's Guide to Losing Control

by Katherine Schafler

U.S. publisher: no publisher yet

Schafler, a former on-site therapist for Google, digs deeply into the idea of perfectionism and examines how one can use it to find more meaningful, authentic power.

Folio Literary Management

Countdown: 1945

by Chris Wallace, with Mitch Weiss

U.S. publisher: Avid Reader, June

Wallace, a journalist and host of *Fox News Sunday*, chronicles the secret meetings and events that took place in the U.S. in the months leading up to the bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, with President Truman at the center of the narrative.

Dark Horses

by Susan Mihalic

U.S. publisher: Scout, Sept.

In this debut novel, a 15-year-old equestrian prodigy struggles to reclaim her life from her abusive father.

The Wicked Sister

by Karen Dionne

U.S. publisher: Putnam, Aug.

The latest novel from the author of *The Marsh King's Daughter* spins the tale of Rachel Cunningham, who accidentally shot her mother and then watched her father turn the rifle on himself, then spent 15 years in a mental hospital as a self-inflicted punishment for a crime she may not have committed.

Foundry Literary + Media

Dark Room Etiquette

by Robin Roe

U.S. publisher: HarperCollins, May 2022

Roe—whose debut YA novel, *A List of Cages*, won several best-book honors—returns with a story centered on 16-year-old Sayers Wayte, who gets away with whatever he wants because of his family name, until he is kidnapped.

Permission to Be Interesting

by Eve Rodsky

U.S. publisher: Putnam, fall 2021

Rodsky's follow-up to *Fair Play* aims to help readers set new personal goals, rediscover interests, cultivate creativity, and generally reclaim what she calls their "unicorn space" (i.e., their "permission to be interesting").

Well, This Is Exhausting

by Sophia Benoit

U.S. publisher: Gallery, spring 2021

This debut memoir from the sex and relationships columnist for *GQ* challenges readers to confront why so many women struggle to "do the right thing" and offers advice for how to let go of being "a good girl."

The Gernert Company

The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos

by Judy Batalion

U.S. publisher: Morrow, June

This WWII chronicle, already optioned by Steven Spielberg for film, brings to light the accomplishments of Jewish women who became resistance fighters.

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London Book Fair Preview

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Diane Cook

The New Wilderness

by Diane Cook

U.S. publisher: HarperCollins, Aug.

This debut novel from the author of the story collection *Man v. Nature* explores a mother-daughter relationship in a world ravaged by climate change and overpopulation.

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Megan Goldin

The Night Swim by Megan Goldin

U.S. publisher: St. Martin's, Aug.

In this new thriller from the author of *The Escape Room*, a podcast host covering a controversial trial in a small town becomes obsessed with a brutal crime that took place there years before.

Sanford J. Greenburger Associates

Burn-In by P.W. Singer and August Cole

U.S. publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, May

The duo behind *Ghost Fleet*—Singer, an expert on 21st-century warfare, and Cole, a national securities analyst—pen a new thriller in which FBI special agent Lara Keegan teams up with the first police robot to hunt a shadowy terrorist.

© MIA FERMINDOZA



Matt Ortile

The Groom Will Keep His Name: And Other Vows About Race, Resistance, and Romance

by Matt Ortile

U.S. publisher: Bold Type, June

This debut collection of essays on sex, dating, and identity is from a gay Filipino immigrant to the U.S. and explores navigating race and resistance in America.

© COLIN LANE



Jessica Gross

Hysteria by Jessica Gross

U.S. publisher: Unnamed Books, Aug.

In this debut novel, a young woman becomes convinced that the new bartender at her local bar is Sigmund Freud.

HG Literary

Memphis by Tara Stringfellow

U.S. publisher: Dial, spring 2021

Pushcart Prize–nominee Stringfellow's first novel is a bildungsroman based on her family's extraordinary civil rights heritage.

Unforgetting: A Memoir of Revolution and Redemption by Roberto Lovato

U.S. publisher: Harper, Sept.

In this memoir, Lovato, a scholar and media commentator on Latino policy and the child of El Salvadoran immigrants, chronicles his life from gang member to guerilla to today.

Version Zero by David Yoon

U.S. publisher: Putnam, spring 2021

In his first book for adults, the author of the YA novel *Frankly in Love* spins a tale about a coder who is fired for whistleblowing and sets out on a mission to break the internet and establish something better in its place.

ICM Partners (handled by Curtis Brown)

The Origins of Our Discontents: The Resurgence of Caste in America by Isabel Wilkerson

U.S. publisher: Random House, Apr.

The Pulitzer Prize–winning author of *The Warmth of Other Suns* chronicles the emergence and endurance of caste in America, highlighting how the systemic construction of human divisions has led to present-day discontent.

The Paper Palace by Miranda Cowley Heller

U.S. publisher: Riverhead, summer 2021

Told through flashbacks, this debut novel from the v-p and head of drama series at HBO follows Elle, who must decide between Jonas, her first love and soulmate, and Peter, the husband she loves.

Right/Wrong: How Technology Transforms Our Ethics: Ten Ethical Dilemmas That Challenge Us How to Think About the Future by Juan Enriquez

U.S. publisher: MIT, Oct.

The futurist and TED speaker posits that ethics evolve over time and that many swings in the right vs. wrong pendulum are affected by advances in technology.

The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good? by Michael J. Sandel

U.S. publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Sept.

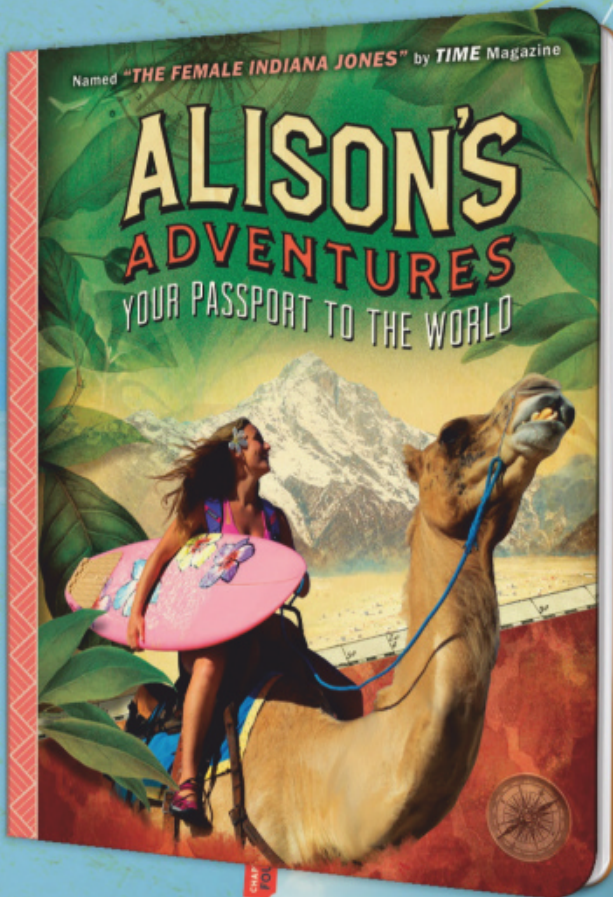
Harvard political philosophy professor Sandel argues that before mainstream political parties can hope to win back public support, they must rethink their mission and purpose.

Inkwell Management

Devoted by Dean Koontz

U.S. publisher: Thomas & Mercer, Mar.

Koontz's thriller centers on an 11-year-old boy who hasn't ever spoken a word, and a golden retriever who can help him stave off an evil man.



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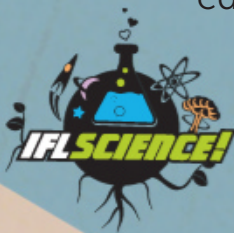
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London Book Fair Preview

Eat Like the Animals: What Nature Teaches Us About the Science of Healthy Eating

by David Raubenheimer and Stephen Simpson

U.S. publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Apr.

This scientific adventure looks at how different organisms know how to balance their diets, and what advice humans can glean from that info, culminating in a unifying theory of nutrition.

We Are All the Same in the Dark by Julie Heaberlin

U.S. publisher: Ballantine, Aug.

The *Black-Eyed Susans* author's novel is about the discovery of an abandoned girl who may hold the keys to the shocking truth of a man's disappearance a decade earlier.

Janklow & Nesbit Associates



The Myth of Freedom

by Maggie Nelson

U.S. publisher: Graywolf, fall 2021

Nelson's first new project since 2015's *The Argonauts* is a work of criticism that examines the concept of freedom through the lenses of art, climate, drugs, and sex.



Our American Friend

by Anna Pitoniak

U.S. publisher: Simon & Schuster, 2021

Pitoniak's novel, part Cold War-era spy thriller and part reimagining of a first lady's life, is an examination of truth and justice, love and grief, and how one determines a life worth living.



The Prophets by Robert Jones Jr.

U.S. publisher: Putnam, Jan. 2021

This debut, which sold in a 10-way auction, is a tale of forbidden love between two enslaved young men on a plantation in the Antebellum South.

Stuart Krichevsky Literary Agency

A Deal with the Devil by Pamela Colloff

U.S. publisher: Random House, no pub date yet

New York Times Magazine and *ProPublica* writer Colloff's first book tells the story of Paul Skalnik, whom the author says was an especially prodigious and unreliable jailhouse informant, focusing on his many victims and seeking to expose the damage to the American criminal justice system created by police and prosecutors' use of such informants.

The God Equation: The Unfinished Quest for a Theory of Everything by Michio Kaku

U.S. publisher: Doubleday, spring 2021

Kaku, a theoretical physicist and the author of *The Future of the Mind*, begins this book with Einstein's unfinished project—creating a unified theory of the universe—and strives to explain in an accessible way how far physicists have come toward completing that work, and what mysteries remain to be solved.

The Grifters' Club by Sarah Blaskey et al.

U.S. publisher: Public Affairs, June

A team of *Miami Herald* journalists look inside the gilded gates of Mar-a-Lago, President Trump's palatial resort in Florida.

Levine Greenberg Rostan Literary Agency

Good for a Girl: A Life Running in a Man's World

by Lauren Fleshman

U.S. publisher: no publisher yet

Fleshman, a former track and field athlete, has written a #MeToo memoir and manifesto about women and sports.

Off: The Day the Internet Died (A Bedtime Fantasy)

by Chris Colin and Rinee Shah

U.S. publisher: Prestel, spring 2021

In the tradition of *Go the F**k to Sleep*, *Off* presents an event everyone secretly—or perhaps not so secretly—dreams of: the internet shutting off once and for all.

This Is What It Sounds Like: A Legendary Record Producer-Turned-Brain Scientist Explores Why We Fall in Love with Music

by Susan Rogers and Ogi Ogas

U.S. publisher: Norton, fall 2022

Rogers, a brain scientist and producer for Prince and others, teams up with Ogas, a computational neuroscientist, to go beyond the familiar concepts of scales, key signatures, and chord progressions to explore a set of overlooked and underappreciated aspects of music.

Massie & McQuilkin Literary Agents



Afterparties and **Straight Thru Cambotown** by Anthony Veasna So

U.S. publisher: Ecco, summer 2021

Sold alongside one another, two debuts, *Afterparties* (a story collection) and *Straight Thru Cambotown* (a novel) are seriocomic fiction that shine a light on the traumas of the Khmer Rouge genocide.

Dead in the Water

by Matthew Campbell and Kit Chellel

U.S. publisher: Portfolio, 2022

Two Bloomberg reporters tell the story of the faked hijacking of the super-tanker *Brillante Virtuoso* in 2011, the murder of the British naval surveyor who uncovered the fraud, and the investigators determined to solve the crime who delve into the secretive world of international shipping.

It's Not TV

by Felix Gillette and John Koblin

**U.S. publisher: Viking,
no pub date yet**

Bloomberg News writer and editor Gillette and *New York Times* television reporter Koblin offer a history of HBO, chronicling how an upstart group of creative executives pioneered a new way of delivering home entertainment.

Jean V. Naggar Literary Agency



Gloria Goldreich

The Paris Children: A Novel of World War II

by Gloria Goldreich

**U.S. publisher:
Sourcebooks, Sept.**

Goldreich's novel is about the grand-

daughter of Alfred Dreyfus, who smuggled Jewish children out of France during the Nazi occupation, and the spy she falls in love with.



Timothy Schaffert

The Perfume Thief

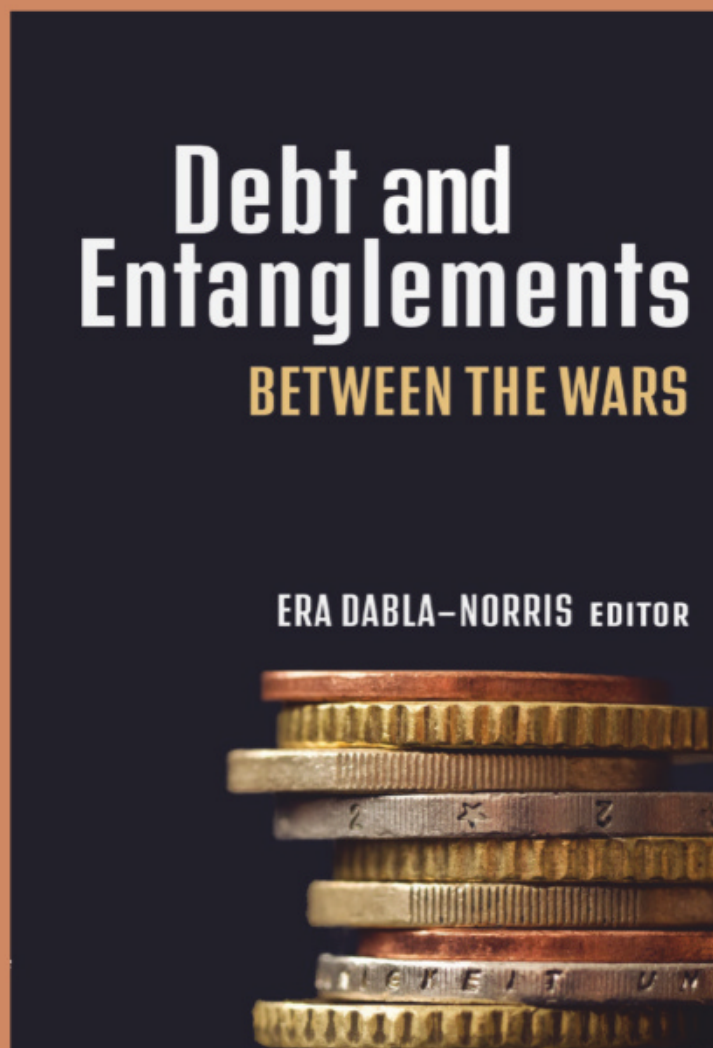
by Timothy
Schaffert

**U.S. publisher:
Doubleday,
spring 2021**

An American with an infamous past

moves to Paris to become a perfumer, but when the Nazis occupy the city, they seek to use her expertise for a sinister purpose.

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London Book Fair Preview



Unretouchable by Sofia Szamosi
U.S. publisher: Graphic Universe, winter 2022

This YA graphic novel follows 18-year-old Olive's summer internship as a photo retoucher at a fashion magazine, and explores her subsequent understanding of the manipulative ability of digital imagery, advertising, social

media, and their effects on body image.

Jane Rotrosen Agency



Girls of Summer by Nancy Thayer
U.S. publisher: Ballantine, May

The author of *Nantucket Wedding* returns with this novel, in which an impending August storm threatens to shatter the peace of Nantucket—and its unexpected summer romances—forcing its inhabitants discover what they can and cannot control..



The Lost Girls of Devon
by Barbara O'Neal

U.S. publisher: Lake Union, July

From the author of *When We Believed in Mermaids* comes a novel featuring four generations of Fairchild women and a missing-persons case in an English village.



Truths I Never Told You
by Kelly Rimmer

U.S. publisher: Graydon House, Apr.

This novel by Rimmer (*The Things We Cannot Say*) is about a woman grappling with postpartum depression who uncovers writings belonging to her late mother that reveal heretofore unknown ties.

Sterling Lord Literistic

Cuyahoga by Pete Beatty

U.S. publisher: Scribner, Oct.

Beatty's debut novel is a revisionist western tale with nods to Looney Tunes and Flannery O'Connor.

Eat the Buddha: Life and Death in a Tibetan Town
by Barbara Demick

U.S. publisher: Random House, July

Journalist Demick, who reported on North Korea for her book *Nothing to Envy*, examines Tibet and weaves the country's complex history with the continuous daily struggles of its citizens.

A World on the Wing: Saving Migratory Birds on a Changing Planet by Scott Weidensaul

U.S. publisher: Norton, Mar. 2021

Naturalist Weidensaul incorporates the latest science and examples of conservation challenges in this examination of bird migration.

Trident Media Group

The Absolute Book by Elizabeth Knox

U.S. publisher: no publisher yet

Published last year in New Zealand, *The Absolute Book*, an epic fantasy, is the 14th novel from Knox.

Jack by Marilynne Robinson

U.S. publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Sept.

Robinson, a Pulitzer Prize and the National Humanities Medal recipient, returns to the world of Gilead, Iowa, with story of Jack Boughton, the beloved and wayward son of a preacher.

Modulo by YZ Chin

U.S. publisher: Ecco, summer 2021

This debut novel by Chin, winner of the Louise Meriwether First Book Prize for her short story collection *Though I Get Home*, follows a young Malaysian immigrant on the verge of losing her U.S. work visa, whose husband suddenly disappears.

The Ruins of Freedom: An Environmental History of the Modern World by Sunil Amrith

U.S. publisher: Norton, 2023

Amrith—a Harvard professor, MacArthur fellow, and the author of *Crossing the Bay of Bengal*—offers a work that braids together environmental history and the history of capitalism from 1500 to the present.

William Morris Endeavor

Missionaries by Phil Klay

U.S. publisher: Penguin Press, Oct.

From the author of the National Book Award-winning short story collection *Redeployment* comes a wartime novel set in Colombia, about four entangled lives.

The New Map by Daniel Yergin

U.S. publisher: Penguin Press, Sept.

Yergin, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and global energy expert, offers an account of how energy revolutions, climate battles, and geopolitics are mapping our global future.

Rodham by Curtis Sittenfeld

U.S. publisher: Random House, June

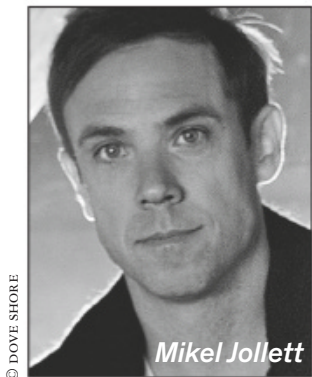
This novel from the author of *Prep* and *Eligible* imagines a deeply compelling what-if: "What if Hillary Rodham hadn't married Bill Clinton?"

London Book Fair Preview

Whereabouts by Jhumpa Lahiri
U.S. publisher: Knopf, spring 2021

Pulitzer Prize–winner Lahiri’s English translation of her own 2018 novel, originally published in Italian, is a portrayal of a middle-aged woman’s daily life over the course of a year.

Writers House



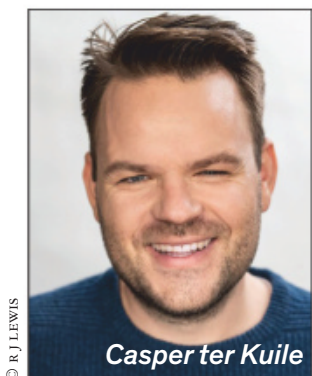
Hollywood Park by Mikel Jollett
U.S. publisher: Celadon, May

In his memoir, to be released in conjunction with an album of the same name, the lead singer of the Airborne Toxic Event details how he escaped from an infamous cult and a childhood filled with poverty, addiction, and emotional abuse.



Older by Pamela Redmond
U.S. publisher: Gallery, Sept.

In this sequel to *Younger*, now a TV series from the creator of *Sex and the City*, Liza Miller is torn between two cities and two hearts when her bestselling novel is picked up by a major television network.



The Power of Ritual
by Casper ter Kuile
U.S. publisher: HarperOne, June
Ter Kuile, a Harvard Divinity School fellow and cohost of the popular *Harry Potter and the Sacred Text* podcast, explores how everyday practices—yoga, reading, walking the dog—can become sacred rituals to help readers deal with social isolation and the struggle to find purpose.



To Sleep in a Sea of Stars
by Christopher Paolini
U.S. publisher: Tor, Sept.

Paolini’s debut for adults is an epic space opera that follows biologist Kira Navárez from a fateful discovery on an uncolonized planet through space battles with the future of humanity at stake.



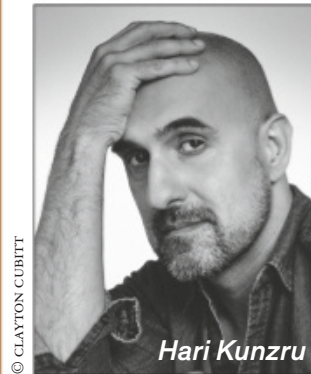
The Wylie Agency
Livewired by David Eagleman
U.S. publisher: Pantheon, Aug.
From the author of *Incognito* and *Sum* comes a portrait of the human brain



that explores how it unceasingly adapts, re-creates, and formulates new ways of understanding the world.

The Night Watchman
by Louise Erdrich
U.S. publisher: Harper, Mar.

National Book Award–winner Erdrich based her novel on the life of her grandfather, who carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota to Washington, D.C.



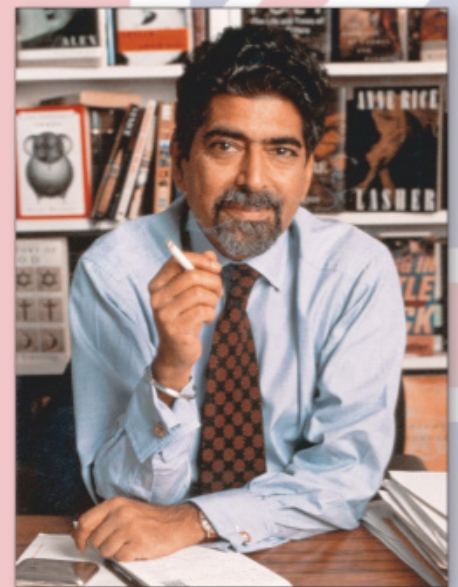
Red Pill by Hari Kunzru
U.S. publisher: Knopf, Sept.

In this new novel from the author of *White Tears*, set in a suburb of Berlin, a writer struggles to accomplish anything begins to lose faith in writing as he binge-watches a violent cop show that becomes weirdly compelling in its bleak Darwinian view.

Note: At press time, some of the agencies included in this roundup were reconsidering whether to attend the event, in light of the global spread of the new coronavirus. For updates on the status of the fair, check the organization’s website: londonbookfair.co.uk.

Mehta Memorial Set for March 9

Penguin Random House will hold a celebration of Sonny Mehta’s life in books in London on Monday, March 9. The event will take place at One Marylebone, London NW1 4AQ at 4 p.m. and will be followed by a drinks reception at the same venue. The legendary editor-in-chief of Knopf and chairman of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group died December 30 in New York City. Anyone planning to attend is asked to register at sonny-mehtalondonmemorial@penguinrandomhouse.co.uk. If you do not plan to stay for the reception afterward, please let the organizers know that as well.



Road-Tripping

In his new novel, Héctor Tobar chronicles the life of a failed writer who became “an American Che Guevara”

By ELAINE SZEWCZYK



On a recent morning at his home in Los Angeles, Héctor Tobar, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and expert chronicler of the Latino experience, sat down with a bowl of oatmeal he'd whipped up for breakfast after dropping his daughter off at school. He wants to talk about the day he encountered the strange, true story of Joe Sanderson, a 20th-century thrill seeker and failed novelist from Urbana, Ill., who is the subject of Tobar's epic new novel, *The Last Great Road Bum*, due out in June from MCD.

Sanderson traveled the world in the 1960s and '70s, then became a guerilla fighter in the Salvadoran Civil War. So what drew Tobar to a man who is a relative unknown? “I want people to think of Joe Sanderson as one of the great American adventurers of his time—as someone who's as worthy of being remembered as Jack Kerouac,” he says.

Tobar has written two other novels, *The Tattooed Soldier* and *The Barbarian Nurseries*, and two nonfiction works: *Translation Nation*, in which the author chronicles his own family history and travels across the United States to gather stories about the Latino experience, and *Deep Down Dark*, an account of the 2010 mining disaster in Copiapó, Chile. Before he wrote *Deep Down Dark*, which spent seven weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list, he was already thinking about Sanderson, whom he calls “an American Che Guevara,” whom he learned about while working in Mexico.

In 2008, Tobar was working as the

Author Profile

Mexico City bureau chief for the *Los Angeles Times* when a research assistant told him about a war diary written by an American that was sitting in an archive in San Salvador, El Salvador. The diary belonged to Sanderson, who dropped out of college and spent his life traveling the world—Africa, Asia, Europe—in search of adventure and material to write the next great American novel.

Sanderson's relentless quest for big experiences brought him to El Salvador in 1979, where he joined up with guerillas who opposed the U.S.-backed military junta and became a fighter (code name: Lucas). He died in battle in 1982 at age 39. His diary and other papers, which were found stashed in his backpack, became part of the revolution archive at the Museo de la Palabra y la Imagen in San Salvador.

"Joe's story was begging to be written," Tobar says. Initially, though, he didn't know how to approach his subject. It would take years, and multiple stalled nonfiction book proposals, for him to find the answer. In the meantime, he gathered the material he'd later weave into his novel.

Tobar spoke with former rebels who'd fought alongside Sanderson. "I heard stories of Joe winning a shooting contest," he says, noting that Sanderson was known to be a great marksman, "and of Joe teaching rebels how to swim." And Tobar tracked down Sanderson's brother, Steve Sanderson, in the States, who gave him access to letters Sanderson wrote to their mother. Steve also shared his brother's fiction, which Tobar—who is currently a writing professor at the University of California, Irvine—admits isn't good.

"I'm a generous grader," Tobar says, "so I'd probably give him a B-."

Despite the grade, Tobar, who briefly put aside newspaper work in the 1990s to get his MFA in creative writing from the University of California, Irvine, identified with Sanderson's dream to write fiction. "I would definitely choose fiction writing over nonfiction if I had to," he says.

It was the success of *Deep Down Dark* that motivated Tobar to write Sanderson's story as a novel. According to Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Tobar's books have been translated into 15 languages and have sold approximately 250,000 copies in North America across all formats, with *Deep Down Dark* accounting for about half of those sales. But after *Deep Down Dark*, he hit a crossroads. "I realized if I wrote another book of nonfiction I would never write another novel again," Tobar says. "There was a voice in my head saying, 'Nonfiction is all I'm going to be known for.'" So he revisited Sanderson's story and began to see him as "a man who was trying to live his life like a character in a novel that he never succeeded in writing."

Tobar got swept up in the idea and wrote the book the real Joe Sanderson couldn't.

"It's a novel, but it sits next to *Into the Wild* and other great nonfiction books," says Tobar's editor Sean McDonald of *The Last Great Road Bum*. "The way it pulls together the strands of Héctor's writing career is thrilling."

The son of Guatemalan immigrants, Tobar was born in L.A. in 1963. He spoke Spanish growing up and is firmly entwined with his roots. He's been married for 26 years and has three kids and what he describes as a "poorly behaved but loyal" dog. He's friendly and open but says he's a loner.

"It's taken me time to overcome a lot of the insecurities that led me to become a writer," Tobar says. "I was an only child. I was always seeking my father's approval. I always wanted to be an A student. And so becoming a writer was a way to show the world how special I am."

Jay Mandel, Tobar's agent at William Morris Endeavor, calls him "a Swiss Army knife of a writer." He adds that Tobar is "both deeply American and deeply Central American," and that this offers him a unique perspective as a storyteller.

Tobar's powers are on full display in his latest, which uses the treasure trove of letters and diaries Sanderson left behind to create a story of love, war, and art that spans cultures.

Tobar admits he got some weird looks when he started telling people that his latest protagonist is a white guy. "Some people were disappointed that a Latino writer would choose to write a novel from the perspective of a white male," he says. But he relishes defying expectations. "It's important to think about working across, and imagining across, ethnic lines. If we as writers of color only think of ourselves as writing inside this channel of, say, Latino history, then we... well,

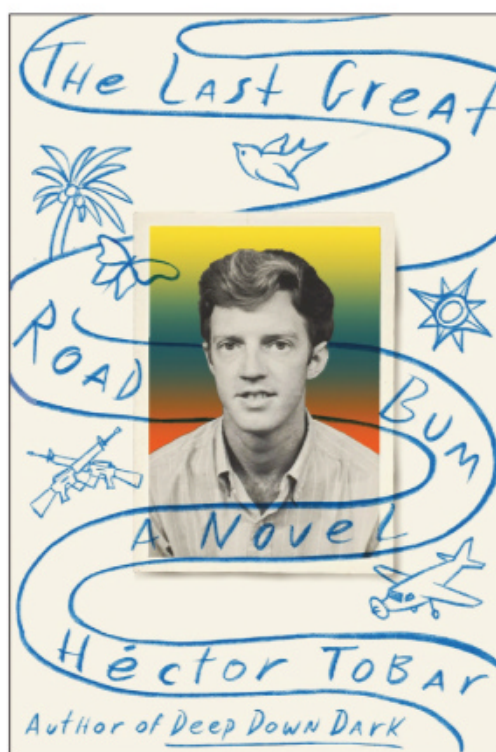
I am depriving myself of a deeper understanding of the full truth of the country in which I live."

Tobar's next projects include a survey of Latino life in the Trump age and a trilogy of novels about L.A.

As the conversation winds down and his dog lets out an impatient bark, Tobar tells the story of the time his immigrant father built a fence around the house where Tobar and his family currently live. His father blew out his car engine hauling wood and had bloody hands every day as he hammered away. "But he stubbornly worked at this fence and finished it," Tobar says. "And it's beautiful. How he worked on that... That's the way I write."

Tobar nods as he reflects on the 11 years—research and all—it took to complete *The Last Great Road Bum*. "I put everything into that book," he says. "I fought for every sentence. I left it all on the page."

Elaine Szewczyk's writing has appeared in McSweeney's and other publications. She's the author of the novel I'm with Stupid.



Reviews

Fiction

★ Catherine House

Elisabeth Thomas. Custom House, \$26.99 (240p) ISBN 978-0-06-290565-9

Thomas's spellbinding debut opens in 1996 on Ines Murillo's first night at a small, highly selective college in the Pennsylvania woods. Drunk after a party, Ines reflects on her relief that behind Catherine House's locked gates, no one knows about her past. Renowned for controversial research regarding a mysterious elemental substance called plasm, the school holds classes year-round, and students remain confined to Catherine's rural estate. Eager to disassociate from a past trauma, Ines falls behind on her work while seeking solace in a string of sexual encounters before finding a group of friends who feel closer to family than anything she's ever known. Still, Ines can't ignore her growing suspicions about the school's plasm experimentation in "psychosexual healing," in which students are subjected to mass hypnosis. Ines's academic probation leads her to forced isolation in the "Restoration Center," where a professor places plasm pins in her head and tells her she'll never think of her past life again. Surreal imagery, spare characterization, and artful, hypnotic prose lend Thomas's tale a delirious air, but at the book's core lies a profound portrait of depression and adolescent turmoil. Fans of Donna Tartt's *The Secret History* will devour this philosophical fever dream. *Agent: Kent Wolf, Friedrich Agency.* (May)

Only the River

Anne Raeff. Counterpoint, \$26 (320p) ISBN 978-1-64009-334-8

Raeff's engrossing tale of refugees and war (after *Winter Kept Us Warm*) traces the connection between two families affected by the Nicaraguan Revolution. After the Anschluss in 1938, 13-year-old Pepa, a Jew, flees Vienna with her family for Nicaragua, eventually settling in El Castillo, where, as doctors, her parents dedicate themselves to fighting yellow fever. At 14, Pepa walks through the jungle



© THOMAS TEAL

In Genevieve Hudson's luminous debut novel, *Boys of Alabama*, a German teenager confronts an evangelist's dark side (reviewed on p. 41).

at night and watches people dancing in the plaza, where she meets a boy named Guillermo and falls in love. However, a few years later, while Pepa carries Guillermo's child, her family abruptly leaves for New York, and she is separated from Guillermo forever. Pepa marries a Jewish man and has another child with him, Liliana. Decades later, Pepa's son, William, sets out to join the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, where he is presumed dead in 1982. Guillermo's daughter, Federica, also fights the Contras. It isn't until Liliana travels to Nicaragua in the mid-2000s to find answers about her older brother's disappearance, that Pepa's and Guillermo's stories merge again. Raeff's seamless web artfully depicts the characters' will to survive and to fight for what they believe in. This heartfelt story of separation and confluence will move readers. (May)

The Motion of the Body Through Space

Lionel Shriver. Harper, \$28.99 (352p) ISBN 978-0-06-232825-0

Shriver's bitter satire of the elite exercise industry (after the collection *Property*) huffs along with sobering reflections on aging. Serenata Terpsichore and Remington Alabaster, married for 32 years, have recently moved to Hudson, N.Y., in the wake of Remington losing his civil engineering job in Albany. The couple's bumptious domestic bickering comes to a head after sedentary Remington, at 64, announces he will run marathon. Serenata, who's been a runner for years, scolds him

for the unwelcome "incursion into her territory." Nevertheless, Remington trains, buys neon-colored running gear and a "brushed-steel, state-of-the-art" treadmill with surround sound. At the finish line, he is accompanied by Bambi Buffer, a late 30-something woman in a lavender sports bra whom Serenata derisively refers to as an "anatomy illustration." Bambi encourages Remington toward a new goal, the Lake Placid MettleMan Triathlon. With Serenata as a mouthpiece, Shriver casts her familiar brand of mordant humor at easy targets, but unlike in the work of Edward St. Aubyn, for instance, the narrator's meanness serves no apparent purpose, and the razor-sharp observation isn't balanced by self-implication. The result is underwhelming. (May)

★ Shadowplay

Joseph O'Connor. Europa, \$26 (400p) ISBN 978-1-60945-593-4

O'Connor's high-spirited latest (after *The Star of the Sea*) puts ample flesh on the bones of the little-known story of the theatrical ménage involving celebrity actors Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, and Irving's business manager, Bram Stoker. Composed (like *Dracula*) in epistolary style from diary entries, letters, recording transcripts, and the like, the narrative follows Stoker as he moves with his family from Dublin to London in 1879 to help Irving establish his Lyceum Theatre. Over the next quarter century the two indulge in a frequently bitter love/hate relationship—Irving drives Stoker mercilessly and cruelly taunts him for his literary ambitions. Via commentary from Terry on *Dracula*, O'Connor's narrative suggests that Stoker likely channeled the personality of Irving and the drama of their contretemps into his tale of the imperious vampire scourge. O'Connor's characters are magnificently realized and colorfully depicted by the virtues that define them: Irving's egotism, Terry's feminism, Stoker's stoicism, and—for the brief time he appears—Oscar Wilde's witticisms. The repartee O'Connor imagines between them is priceless, in particular when they refer to each other by their nicknames ("Chief" for Irving, "Auntie" for Stoker), and he fills the tale with numerous rib nudges that readers of *Dracula* will recognize. This novel blows the dust off its Victorian trappings and

brings them to scintillating life. (*May*)

Amora

Natalia Borges Polesso, trans. from the Portuguese by Julia Sanches. Amazon Crossing, \$19.95 (234p) ISBN 978-1-5420-0433-6

Polesso's bittersweet collection (after *Control*) explores the highs and lows of life for a series of Brazilian lesbians. In "My Cousin's in Town," an unnamed narrator invites her co-workers over for dinner, and when her girlfriend, Bruna—who was supposed to be traveling—comes out of their bathroom wrapped in a towel, the narrator introduces Bruna as a cousin to keep her sexual identity a secret. In "Dreaming," Raquel, a businesswoman whose friends find her "shockingly tedious," stuns them with a story from her time living in San Francisco in her 20s, when, naked and drunk during a house party, she sneaked into a celebrity's pool and hooked up with a "blonde, leggy, tanned" woman with "surfer's cheeks." "Renfield's Demons" tells the gut-punching story of Débora, who comes home unexpectedly and finds her partner, Moira, entangled with another woman on the living room floor. A week later, to combat her depression, Débora goes to a costume party where she has sex with a woman dressed as a vampire, who draws real blood when she bites. With brevity, abstraction, and narrative tension, Polesso offers a poignant look at women alternately broken down and resilient. Fans of Lucia Berlin will love these tense and twisty tales. (*May*)

Vanishing Monuments

John Elizabeth Stintzi. Arsenal Pulp, \$17.95 trade paper (304p) ISBN 978-1-55152-801-4

In Stintzi's ambitious debut novel (after the poetry collection *Junebat*) a nonbinary photographer based in Minneapolis struggles to break through the barriers of their past. The photographer, Alani Baum, navigates their "memory palace" after their mother's dementia takes a turn for the

★ The Vanishing Half

Brit Bennett. Riverhead, \$27 (352p) ISBN 978-0-525-53629-1

Bennett (*The Mothers*) explores a Louisiana family's navigation of race, from the Jim Crow era through the 1980s, in this impressive work. The Vignes twins, Desiree and Stella, were born and raised in Mallard, La., the slave-born founder of which imagined a town with "each generation lighter than the one before." In the early 1940s, when the twins are little, they witness their father's lynching, and as they come of age, they harbor ambitions to get out. Desiree, the more headstrong sister, leads Stella to New Orleans when they are 16, and after a few months, the quiet, studious Stella, who once dreamt of enrolling in an HBCU, disappears one night. In 1968, 14 years later, still with no word from Stella, Desiree is back in Mallard with her eight-year-old daughter, Jude, having left her abusive ex-husband. When Jude is older, she makes her own escape from Mallard to attend college in Los Angeles. At a party, Jude glimpses a woman who looks exactly like Desiree—except she couldn't be, because this woman is white. Eventually, the Vignes twins reunite, reckoning with the decisions that have shaped their lives. Effortlessly switching between the voices of Desiree, Stella, and their daughters, Bennett renders her characters and their struggles with great compassion, and explores the complicated state of mind that Stella finds herself in while passing as white. This prodigious follow-up surpasses Bennett's formidable debut. (*June*)



worse and they return to their childhood home in Winnipeg for the first time in 30 years. The components of the palace guide the narrative through collaged passages that examine the space's fixed points. Chapters titled "The Living Room" and "The Stairs" open on scenes narrated in the second person, bringing the reader into rooms where walls are "covered in memories." Stintzi ties Alani's troubled history with their mother to readings of Ovid, descriptions of photographs, and past travels from the narrator's life that reach as far as Hamburg, where Alani worked as a model for photographer Erwin Egger. Certain moments stand out vividly—a description of Alani navigating their nonbinary identity through the metaphor of a labyrinth and a Minotaur, the detailed construction

of Erwin's photographic compositions—but they don't all cohere in the long run. Still, Stintzi's skill shines through in well-crafted sentences and narratives. Despite its weaknesses, Stintzi's first foray into the novel form displays a visionary approach with the refreshing touch of a poet. (*May*)

The Narcissism of Small Differences

Michael Zadoorian. Akashic, \$28.95 (304p) ISBN 978-1-61775-825-1

Zadoorian (*The Leisure Seeker*) serves up a wry, unflinching tale of an underachieving couple in midlife crisis mode as the recession grips the industrial Midwest. Joe and Ana live in Ferndale, Mich., a mile outside Detroit, where they've been shackled up (but not married) for 15 years. Joe's a freelance journalist just getting by,

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while Ana, once an aspiring documentary filmmaker, works in advertising and has become the breadwinner. Despite their cramped living quarters, they live in separate spheres. While Ana befriends and fantasizes over a coworker, Joe stays out late drinking and, while home, develops a heavy porn habit. After Ana catches Joe at the screen, she expresses doubts about their relationship and ongoing living situation. Things don't get any easier at work. Ana questions how far she's willing to stray from her progressive values to serve a Christian client, and Joe is reduced to a "telemarketing Willie Loman," selling ads for a newspaper. Zadoorian's comedy of contemporary manners resonates by virtue of its introspective characters and depictions of the small moments in life that, taken together, have great significance. Piquantly titled chapters ("Out Come the Freaks") provide additional comic snap. Zadoorian's subtle, timely story hits the mark. (*May*)

Villa of Delirium

Adrien Goetz, trans. from the French by Natasha Lehrer. New Vessel, \$26.95 (324p) ISBN 978-1-939931-80-1

A young man comes of age in the artistic and intellectual milieu of belle époque France in Goetz's lushly detailed English-language debut. Scholar Theodore Reinach hires teenage Achilles, son of servants employed by Gustave Eiffel, to make sketches for Kerylos, his new seaside villa in the Côte d'Azur. Despite the anti-Semitism directed at the Reinachs over their support of Alfred Dreyfus, the house is acknowledged as a creative marvel upon completion. Achilles soon comes to live at Kerylos, where he studies Greek, becomes Theodore's protégé, and grows closer to the Reinach circle: Theodore's erudite brothers, Joseph and Salomon; Theodore's wife, Fanny; and Joseph's son, Adolphe, who becomes Achilles's best friend. Goetz's tale spans both world wars, which bring tragedy and destruction to the Côte d'Azur, and neither Achilles nor the

deeply patriotic Reinach family escape unscathed. The elderly Achilles returns to the house to seek a treasured relic of his past, and while the nominally suspenseful premise of Achilles's hunt falls slack amid extended digressions into the past, Goetz pulls off an impassioned portrait of Kerylos as "a place that makes you want to travel, do somersaults and stretches, drink champagne in evening dress, read, think." Goetz's deeply felt novel has an equally intoxicating effect. (*May*)

In the Lion's Den

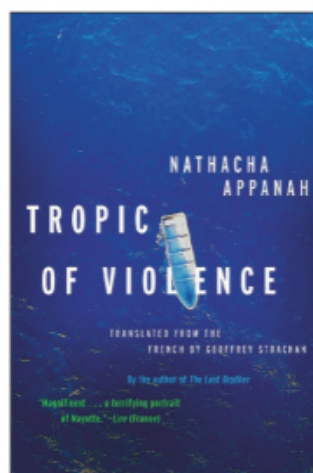
Barbara Taylor Bradford. St. Martin's, \$28.99 (352p) ISBN 978-1-250-18742-0

Bestseller Bradford adds a leisurely paced installment to her House of Falconer series (after *Master of His Fate*), set in Victorian England. The story tracks aspiring merchant James Falconer's rising career at the shipping and real estate firm Malvern Market, run by Henry Malvern. While Henry's middle-aged daughter, Alexis, the company's expected successor, grieves for her dead fiancé, Henry promotes the ambitious James, 21, to second in command. After a family member embezzles from the firm, James proposes building a gallery of shops as a way to recoup those losses, but arson strikes the half-built gallery. (Though, curiously, no suspects are suggested, leaving readers to anticipate a reveal in a future series installment.) Bradford does offer a secret from James's past love life, staging a seductive tryst between James and the lovely Irina, a dress designer, while a highly charged love affair between James and Alexis moves the plot. Bradford evokes the Victorian setting with aplomb, but a ham-handed intervention by Alexis's late fiancé's adult daughter, who professes to have looked up to her while telling her to "get back [her] looks," muddles the author's apparent appeal to current values with its adherence to Victorian convention. Series fans will enjoy following along as the plot deepens. (*May*)

★ Tropic of Violence

Nathacha Appanah, trans. from the French by Geoffrey Strachan. Graywolf, \$16 trade paper (160p) ISBN 978-1-64445-024-6

Orphaned gang members and desperate refugees live on a machete's edge in Appanah's blistering depiction (after *Waiting for Tomorrow*) of postcolonial chaos in Mayotte, an island in the Mozambique channel. A carousel of first-person narrators recount the abrupt life story of Möise, abandoned as a baby and taken in by Marie, a white nurse in Mayotte. After Marie dies, the teenage Möise's simmering identity crisis leads him into the island's unforgiving slum, a "violent no-man's land" called Gaza. There, the book-loving Möise, who names his dog after the author Henri Bosco, falls sway to gang leader Bruce, whose child soldiers run Gaza's economy by drug dealing, burglary, and political graft. Marked as a middle-class interloper, Möise is ripe for Bruce's exploitation. The calamitous chain of events that follows is narrated from beyond the grave by players who are helpless to change it and can only affirm its inevitability. "This country turns us all into beings who do wrong," Marie says in her ghostly narration. A journalist and native Mauritian, Appanah has a knack for reportorial detail that crystallizes the characters' commentary. Seen from above, present-day Mayotte is adrift in its own history, neglected by France, its parent state; at ground level it's bloodstained and redolent with "sour urine on street corners, ancient shit in the gutters, chicken being grilled on top of oil drums, eau de cologne and spices outside the houses, the sour sweat of men and women and musty reek of laundry." Appanah skillfully lets these perspectives merge in the short, brutal lives of her characters. This heralds Appanah as an essential cosmopolitan voice. (*May*)



I'd Give Anything

Marisa de los Santos. Morrow, \$27.99 (272p) ISBN 978-0-06-284448-4

De los Santos's heartfelt latest (after *I'll Be Your Blue Sky*) illustrates how tragedy can be overcome by love, honesty, and forgiveness. In 1997, the bonds of teenage

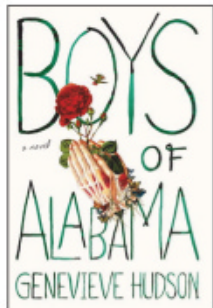
BEWARE THE SNAKE HANDLER

Domineering preachers and supernatural powers drive the action in these two novels.

Boys of Alabama

Genevieve Hudson. Liveright, \$26.95 (304p) ISBN 978-1-63149-629-5

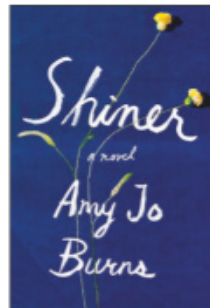
In Hudson's luminous debut novel (after the collection *Pretend We Live Here*), a German teenager with a supernatural power moves to Delilah, Ala., with his parents. Max delightfully takes in the "exotic" sights—rivers "rushing like arteries cut open across the earth"; a Confederate flag flying from a truck. Despite Max's mother's unease, Max adjusts easily to his new life by joining the high school football team, though the homophobic culture causes him to question his burgeoning feelings for his friend Pan, a goth outsider from school. Max reveals his power of resurrection to Pan by reanimating a dead squirrel. After Max gets caught up in a fervent evangelical group led by a man known around town as the Judge, his parents weigh their concern about his involvement with the Judge against their support for his efforts to find himself. ("The Judge man called his supporters a Christian army," his mother exclaims to his father. "He's trying to draft our son!") After Pan tells Max about the dark side of the Judge's evangelism, it pushes him to help resurrect people who can speak the truth about the Judge, putting both Max and Pan in danger. While the conclusion feels rushed, leveraging the characters' strong bond in service of a melodramatic climax, Hudson writes tenderly about cultural displacement, toxic masculinity, and friendship. This complex tale achieves a startling variation on the theme of teenage rebellion. (May)



Shiner

Amy Jo Burns. Riverhead, \$27 (272p) ISBN 978-0-525-53364-1

Trauma and hope pass from mother to daughter in a West Virginia family in Burns's layered, evocative debut novel (after the memoir *Cinderland*). Wren Bird is the 15-year-old daughter of a one-eyed snake-handling preacher, Briar Bird, and his wife, Ruby Day. Superstitious, charismatic, and devoted to a wife who openly despises him, Briar forces his family to live isolated in the mountains, resulting in few chances for Ruby and Wren to interact with the people of Trap, the nearest town. Their only regular visitor is Ruby's childhood best friend, Ivy, whose deep connection with Ruby led her to settle with her family nearby. "It started with a burn," begins the novel—Ivy visits Ruby and Wren one fateful day, and her dress and hair catch on fire. Briar heals her, with nary a scar, but when she starts calling Briar "White Eye," Ruby and Wren question what happened to Ivy. As Wren contends with the ramifications of her father's "miracle," she also begins to uncover the history behind his faith. Though the recursive structure stutters toward big reveals, making it difficult for readers to fully connect with any of the characters, Burns beautifully renders the isolated Appalachian landscape and the urgent desperation of her characters. Burns's stunning prose is reason enough to keep an eye out for this promising writer's next effort. (May)



Virginia "Zinny" Beale's friend group are tested after the death of Zinny's boyfriend Gray's father, a firefighter who died putting out a fire. Soon after, Zinny overhears a fight between her mother, Adela, and Zinny's beloved older brother, Trevor. Trevor loathes Adela, a wealthy, steely matron, and after his fights with Adela persist, he leaves for college and never returns. The tension at home causes Zinny to withdraw from her friends, including Gray. Twenty years later, Zinny is Ginny Beale McCue, married to the bland, dependable Harris. After Harris loses his job due to a scandal resulting from affectionate emails he sent to an 18-year-old intern, Ginny turns her attention to their precocious 15-year-old daughter, Avery. As Avery investigates her father's behaviors, Ginny looks back on her regrets about losing cherished teenaged friendships and her decision to settle with Harris.

Thoughtful musings, engaging dialogue, and ironic wit ("It has adult bone structure," Harris says, defensively describing his intern's face) add to the drama. De los Santos's seemingly light tale is full of surprises. (May)

A Strange Country

Muriel Barbery trans. from the French by Alison Anderson. Europa, \$18 trade paper (288p) ISBN 978-1-60945-585-9

In the convoluted follow-up to *The Lives of Elves*, Barbery pits humans and elves against a common enemy bent on destruction. In an alternate history, it's 1938, a world war rages, and Spain is mired in civil war. Gen. Alejandro de Yepes and his right-hand man, Maj. Jesús Rocamora, are at de Yepes's ancestral home, Extremaduro, when a snowstorm begins and three strangers appear on the property without leaving footprints. The three—

Petrus, Marcus, and Paulus—are elves, sent to Extremaduro to make an alliance in an attempt to stop Aelius, an elf who is responsible for the war ravaging both the human and the elven worlds. Petrus leads the way over a magical bridge into "the fog" of the elven world, which is disappearing for unclear reasons. Due to the recently discovered notebook of a 16th-century painter, the elves believe Alejandro may be the chosen person to save their world in a battle foretold for the next day. At its best, Barbery's imaginative tale reads as a mix of J.R.R. Tolkien and Hayao Miyazaki, epic in scope yet grounded by humor. However, the plot is often confusing and gets bogged down by Barbery's florid scene-setting. Meanwhile, the poetic prose (the elves are big fans of verse) regarding the allegorical nature of the elven fog and climactic finale hint at a deeper message—but what that message is remains frus-

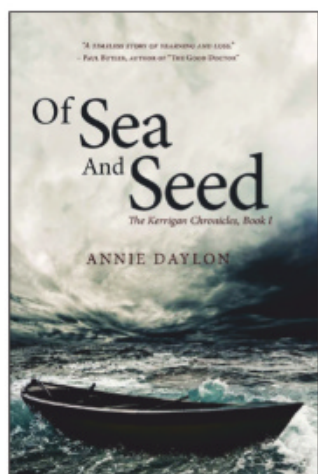
tratingly obscured. Series fans will want to take a look, but the uninitiated need not apply. (Apr.)

Of Sea and Seed

(The Kerrigan Chronicles #1)

Annie Daylon. McRAC, \$13.95 trade paper (352p) ISBN 978-0-9866980-4-0

Daylon's talent is apparent in this engrossing opening to a projected series about the travails of a Newfoundland family. In 1915, matriarch Kathleen Kerrigan's family is sustained by cod fishing in the village of Argentia, but when her three-month-old baby dies, the loss signals further devastation ahead. Kathleen's depression combined with a diagnosis of consumption forces the family to send her to a sanatorium. Her 16-year-old son Kevin deserts the family,



leaving eight-year-old Clara alone with her father, Alphonse, who has been emotionally devastated by his combat involvement in WWI ("War can leave scars on a man...

inside scars," Kevin explains to Clara). As the narrative shifts between Kevin, Clara, and Kathleen, the family suffers through relentless tribulations—death, abuse, infidelity—but it's the family secrets that come to light that might destroy them. Fisherman jargon and the family's Irish ancestry add flavor to the strong imagery ("When the sea can retreat no farther it pauses, then plunges forward, from the bottom... it becomes a murderous mountain of emerald marble"). Intriguing characterizations and a surprising level of suspense make this a page-turner. (Self-published)

Mystery/Thriller

★ The Summer of Kim Novak

Håkan Nesser, trans. from the Swedish by Saskia Vogel. World, \$16.99 trade paper (224p) ISBN 978-1-64286-019-1

At the start of this moving elegy for lost innocence from Nesser (the Inspector

Van Veeteren mysteries), 49-year-old Erik, the book's narrator, promises to tell the reader about "a terrible and tragic event" that occurred the summer he was 14. In 1962, as Erik's mother is dying of cancer, his grieving father sends the boy to the family's ramshackle lake cabin with 14-year-old Edmund, a fellow student Erik hardly knows, and Erik's older brother, a reporter who intends to write the Great Swedish Novel that summer. After a lazy month of swimming and fantasizing, handball champion Berra Albertsson is found dead in a gravel parking spot near where the boys are staying, his skull caved in, and his fiancée, Ewa Kaludis, the boys' substitute teacher and the object of their dreams, is a suspect. Erik and Edmund embark on a protracted murder investigation that leads them into the mysteries of sex. Nesser sensitively probes the agonies and ecstasies of adolescence, making this an exquisite example of Nordic noir's ability to reveal the darkest emotional depths beneath a cloudless summer sky. *Agent: Elisabet Brannstrom, Bonnier Rights.* (June)

Eagle Station

Dale Brown. Morrow, \$28.99 (432p) ISBN 978-0-06-284308-1

Set in 2022, this exciting military action thriller from bestseller Brown finds American forces still in control of Mars One, the armed Russian space station that a space-borne commando raid captured in 2019's *The Kremlin Strike*. Since the Russians destroyed most of the U.S. reconnaissance satellites in the previous book, American ground forces are essentially blind, except for intel supplied by commandos who have taken over what's now called Eagle Station. The loss of a battle in space with the Americans persuades Marshal Mikhail Ivanovich Leonov, the mastermind behind the creation of Mars One, and Li Jun, the Chinese president, that the only way they will ever beat their long-standing foe is by combining forces and controlling the newest battlefield, outer space. The key to success is amassing the special fuel needed to fuel Russian fusion reactors, which is only readily available on the moon. As the Russian and Chinese forces close in on their goal, it becomes clear that only the ingenuity of Americans can save the day. Brown's

spectacular future space weapons systems are utterly convincing. Tom Clancy fans won't want to miss this one. *Agent: Robert Gottlieb, Trident Media Group.* (May)

The Lion's Den

Katherine St. John. Grand Central, \$28 (368p) ISBN 978-1-5387-3363-9

What should have been an idyllic vacation for struggling actress Belle Carter, the narrator of St. John's propulsive if occasionally preposterous Machiavellian debut, mutates into something more akin to *Survivor: St. Tropez*. Though Belle's former bestie, Summer Sanderson, the mistress of billionaire John Lyons, has ostensibly invited Belle to celebrate her birthday cruising the Riviera aboard Lyons's yacht, along with a few other friends and family, early warning signs suggest that Lyons may have a hidden agenda, as do the plutocrats he's meeting with. These signs include the young women being locked into their cabins at night and asked to surrender their passports as well as having only limited, monitored internet access—measures brushed off as necessary to protect the men's privacy. Belle may have her own plans, though the true picture of the high-stakes cat-and-mouse game involving her and the ruthless Summer only becomes visible as the twisty but far-fetched plot races toward the finish. Readers prepared to overlook unconvincing characters as well as several stupefying turns of events will be satisfied. St. John dishes up a diverting poolside-ready page-turner. *Agent: Sarah Bedingfield, Levine Greenberg Rostan Literary.* (May)

The New Girl

Harriet Walker. Ballantine, \$17 trade paper (304p) ISBN 978-1-9848-1997-0

British author Walker's searing debut follows the intertwined lives of three women. High-powered London fashion editor Margot Jones is headed for maternity leave, her pregnancy a few months behind her best friend Winnie Clough's. Maggie Beecher, Margot's handpicked temporary successor, proves far more adept at Margot's job than either imagined. When one character suffers a personal tragedy, Margot finds herself adrift and terrified of the future, Winnie refuses to see or speak to her for reasons related to the tragedy, and Maggie emerges as the darling of the

fashion world. As Margot becomes increasingly jealous and paranoid, Winnie sets her sights on revenge and Maggie schemes to make her temporary job permanent. Each woman's alternating narrative offers her own perspective on the unfolding events, from which no one escapes unscathed. The author, the fashion editor for *The Times* of London, movingly portrays the fragility of friendship and the corrosive effect of mistrust and recriminations in a wickedly funny psychological thriller that's in turn brutal and tender. Walker is off to a fine start. *Agent: Laura MacDougall, United Agents (U.K.). (May)*

Kill the King

Sandrone Dazieri, trans. from the Italian by Anthony Shugaar. Scribner, \$28 (384p) ISBN 978-1-5011-7472-8

The bloody, convoluted conclusion to Dazieri's serial killer trilogy (after 2018's *Kill the Angel*) finds kidnapping victim Dante Torre still missing and former deputy captain Colomba Caselli recovering in the countryside near Portico, Italy, where the local carabinieri drag her into a double homicide case. During her investigation, Colomba discovers clues that enable her to single-handedly locate and rescue Dante. Colomba and Dante suspect that his kidnapper was involved in the double homicide and other murders that follow, but they also come to believe that another killer is at work. Even with Dante's Holmes-like ability to put together disparate facts, and the on-again, off-again help of intelligence services and police, the pair remain behind the killers and their accomplices. Dazieri ups the ante by connecting the psychopaths to multinational security and pharmaceutical companies wanting to profit on inhumane "research." The bizarre final reveal is a bit over-the-top. This isn't for the faint of heart and runs too long, but fans of procedurals, conspiracy theories, or serial killer thrillers will be well satisfied. *Agent: Laura Grandi, Grandi e Associati (Italy) (May)*

The Wife Stalker

Liv Constantine. Harper, \$27.99 (320p) ISBN 978-0-06-296728-2

Not even a late-breaking, game-changing twist can quite salvage this disappointing psychological thriller from Constantine (*The Last Mrs. Parrish*).

Much of the fault lies in the story's two protagonists, alternating (and unreliable) narrators Piper and Joanna, who are vying for the affections of Leo Drakos, a depressed, workaholic—but well-off—Westport, Conn., lawyer and father of two. Glamorous recent arrival Piper, who has bought a local recovery center as part of a new identity to distance herself from the suspicious deaths of her husband and teen stepdaughter in a sailing accident, quickly sets her cap for Leo, never mind that Joanna is already living with Leo. For her part, Joanna is slow to recognize the danger posed by the seductive interloper—and swiftly finds herself on the outside looking in. Though readers may root for Joanna as she delves into the narcissistic Piper's past in a race to win back the family she loves so fiercely, many of her actions are puzzling if not downright off-putting—for reasons that will only become clear with the flabbergasting final reveals. Constantine has done better. *Agent: Bernadette Baker-Baughman, Victoria Sanders & Assoc. (May)*

★ Indigo

Loren D. Estleman. Forge, \$25.99 (224p) ISBN 978-1-2502-5835-9

Edgar finalist Estleman effortlessly melds film history with a whodunit in his gripping sixth mystery featuring UCLA movie archivist Valentino (after 2016's *Brazen*). Valentino is devoted to locating and acquiring "rare motion pictures so they can be preserved for future generations to



see and appreciate." He gets a unique opportunity from Ignacio Bozal, a wealthy man with a shadowy past, who gives him the only known copy of *Bleak Street*, a never-released

movie, in which an obscure actor named Van Oliver starred as a gangster based on Bugsy Siegel. Oliver disappeared and was believed to have been murdered, possibly by the mob, in 1959, before the picture could be released. The PR department at UCLA insists that Valentino try to shed light on Oliver's fate, to bolster the publicity for the planned screening of *Bleak*

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- Mystery Suspense Reviews

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- Jay Baer, *New York Times* Bestseller

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THE WILL TO DIE

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Street. Valentino sets out to see how much he can learn, decades later, about what actually happened from the few people left involved with the film, including a fellow actor who was the last person known to have seen Oliver alive. The solution to the cold case is both clever and surprising. Film noir buffs will be in heaven. *Agent: Dominick Abel, Dominick Abel Literary.* (May)

The Perfect Daughter

Joseph Souza. Kensington, \$26 (304p)
ISBN 978-1-4967-2638-4

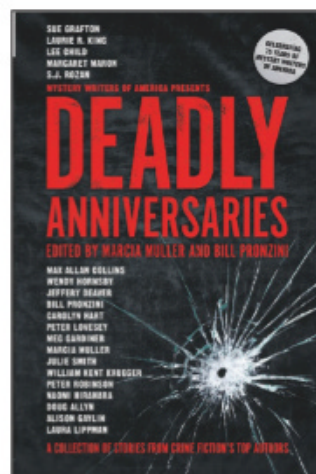
Weak portrayals of the main characters mar this meandering thriller from Souza (*Pray for the Girl*). Isla Eaves calls the Shepherd's Bay, Maine, police after she's awakened early one morning by a noise in her house only to discover that it was just her Alzheimer's-afflicted father. When officer Karl Bjornson arrives, Isla notes her daughter Katie, a high school junior, isn't in her room, but—despite another teen having been missing from town for more than three months—neither Isla nor Karl is particularly concerned until the following day when Katie's best friend, Willow Briggs, is also reported missing. Katie turns up days later, beaten and with temporary memory loss. Karl investigates, but his technique is limited to questioning Katie and having “gut feelings.” Katie meanwhile tries to remember the start of her friendship with Willow, but her internal monologues often don't sound like that of a teen. Various extraneous plot threads help keep readers guessing, but the true culprits act suspiciously from the very beginning. This isn't one of Souza's finer works. *Agent: Evan Marshall, Evan Marshall Agency.* (May)

Deadly Anniversaries: Celebrating 75 Years of Mystery Writers of America

Edited by Marcia Muller and Bill Pronzini.
Hanover Square, \$26.95 trade paper (400p)
ISBN 978-1-335-04494-5

Anniversaries of all kinds are the source of mayhem for the 19 stories in this entertaining all-original anthology from MWA grand masters Muller and Pronzini (the Sabrina Carpenter series). Wedding anniversaries feature prominently, as in Max Allan Collins's diverting “Amazing Grace,” in which a 50th-anniversary cake

becomes the catalyst for murder. Historical anniversaries, meanwhile, are central to Lee Child's clever “Normal in Every Way,” in which knowledge of key dates from WWII enables a police file clerk to target a serial



killer in 1950s San Francisco. Series characters also appear, notably the mother of S.J. Rozan's Lydia Chin in “Chin Yong-Sun Sets the Date,” in which the mother foils an attempt to sabotage one wedding engagement and smooths the way for another. On a lighter note, a pair of redneck thieves in Julie Smith's “Whodat Heist” pull off a big score on Superbowl Sunday only to be once again outmatched by their female partner. Other contributors include Jeffery Deaver, Laurie R. King, Peter Lovesey, and Margaret Maron. This is a must for mystery fans. (May)

The Law of Lines

Hye-young Pyun, trans. from the Korean by Sora Kim-Russell. Arcade, \$24.99 (304p)
ISBN 978-1-948924-96-2

In this enigmatic tale of two South Korean women dealing with tragedy, Shirley Jackson Award winner Pyun (*The Hole*) fails to sustain the energy from the dramatic opening developments in the lives of Se-oh Yun and Ki-jeong Shin. The anxious Se-oh, whose mother died when she was eight, doesn't like to stay away for too long from the small, rundown house she shares with her father. One day, she returns from an errand to find the house devastated by a gas explosion, which the police suspect may have been the result of a suicide attempt by her father, who unbeknownst to her was in debt. She suspects, however, someone tried to kill her father. Meanwhile, high school teacher Ki-jeong learns that her college student sister has been found dead in the Namgang River. The drowning, which could have been either accident or suicide, elicits conflicting feelings, given how often Ki-jeong imagined her sibling, who tormented their mother, dead. Eventually, the story lines of the two leads intersect, but that happens

late in the book and not in a very satisfying way. Despite sometimes moving portraits of characters in deep pain, the whole is less than the sum of its parts. (May)

The Good Wife

Jane A. Adams. Severn, \$28.99 (224p)
ISBN 978-0-7278-8962-1

Set in 1929, Adams's solid fifth mystery featuring Det. Chief Insp. Henry Johnstone of the Metropolitan Police (after 2019's *The Clockmaker*) takes Johnstone and his sergeant, Mickey Hitchens, to Southwell, Nottinghamshire, to investigate the murder of Martha Mason, who left her physician husband and the friends she was mixing with at the local racecourse to go in search of an acquaintance she had supposedly spotted. Her body was later discovered in a horse box away from the track, her skull smashed by a single blow. Who would kill “a woman that everyone accepted was a good wife and model citizen”? The two detectives soon figure out that Martha had an ambiguous and possibly murky past; they also uncover various criminal activities among suspects who range from members of street gangs to lords of the realm. Mickey, who “usually mitigated what was often referred to as Chief Inspector Johnstone's sharpness and lack of tact,” does the heavy lifting, while Henry quietly ponders the clues. Appealing characters compensate for a convoluted plot. Fans of historical police procedurals will be satisfied. (May)

To Kill a Mocking Girl: A Bookbinding Mystery

Harper Kincaid. Crooked Lane, \$26.99
(352p) ISBN 978-1-64385-304-8

Quinn Caine, the 20-something heroine of this enjoyable series launch from Kincaid (*The Wonder of You*), has just returned from teaching abroad to Vienna, Va., to work as a bookbinder at the family bookstore. A lot has changed in her hometown. Her once rambunctious cousin, Elizabeth Anne Caine, is now Sister Daria, a nun in training, and her high school nemesis, Trisha Pemberley, is engaged to Scott Hauser, whom Quinn once dated briefly. One night, while walking Ruff Barker Ginsburg, her German shepherd, Quinn comes across Trisha's body in the park. The police officer who responds to her call, also a newcomer to Vienna, Wyatt Reynolds, seems to have known the victim and regards

Quinn with suspicion. When Quinn and Sister Daria begin to investigate, they discover that Trisha was at odds with her twin, Trina, over Trisha's relationship with Wyatt, and that Trisha and Scott were hiding a secret. Meanwhile, Quinn reconnects with her secret crush, Aiden Harrington, now a police detective. Smooth prose, realistic characters, a budding romance, and not too much silliness make this cozy a winner. Tantalizing recipes round out the volume. *Agent: Jill Marsal, Marsal Lyon Literary. (May)*

★ The Big Man's Daughter

Owen Fitzstephen. Seventh Street, \$15.95
trade paper (184p) ISBN 978-1-64506-019-2

This arresting mystery from Fitzstephen (Hammett *Unwritten*) explores what might have happened to a minor character in Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*. In 1922 San Francisco, cunning 18-year-old



Rita Gaspereaux is at loose ends after her con artist father, Cletus, "known to some in the rackets as the Big Man," dies in a shootout over the possession of a statuette called

the Black Falcon. Rita, who's learned a few tricks from Cletus, believes she's at last free to take control of her life, but barely a day passes before she's drawn against her will into a quest to retrieve the fabled bird. Meanwhile, Rita takes solace in fiction, "almost as effective an escape as laudanum," in particular a novel about an innocent 18-year-old from Kansas, Dorothy G. Extracts from the novel nicely complement Rita's story. Lies, cons, shifting alliances, kidnapping, and death propel readers toward a strangely hypnotic climax, which is skillfully presaged yet still an exhilarating surprise. Fans of metafictional mysteries will be enthralled. (*May*)

Of Mice and Minestrone:

Hap and Leonard the Early Years

Joe R. Lansdale. Tachyon, \$15.95 trade paper
(224p) ISBN 978-1-61696-323-1

Full of humor, gritty drama, and insightful observations, the five stories in

this rewarding collection from Edgar winner Lansdale (*The Elephant of Surprise*) concentrate on the early years of his two mismatched East Texas private eyes: Hap Collins, a straight, white liberal; and Leonard Pine, a gay, black conservative. Lansdale packs a punch in the standout “Sparring Partner,” in which the pair, as high schoolers, are hired by a ruthless boxing manager to train a weakling college kid and a giant named Man Slayer. Hap and Leonard fend off a murderous racist in the thrillingly grisly “The Watering Shed,” and in the moving title tale, Hap strives to help a battered woman escape her abusive husband. A food theme runs from the smells of an adolescent Hap’s grandma’s kitchen to a teenager Leonard’s insistence on being served breakfast in a whites-only café. “Good Eats,” a selection of recipes with a disclaimer from Hap, rounds out the volume. This book adds rich background to Lansdale’s tough, morally decent characters, who first appeared in 1990’s *Savage Season*. Agent: Danny Baror, Baror International. (May)

A Full Cold Moon

Lissa Marie Redmond. Severn, \$28.99
(240p) ISBN 978-0-7278-8987-4

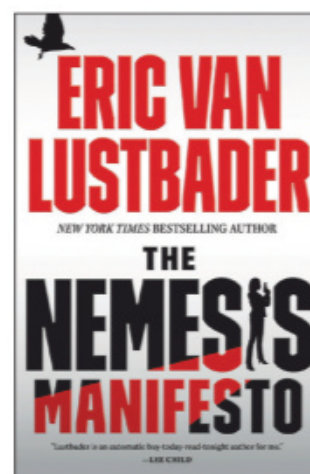
In Redmond's workmanlike fourth

police procedural featuring Det. Lauren Riley of the Buffalo (N.Y.) PD (after 2019's *A Means to an End*), Lauren, on temporary leave from the cold case unit, looks into the murder of Gunnar Jonsson, a young Icelandic man found bludgeoned to death in an alley near his hotel. Due to the victim's nationality, the FBI steps in and provides Lauren with a new partner, special agent Matthew Lawton. Lauren discovers that Gunnar came to Buffalo to meet his multimillionaire father, John Hudson, whose identity he recently discovered by taking a DNA test. Mr. Hudson was overjoyed at meeting Gunnar, but his other two children weren't. Just as Lauren identifies a local suspect, the Icelandic authorities request that she and Matthew come to Reykjavík to interview Gunnar's employer. Once in Iceland, Lauren starts to develop theories, as well as potential suspects (of which there are only two), and then lets them drop while she sees the sights of Reykjavík. Armchair travelers will have fun, but those expecting more than a cursory investigation will be disappointed. *Agent: Bob Mecoy, Creative Book Services. (May)*

★ The Nemesis Manifesto

Eric Van Lustbader. Forge, \$27.99 (352p) ISBN 978-1-250-75117-1

Fans of bestseller Lustbader's contributions to the Jason Bourne franchise (*Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Initiative*, etc.) will welcome this outstanding series launch. Evan Ryder, a field agent in a black ops shop, works deep within the Department of Defense. Her spymaster boss receives a list with six names of agents investigating a mysterious organization known as Nemesis. In the last 10 months, five of them have either disappeared or been badly injured. Evan and fellow agent Brenda Myers are sent to interview the one survivor, Patrick Wilson. The obviously unwell Wilson, who's been tortured, keels over and dies while talking to them, and shortly thereafter Evan and Brenda are the target of a car bombing. The novel encompasses such standard thriller elements as Russians, Nazis, betrayal, treasonous U.S. politicians, and evil masterminds, but Lustbader elevates these familiar components well above the usual thriller norm. Credible action and often lyrical prose support the complex, intelligent plot. A series of twists and an extended fight sequence at the end will leave readers amazed and pleasantly exhausted. Lustbader is at the top of his game. *Agent: Mitch Hoffman, Aaron M. Priest Literary. (May)*



Read or Alive: A Bookmobile Mystery

Nora Page. Crooked Lane, \$26.99 (320p)
ISBN 978-1-64385-301-7

The murder of underhanded book scout Hunter Fox, found dead in a Catalpa Springs, Ga., alley during the Georgia Antiquarian Book Society Fair, drives Page's delightful third Bookmobile mystery (after 2019's *Read on Arrival*). Since Fox finagled or outright stole valuable books from Dot Moore and many other town residents, suspects abound. To the dismay of 76-year-old librarian and bookmobile driver Cleo Watkins, two of them are her cousin Dot and antiquarian bookdealer Henry Lafayette, her gentleman friend. Meanwhile, the police chief is so taken with bookseller Kitty Peavey, a Marilyn Monroe look-alike, that no amount of evidence will convince him to see her as a suspect, even though her relationship with the deceased seemed awfully friendly for a woman who claimed to be "pre-engaged" to the book society president. To catch the killer, Cleo lays a trap for someone that no one else has even suspected. Page offers a fascinating look at book collectors and their world. Cozy fans will look forward to seeing more of Cleo and her friends. *Agent: Christina Hogrebe, Jane Rotrosen Agency.* (May)

The Girl Beneath the Sea: Underwater Investigation Unit

Andrew Mayne. Thomas & Mercer, \$15.95 trade paper (360p) ISBN 978-1-5420-0957-7

This decent series launch from Edgar finalist Mayne (the Naturalist series) introduces Sloan McPherson, a diver employed by the Lauderdale Shores PD to recover corpses and evidence from Florida waters. When 23-year-old Stacy Miller is garroted and dumped in a canal, the off-duty Sloan, who was in the canal at the time and oblivious to the crime, becomes a suspect. Loose ties to the victim, plus a reputation blemished by her outlaw uncle, Karl McPherson, a drug smuggler serving a three-year prison sentence for a parole violation, ensure that local police and the DEA keep her under surveillance. As Sloan investigates the murder, she's aided by her treasure hunter father and the dogged, if shady, DEA agent responsible for Karl's arrest. Targeted by vicious killers, Sloan becomes entangled in a dangerous

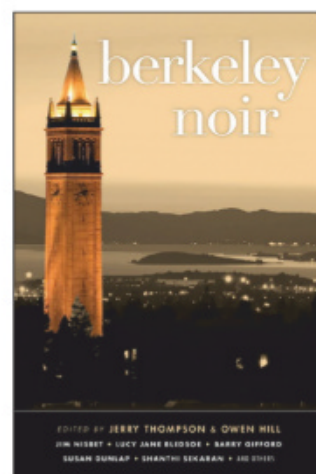
sunken treasure hunt involving a drug cartel, a crooked lawyer, and renegade intelligence operatives. Distinctive characters and a genuinely thrilling finale compensate for contrived and improbable situations. Readers will look forward to Sloan's further adventures. *Agent: Erica Silverman, Trident Media Group.* (May)

Berkeley Noir

Edited by Jerry Thompson and Owen Hill.

Akashic, \$15.95 trade paper (256p) ISBN 978-1-61775-797-6

The 16 stories set in Berkeley, Calif., in this above average Akashic noir anthology offer little actual noir but a heaping helping of crime, with almost every entry featuring at least a murder or kidnapping.



Highlights include Barry Gifford's brief but effective "Barroom Butterfly," a riff on true crime magazines, and Lexi Pandell's unsettling "Hill House,"

in which a journalism grad student house-sits for a famous UC Berkeley professor. In Lucy Jane Bledsoe's tense "The Tangy Brine of the Dark Night," a young woman paddles a kayak onto San Francisco Bay to give her dead grandmother a furtive watery burial. Jim Nisbet in "Boy Toy" takes to the bay in a sailboat, but drowns his narrative in more nautical jargon than *Moby-Dick*. One of the most entertaining selections, Michael David Lukas's "Dear Fellow Graduates," takes the form of a high school student's graduation address that focuses on a teacher's kidnapping. Readers will be glad that many of these tales are fun in a way that traditional noir isn't. (May)

Cold Kill

Rennie Airth. Severn, \$28.99 (224p)
ISBN 978-0-7278-9029-0

This standalone from Airth (the John Madden series) offers an uninspired variation on a familiar thriller theme—the innocent caught up in intrigue and violence. The opening, set in Paris, is promising enough, as an assassin who once worked for the CIA, known as Charon

for his trademark of leaving a coin between the lips of his victims, strikes again. This moody section leaves readers wondering who Charon works for and exactly what's going on. That suspense soon dissipates as the focus shifts to American actor Addy Banks, who's headed from New York City to London to visit her Aunt Rose. Though Rose's letter inviting Addy promised that she would be back from Paris by the time of her niece's arrival, Rose is nowhere to be found. Addy's quest to find Rose leads to murder and the search for a dull MacGuffin, a memory stick of great interest to the Russian government. Genre followers will find nothing they haven't already encountered. Fans of this talented writer will hope for more Madden. *Agent: Joy Harris, Joy Harris Literary.* (May)

Spent Identity

Marlene M. Bell. Ewephoric, \$14.95 trade paper (378p) ISBN 978-0-9995394-2-2

Bell's busy follow-up to *Stolen Obsession* finds New York City antiquities appraiser Annalisse Drury having doubts about her relationship with the vastly wealthy and incredibly handsome Alec Zavros, who's a veterinarian as well as hands-on owner of a luxury sports car company. In search of relationship advice, Annalisse sets off for her Aunt Kate's farm near Goshen, N.Y., only to find Kate in a stew because her son, to whom she quitclaimed it when she was broke, has decided to sell the farm, which Kate was planning on leaving to Annalisse. Meanwhile, Ethan Fawdray, Kate's hired man, reports an unusually pungent smell coming from the barn. When Annalisse, Kate, and Ethan investigate, they find a man's decomposing body. Shortly thereafter, Kate vanishes. Has she been kidnapped? How is she connected to the dead man? The suspenseful search for Kate leads Annalisse, Alec, and Alec's PI friend, Bill Drake, to past crimes as well as current ones. This mystery is for readers who like their romances spiced up with Glocks and danger. (Self-published)

SF/Fantasy/Horror

Red Noise

John P. Murphy. Angry Robot, \$14.99 trade paper (432p) ISBN 978-0-85766-847-9

Murphy skillfully transports spaghetti

western tropes to a lawless space station in this action-packed debut. The reclusive, unnamed heroine, an asteroid miner, docks at dilapidated Station 35 hoping to sell her ore, restock her supplies, and interact with as few people as possible. But Station 35 is a violent, unsavory place controlled by a corrupt, all-powerful corporation, and its inhabitants prove intent on cheating and exploiting her. So the Miner, a former intelligence-corps officer of mysterious, dark reputation, sets about cleaning up the station by any means necessary—gathering allies, securing resources, and using the already-raging turf war between rival gangs and crooked cops to her advantage. The Miner's a resourceful, intriguing protagonist determined to bring order back to Station 35, no matter how violent it gets. Though not all of the inhabitants of Station 35 are as well-rendered as the lead, snappy dialogue and plenty of dry humor keep the pages turning. This fast, fun space western is pure entertainment. *Agent: Evan Gregory, Ethan Ellenberg Literary Agency. (June)*

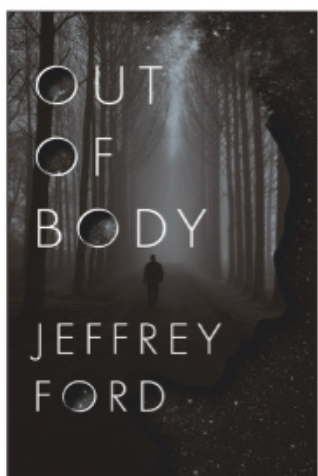
Out of Body

Jeffrey Ford. Tor.com, \$14.99 trade paper (176p) ISBN 978-1-250-25015-5

Ford's dark fantasy (after *Ahab's Return*) is a thrilling supernatural slugfest acted out by sleeping souls in the "night world" of the astral plane. Owen Hapstead, a librarian in the quiet town of Westwend, survives a pistol-whipping during a convenience store holdup and (possibly as a

result of the head trauma) discovers that his ethereal self can break free to roam the town while his corporeal self sleeps. During his discarnate jaunts he meets Melody, a fellow

sleeper who mentors him through the night world's possibilities and perils—among them "cutters," beings who can fatally sever the intangible cord tethering the sleep self to the body, and an even more horrifying killer whose true identity comes as a late surprise and whose predations add frightening complexity and purpose to the couple's nocturnal adventures. Ford's



elaboration of the night world is wildly imaginative and his depiction of Owen's invisible explorations of it verges on the voyeuristic, adding unusual piquancy to the story. Readers will find this well-wrought tale of a mysterious world both eerie and bewitching. *Agent: Howard Morhaim, Howard Morhaim Literary Agency. (June)*

Severed Wings

Steven-Elliot Altman. WordFire, \$24.99 (180p) ISBN 978-1-68057-036-6

Altman (*Deprivers*) combines the divine and the profane in this erotically charged urban fantasy. Brandon Jones is a rising Hollywood star until a car crash paralyzes him from the waist down. He severs ties with everyone who knew him before the accident, resigning himself to a hermetic life in his Los Angeles apartment and burning through his days with alcohol and TV. Then an attractive couple moves in next door and he witnesses a strange assortment of injured people visiting them. When he sees a blind woman come to their apartment, hears the sound of sex through the walls, and then watches her leave with her sight restored, Brandon's obsession with the couple grows and he becomes determined to learn their identities and the nature of their healing miracles. But learning the truth puts him in the sights of a wrathful enemy. Altman's plot offers few surprises, but the themes of determination and hope are powerful enough to carry readers through. This dark, alluring story will appeal to urban fantasy fans. *(June)*

Corporate Gunslinger

Doug Engstrom. Harper Voyager, \$15.99 trade paper (320p) ISBN 978-0-06-289768-8

Engstrom's promising debut offers a stark, dystopian vision of a near-future American Midwest in which debt slavery is commonplace and livestreamed gunfights are a popular form of entertainment. Former actor Kira Clark accepts a sponsorship from TKC Insurance Company to duel civilians on live TV to avoid defaulting on her student loans and resigning herself to a life of debt slavery. Kira adopts a cold, composed persona in her gunfights, but outside the arena she's kind-hearted and loyal, if gradually becoming more unstable. At her side are her best friend, Chloe Rossi, and her mentor, Diana Reynolds, who support Kira through all of her highs and

lows. The violence is never glorified as Kira's surprising empathy makes her easy to root for. Scattered flash-forwards reveal that Kira makes it through the competition to the final duel, leaving only the question of whether she'll overcome her nerves and guilt to outwit her fiercest competitor. The gunfights become repetitive over time, weighing down Engstrom's grim, intelligent examination of the American debt crisis. Still, fans of insightful dystopias will find plenty to enjoy. *Agent: Danielle Burby, Nelson Literary. (June)*

The Maiden Voyage of New York City

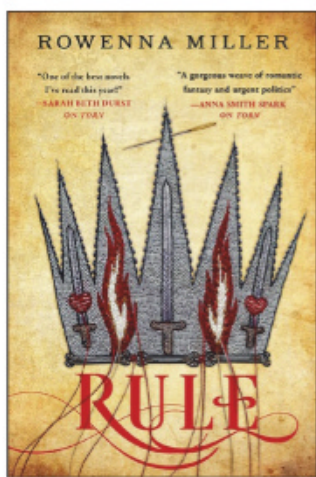
Gary Girod. Brain Lag, \$15.99 trade paper (344p) ISBN 978-1-928011-31-6

Girod's debut introduces a fresh, futuristic urban landscape brimming with potential but sets a disappointingly simplistic, unsubtle tale within it. Decades after the floods of 2090 subsumed Manhattan, a miraculous technological solution raises the city's skyscrapers to float above the water, leading to a renewed burst in tourism. This boom does not extend to the other boroughs, which remain crime-ridden and dilapidated. Responding to the city's financial problems and extensive drug trade, as well as the recent disappearance of several prominent billionaires, Mayor Sophia Ramos commissions an unpopular project to motorize the buildings in the "slums" and clear them out by sailing them down the river. Meanwhile a gossip columnist and a pair of Brooklyn gumshoes investigate the disappearances and a revolutionary organizer calls for the revolt of a working class who do not want to see their city disappear. The villainous upper class is portrayed as flat and cartoonish, a uniformly decadent and stupid mass, and the solution to the mystery of the missing billionaires is ultimately trivial. By painting in such broad strokes, Girod fails to satisfactorily explore his fascinating postapocalyptic, steampunk-infused setting. Readers excited by the premise will wish it were better executed. *(May)*

Rule

Rowenna Miller. Orbit, \$16.99 trade paper (432p) ISBN 978-0-316-47869-4

Miller's strong conclusion to her Unraveled Kingdom trilogy (following *Fray*) balances personal and political



conflicts as the 18th-century Europe-esque nation of Galitha takes its first steps from monarchy to democratic republic. Galithan Sophie Balstrade, a “sartorial sorceress”

working to weaponize her spell-casting skills for use against the Royalist forces, travels with her ally, Alba, leader of the Order of the Golden Sphere Convent, on a short sea voyage to gather supplies from manufacturers in Fen, a neighboring country where magic is illegal and relationships between factory owners and their workers have been influenced by news of the reformation in Galitha. Back home, the leaders of the Reformist Army, among them Sophie’s rabble-rousing brother, Kristos, and her charming fiancé, Theodor, who’s left the gentry, face internal difficulties as they struggle to construct a new government, debating issues of representation and whether to lead with idealism or pragmatism. Miller does not shy away from battle and bloodshed as the political conflict comes to a head, but also refreshingly portrays the intimate, personal impacts of sweeping social changes. Series fans will be pleased with this satisfying, sophisticated fantasy. *Agent: Jessica Sinsheimer, Sarah Jane Freymann Literary.* (May)

The Mars One Incident

Kelly Curtis. Kelly Curtis, \$2.99 e-book (246p) ASIN B07TX9NQ8J

Curtis debuts with a competently plotted but rough-around-the-edges far-future adventure, the launch of her Unification series. Alma Hattie Johnson, a newly minted spaceship captain in the Joint Confederacy, a governing body that has banned technology for all but a select few, defies orders to destroy a ship full of pirates. As punishment, Alma is sent on what ought to be a mundane supply run to nearby Mars One station. But as rival political factions infiltrate the government, Alma’s politics and competency are called into question and she’s again forced to choose between her orders and her sense of

right and wrong. Curtis moves the plot along quickly, often at the expense of scene-setting and emotional impact, frequently informing (rather than showing) how characters are feeling, and offering interpretations for plot points that need no explanation. This surface-level telling hampers what might otherwise be an immersive space opera. Despite these limitations, however, the worldbuilding is engaging and the character dynamics are capably imagined. Readers willing to look past this story’s flaws will see plenty of potential for the series to come. *(Self-published)*

Romance/Erotica

Wolf Under Fire

Paige Tyler. Sourcebooks Casablanca, \$7.99 mass market (320p) ISBN 978-1-7282-0561-8

Tyler (*Wolf Rebel*) cranks up the heat in the action-packed paranormal romance that launches the Special Threat Assessment Team (STAT) series, about a government agency created to monitor supernatural threats. Werewolf Alpha and ex-Navy SEAL Jake Huang moves to Washington, D.C., with his nascent pack—consisting of himself and identical twin 18-year-old women he rescued from vampires—for a job as a STAT team leader. In the new position, he can finally let his fur flag fly and spend meaningful time around fellow supernaturals. Jestina Ridley is a human STAT agent assigned to Jake’s team and bad experiences with supernatural threats in her past have left her with a wariness of werewolves. Despite a rocky start to their relationship, attraction smolders between them as they track a dangerous supernatural entity from the U.S. to the U.K. and to the lushly described shores of French Guiana. Over-the-top situations lead to intricately choreographed action sequences, lending the novel the feel of a delightfully ludicrous cinematic thriller. Tyler teases more fun to come in future installments with the introduction of many complex secondary characters, among them Caleb, an omega werewolf with control issues. Those willing to suspend their disbelief are in for a sizzling thrill ride. *Agent: Courtney Miller-Callihan, Handspun Literary.* (June)

The Wrong Mr. Darcy

Evelyn Lozada and Holly Lörincz. St. Martin’s Griffin, \$16.99 trade paper (288p) ISBN 978-1-250-62214-3

Lozada, star of the *Basketball Wives* reality TV show, and coauthor Lörincz (who previously collaborated with Lozada on *The Perfect Date*) loosely reimagine *Pride and Prejudice* as a sporty, multicultural romance with a surprising amount of edge. Hara Isari is determined to make it as a sportswriter. Derek Darcy, a professional basketball player in Boston, spent his rookie season sidelined after an injury. He’s now ready to get back in the game when he hears a troubling secret about his best friend and teammate Charles Butler. When Hara wins a national writing award, the prize is an exclusive interview with media-shy Charles, who



brings Derek along. At the interview, Derek criticizes her for her softball questions, all of which had to be approved by the team’s hostile owner. Hara and Derek’s first

impressions of each other are just as disastrous as Austen fans will expect, but they grow closer as Hara attempts to dig out Charles’s secret. The authors bring the lively plot to an unexpected, explosive finish, but the occasionally stilted prose keeps the tale from fully taking off. Still, the basketball angle is an inventive spin on a favorite story. This is sure to delight fans of sports romance. *(June)*

If You Must Know

Jamie Beck. Montlake Romance, \$12.95 trade paper (368p) ISBN 978-1-5420-0871-6

Sibling rivalry and sisterly love coexist in the bittersweet launch of Beck’s Potomac Point series (after *In the Cards*). Sisters Amanda Foster and Erin Turner are happy maintaining as much distance from each other as they can get in their charming New England town. Rule-abiding nursery school teacher Amanda Foster is pregnant and happily married. Free-spirited yoga instructor Erin is mourning her father while trying to build up her bath products business.

When Amanda's husband reveals himself to be a con artist and his deceit threatens Amanda and Erin's mother's financial future, the sisters must put their differences aside to work together to save their family. But a secret Erin's been keeping from Amanda comes to light, and it may destroy their relationship for good. Beck expertly captures the bickering between sisters, the pain of regret, and the thorny path to forgiveness. With well-realized secondary characters—among them sad songwriter Eli (who's caught Erin's eye) and the girls' oft-cantankerous mother—and believable surprises peppered throughout, Beck's emotional tale rings true. More women's fiction than romance, this will please readers looking for resonant, family-centric stories. *Agent: Jill Marsal, Marsal Lyon Literary. (June)*

My Kind of Cowboy

R.C. Ryan. Forever, \$8.99 mass market (656p) ISBN 978-1-5387-1684-7

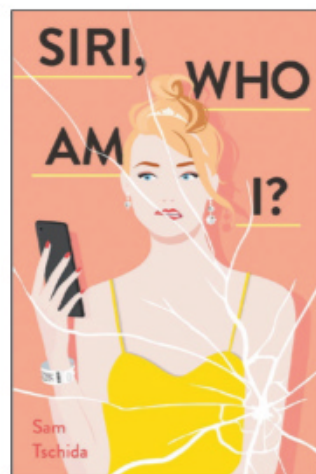
Ryan (*Born to be a Cowboy*) demonstrates a flair for making domestic Western stories feel welcoming and intimate in this first Wranglers of Wyoming romance. Physical therapist Avery Grant arrives at the immense and prosperous Merrick Ranch ready to help her patient, Brand Merrick, who recently suffered a leg injury. But Brand's attraction to Avery doesn't make him any more interested in taking time away from ranch chores to work on stretches with her. For her part, Avery is glad to let Brand's stubbornness drag out her time on the ranch, as back home in Michigan someone has been leaving her threatening messages (a subplot that's resolved a little too neatly). Avery and the Merricks establish close ties as she breaks through to Brand, helping him (and eventually his great-grandfather, as well) recover from injuries. Ryan's gorgeous descriptions of ranch country and the Grand Tetons add escapist pleasure to this family-centric romance. Readers are sure to be swept away. This edition includes a bonus novel by Carolyn Brown. *Agent: Susan Ginsburg, Writers House. (May)*

Siri, Who Am I?

Sam Tschida. Quirk, \$15.99 trade paper (352p) ISBN 978-1-68369-168-6

Tschida's breezy rom-com debut sees a

woman with amnesia trying to piece together her identity with only her Instagram account as a guide. When Mia Wallace wakes up in an L.A. hospital, she has a phone and a designer party dress but no memory of who she is. She



follows clues on her social media to a mansion she assumes is her house, only to be met by a cute, bewildered housesitter named Max who has never heard of her. Max agrees to help,

and the pair crisscross the city following leads about her life. Max proves the perfect confidant and the bond they form as Mia rediscovers herself is more real to her than any of the alarming things she learns about her past. But as more unsavory facts about Mia's life come to light, she has to figure out how to set the new Mia on a better course than the woman she used to be. Mia's narrative voice—punctuated with hashtags, chat-speak, and humorous footnotes—won't be for everyone, but the mystery of her identity is fun and satisfying. This entertaining romance puts a cute twist on the genre.

Agent: Barbara Poelle, Irene Goodman Literary. (May)

Butterfly Bayou

Lexi Blake. Jove, \$7.99 mass market (320p) ISBN 978-1-9848-0656-7

Blake (the Courting Justice series) takes a break from romantic suspense with this sweet and spicy small-town contemporary series debut. After a traumatic incident in a Dallas, Tex., emergency room, nurse practitioner Lila Daley pursues a low-stress lifestyle running a clinic in small town Papillon Bayou, La., where her younger sister lives. Lila's first interaction with sexy sheriff Armie LaVigne, during which he writes her a speeding ticket on her way into town, ignites an attraction. But independent Lila is haunted by her past and isn't sure she's ready for a relationship, especially when she realizes getting the townsfolk to trust her medical skills is going to be more difficult than she'd thought. Lila's

strength and vulnerability are balanced by Armie's intelligence and humor, making them an easy couple to root for. Blake captures the flavor of her colorful Southern town with a vividly drawn cast, including conspiracy nut Gene, lazy alligator Otis, and a slew of ladies determined to keep Armie to themselves. This charming series opener hits all the right notes. *Agent: Kevan Lyon, Marsal Lyon Literary. (May)*

Taming a Wicked Rake

Tammy Andresen. Swift Romance, \$2.99 e-book (125p) ASIN B07SG6FPHG

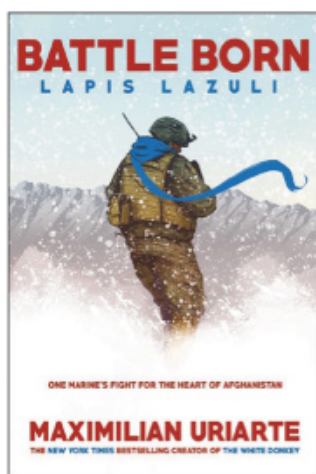
Andresen's lively ninth *Taming a Duke's Heart Regency* (after *Taming a Defiant Duke*) unites an independent woman and a reputed womanizer in an unexpected marriage. When Lady Madeline Maddox sends her essays on the plight of women to Charles Delaney, editor of the *London Standard*, his warm response leads Maddie to believe he values her opinions, not just her social standing and reputation as a beauty. The two strike up a correspondence and she agrees to meet him in person in a rose garden during a society ball, but she encounters rakish Lord Adam Kingsley instead. Maddie mistakes Adam for Charles and they share a blistering kiss, which Charles witnesses. Feeling rebuffed, Charles exposes Maddie's transgression, hoping to ruin her. To save Maddie's reputation, Adam proposes marriage. The only catch is that Adam claims he will never be able to love her, having witnessed his parents' horrible marriage. But as the simmering attraction between them gives way to mutual respect, he may have to go back on his word. Though the instant passion and convenient relationship between Adam and Maddie seem somewhat rushed, the steady growth of their feelings is convincing. The strong leads will appeal to fans of historical romance. *(Self-published)*

Comics

Battle Born: Lapis Lazuli

Maximilian Uriarte. Little, Brown, \$28 (352p) ISBN 978-0-316-44896-3

Former Marine Uriarte (*Terminal Lance*), who served two tours of duty in Iraq, follows up his semiautobiographical *The*

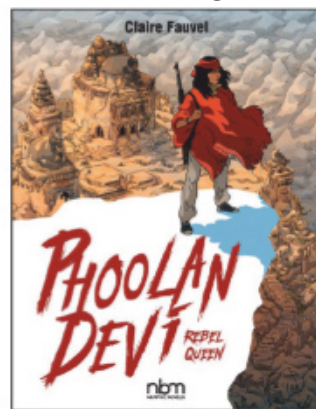


White Donkey with this tense graphic novel set in present-day Afghanistan. A Marine squadron arrives in cold, mountainous Badakhshan on a mission to break up the Taliban's interference in the local gemstone trade. They face reticence from the villagers and Taliban patrols who attack on horseback—and the overall moral ambiguity of trying to fix what years of interference from America, Britain, and Russia have wrought—as well as internal threats of racism, sexism, and egotism among their own ranks. The story centers on no-nonsense African-American marine Sergeant King, whose innate humanity doesn't prevent him from committing acts of shocking violence. Uriarte lends a gritty sense of realism to the action, which helps surmount some over-familiar tropes playing through the script. Uriarte's drawing is labored at times—it's particularly hard to tell the armored-up characters apart—but his storytelling is assured and often thrillingly cinematic. The page count gives the narrative room to breathe, with wordless images of tiny human figures against the vast mountains and a bravura ending. This visceral war story reinforces the difficulty of decisions by forces fighting across blurred lines. *Agent: Katherine Boyle, Veritas Literary. (May)*

Phoolan Devi, Rebel Queen
 Claire Fauvel, trans. from the French by Montana Kane. NBM, \$34.99 (224p)
 ISBN 978-1-68112-251-9

Based on the autobiography of Phoolan Devi (1963–2001), India's notorious “Queen of the Bandits,” this passionate battle cry of a graphic tribute by Fauvel (*Catherine's War*) roots itself in Devi's early experiences as a member of the oppressed Mallah community of the Shudrah caste, a child bride, and a survivor of repeated sexual violence. Devi is married at 11 and raped by her husband. She's rescued by her father only to be tormented by men and boys in her village and gang-raped by police. From there, she's captured by—

then joins—a roving gang of bandits, among whom she grows to regional infamy. Throughout, she plots revenge, which she eventually enacts by beating, maiming, and killing men who harmed her or other poor women and girls, and by robbing the wealthy and redistributing funds to impoverished surrounding communities. Her capture, imprisonment, pardon, and subsequent election to Parliament are given shorter coverage in



bookending scenes. Fauvel's loose, scribbly pencil drawings and jewel-toned colors capture both the rare joy and extreme sorrows of Phoolan's early life, including disturbing, graphic rape scenes. Fauvel portrays Phoolan's tender expressions of charity, and her love marriage to a fellow bandit, and her most violent acts against the powerful in the same vibrant strokes. This striking biography is as memorable as its vigilante heroine. *(Apr.)*

Churchill: A Graphic Biography
 Vincent Delmas, Christophe Regnault, and Alessio Cammardella, trans. from the French by Ivanka Hahnenberger. Dead Reckoning, \$19.95 (120p) ISBN 978-1-68247-528-7

A foreword by historian Andrew Roberts (*Churchill: Walking with Destiny*) starts off this slim graphic biography of Winston Churchill on a high note: tart, incisive, and celebratory while brooking no illusions. Delmas (*Charlemagne*) picks up the baton in assured fashion, portraying the young British aristocrat as starving for adventure and fame. Eager to fight in British colonial skirmishes from South Africa to Sudan, and convinced he will die young, Churchill is presented as an impetuous glory seeker determined to “make history” by writing it himself, if necessary. His ambitious climb to political power (Parliament, the Admiralty) are rendered with great elan in the art by Regnault and Cammardella. Once the world wars begin, though, Delmas's account turns more narrowly heroic in scope. While noting Churchill's missteps, such as the Dardanelles fiasco during

WWI, the narrative is more eager to present him as the one-dimensional British bulldog who defeated Hitler. Besides sidestepping controversies like Churchill's role in the 1943 India famine and ignoring nearly any personal aspects (from his prodigious writing to bouts of crippling depression), Delmas also curiously drops the story at the end of WWII. The result is an energetically drawn but perfunctory portrait. *(Apr.)*

The Doctor Is In (Omni #1)

Devin Grayson and Alitha E. Martinez. H1, \$14.99 trade paper (96p) ISBN 978-1-64337-619-6

Grayson (the Batman series) and Martinez (the Black Panther series) wield their combined superhero comics experience to launch this inventive series set in H1's new alternative universe. Dr. Cecelia Cobbina can project nine differently colored psychic avatars, each endowed with a distinct intuitive skill set. She's working with Doctors Without Borders in Central Africa when she defuses an operating room hostage crisis with empathy, avoiding violence. Accompanied by cartoonist Mae Walters (who fictionalizes their adventures in comic book form), Cecelia returns to the U.S., soothing various explosive events



involving other superhumans, such as getting young hero Antony Miller out of police custody. But to her dread, she discovers her powers are not natural gifts—they are symptoms of a poisoned and dying Earth. When Cecelia is recruited by the enigmatic Sajan to run the ultrasecret Omni Corporation, ostensibly an underground institute to help the newly powered, the question becomes: is Omni a force for good or evil? Martinez's realistic figure drawings are employed in dynamic and energetic motion work, while Bryan Valenza's colors pop and sizzle, with lively polychromatic splashes across the page. Suitable for a young adult audience and sporting a diverse cast, this is a fresh, activism-oriented spin on the genre. *(Mar.)*

Nonfiction

Desert Notebooks:

A Road Map for the End of Time

Ben Ehrenreich. Counterpoint, \$26 (336p)
ISBN 978-1-64009-353-9

Nation columnist Ehrenreich (*The Way to the Spring*) critiques notions of progress he sees as having brought civilization to the point of disaster in an erudite philosophical work about the prospect of climate change. Against the backdrop of his wanderings through the Mojave Desert and a bleakly rendered Las Vegas, he juxtaposes stories from indigenous cultures—both of creation and of the devastating arrival of Westerners—with explanations of how modern Western thought developed, such as the adoption of Greenwich Mean Time, or of hourly pay during the Industrial Revolution. He also includes passages in which he reacts to the latest disturbing environmental and geopolitical news. The prose is at its best in the desert, where, for instance, “little jeweled crickets,” dead and encrusted in salt, lay scattered in Death Valley. Coming upon a 12,000-year-old creosote bush prompts Ehrenreich to reflect that time might be understood “as a circle that expands out of sight, invisible roots that grow and grow even as the parts we can see die off.” Suggesting that humanity must go beyond “the stories that have been winning out these last two-hundred-and-change-years,” Ehrenreich creates a beautiful meditation on adapting to future cataclysm. (July)

The Lost Pianos of Siberia

Sophy Roberts. Grove, \$26 (448p) ISBN 978-0-8021-4928-2

In this luminous travelogue, journalist Roberts travels through Siberia looking for historically significant pianos, which she sees as symbols of civilization, refinement, and artistic freedom amid vast, frigid wildernesses and primitive settlements scarred by Russia’s bloody revolutions and barbaric gulags. Her quest also serves as a vehicle for her to investigate Siberia’s dramatic past. Episodes include mid-19th-century noblewoman Maria Volkhonsky’s journey into political exile, piano in tow, with her liberal Decembrist husband; the disappearance of a piano in the Ekaterinburg house where Bolsheviks executed Czar



The Irish Cookbook by JP McMahon includes dishes such as this sausage and bacon coddle (reviewed on p. 57).

Nicholas II and his family; the somber picaresque of musicians and dancers incarcerated in Soviet prison camps, performing in the Arctic wastes; and the fate of a concert grand used by the Leningrad Philharmonic during its exile during WWII. The instruments often elude Roberts, but her quest sometimes achieves inspiring musical fruition, as when she arranges for a family of piano technicians in Novosibirsk to truck a resonant upright 2,000 miles to a pianist in Mongolia. The book is an eccentric meander, but Roberts’s mix of colorful history, rich reportage, and lyrical prose—“You can hear Siberia in the big, soft chords in Russian music that evoke the hush of silver birch trees and the billowing winter snows”—makes for a beguiling narrative. (June)

Of Bears and Ballots: An Alaskan Adventure in Small-Town Politics

Heather Lende. Algonquin, \$25.95 (288p)
ISBN 978-1-61620-851-6

Journalist Lende (*Find the Good*) delivers a detailed and amiable chronicle of her three-year term as assemblywoman in Haines Borough, Alaska, a municipality of roughly 2,500 people in the state’s southern panhandle. Frustrated by “the circus of national politics” and the “speak first, think later” approach of Sarah Palin and Donald Trump, Lende ran for borough

assembly in 2016. She describes the Haines electorate as “violet with red and blue highlights,” and sketches the local, state, and national issues that matter most in the community, including climate change, the economy, a “multi-million dollar harbor expansion project,” gun rights, the town’s costly private dump, and declining oil revenues. After spending \$1,000 on her campaign, Lende won with 501 votes, becoming one of two new members to the six-person assembly, where she encountered stiff opposition to her “relatively liberal politics,” including a contentious recall vote—an experience that led her to examine how gender stereotypes affect women in

politics. Lende successfully balances the dry facts of assembly reports with humorous character sketches and lyrical odes to the natural beauty of Alaska. The result is an honest and inspirational investigation into why “it’s easy to say what’s wrong with government; it’s harder to fix it, and progress can be very slow.” *Agent: Elizabeth Wales, the Wales Literary Agency. (June)*

Rockaway: Surfing Headlong into a New Life

Diane Cardwell. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$26 (272p) ISBN 978-0-358-06778-8

Vibe magazine founder and former *New York Times* reporter Cardwell recounts how she moved to Rockaway Beach, N.Y., after a divorce to pursue her passion for surfing in this detailed story of reinvention. The book spans from 2010 to 2017 and opens as Cardwell—raw after her divorce and feeling she had failed at creating a family—travels to Montauk and watches surfers for the first time. After taking a few lessons, she was hooked. She discusses learning surfing terms like the “turtle roll” (“a way of paddling through breaking waves to get to the outside on a longboard”) and various surfing maneuvers, and she talks about strengthening her body and growing her confidence. “Life really does go on,” she writes. The book’s most engaging sections concern her move to Rockaway Beach,

where she bought a house not long before Hurricane Sandy hit in 2012; here, she offers a rich account of living through the disaster and rebuilding in its aftermath. By the end, she has a crew of surfing friends, a new man, and a zest for life. Readers don't have to surf to be taken away by Cardwell's story, but it definitely wouldn't hurt. (June)

American Hemp Farmer: Adventures and Misadventures in the Cannabis Trade

Doug Fine. Chelsea Green, \$19.95 trade paper (320p) ISBN 978-1-60358-919-2

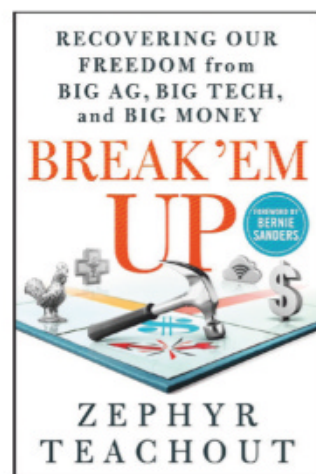
Fine (*Hemp Bound*) shares his own experiences with hemp farming, which is "about to become the fastest agricultural industry ever to reach a billion dollars in annual sales," in this educational outing. From a practical farming perspective, it's a boon, as "for the first time in generations... a family can make a living while hand-harvesting on small acreage." Fine covers the crucial points of hemp farming, from "soil building" to the type of seed to buy (open-source). Readers will learn what to expect to pay for seed, about weeding (it's relaxing), and how to overcome "mid-season panic attacks" about the harvest. Fine explores hand harvesting ("Can people do as good a job as John Deere?") and describes processing hemp in a commercial kitchen and the various extraction methods involved. More generally, he discusses the value of work co-ops, having "a compelling backstory" for one's product ("I cultivate hemp because..."), and studying the exemplary example of small-business management provided by craft breweries. For anyone interested in hemp cultivation or simply learning more about the newest "gold rush" crop, this is well worth picking up. (May)

★ Break 'Em Up: Recovering Our Freedom from Big Ag, Big Tech, and Big Money

Zephyr Teachout. All Points, \$28.99 (320p) ISBN 978-1-250-20089-1

Attorney and political activist Teachout (*Corruption in America*) makes a passionate and persuasive case for a revitalized anti-trust movement to strengthen democracy and improve the lives of middle- and working-class Americans. Explaining that three large poultry processors buy and sell nearly every chicken in the U.S., allowing

them to set restrictive, exploitative terms on contract farmers, Teachout forecasts the "chickenization" of the American economy. Companies like Seamless and



Uber, she writes, centralize power, profit, data, and decision making while decentralizing labor and risk. She critiques Amazon, Facebook, and Google for destroying competition; building an advertising model that fosters "surveillance, discrimination, and addiction"; and imperiling the free press. Other corporations come under fire for mandating private arbitration to settle lawsuits, "taking over" political parties and trade associations, and abetting the suppression of the minority vote. Teachout's suggestions for reform include restoring stringent antitrust measures in place before the 1980s and overhauling the Communications Decency Act. Teachout delivers a forceful, clearly articulated vision of "moral markets" built on freedom, choice, and human dignity. Progressives will heed this clarion call for reform. *Agent: Gail Ross, the Ross Yoon Agency.* (May)

Cryptography: The Key to Digital Security, How It Works, and Why It Matters

Keith Martin. Norton, \$27.95 (320p) ISBN 978-1-324-00429-5

Martin (*Everyday Cryptography*), an information security scholar, provides a useful introduction to cryptography, successfully showing the field isn't one "only computer whiz kids have any hope of understanding." Underlining cryptography's importance, he observes that digital encryption "underpins everyone's security in cyberspace," from online shopping to keyless car entry. Starting at the most basic level of computer science, Martin explains how binary code works, before moving to more advanced topics such as symmetric encryption and hash functions. He shows a knack for communicating demanding ideas, breaking up the text into short chunks, echoing the structure of block

cipher and with the same result of facilitating quick deciphering of sometime complex information. He also deploys physical metaphors for the abstract cryptographic tools he covers, describing asymmetric encryption, for instance, as a series of padlocks attached to a briefcase, and the challenge-response principle as a blind boomerang hunter. For historical context, Martin connects today's encryption techniques to codes used by the likes of Julius Caesar and Mary, Queen of Scots. At the close, he discusses the difficult balancing act between security and personal privacy, and likely future developments in the cryptographic field. This timely book will leave digital neophytes significantly better informed about a vital area in computer science. (May)

Funny Weather: Art in an Emergency

Olivia Laing. Norton, \$26.95 (272p) ISBN 9781324005704

This timely collection from Laing (*The Trip to Echo Spring*) asks "Can art do anything, especially during periods of crisis?" She shows that, indeed, art can change things for the better, pinning her assertion on critic Eve Sedgwick's concept of "reparative reading," which encourages readers to use hope, creativity, and survival in their interpretations. Broken up into sections that include artist profiles, literary criticism, and personal essay, the book shows where art can fight back, as with painter David Wojnarowicz's writing and photography documenting his former partner's death from AIDS at a time of political inaction. Thanks to the short length of her essays, she's able to cover a lot of ground, touching on, in addition to the AIDS crisis, climate change, gender, and in two especially biting selections, the plight of refugees in the U.K. and the Grenfell Tower fire in London. Laing soars in her writing on Maggie Nelson, whom she describes as creating an "exhilarating new language for considering both the messiness of life and the meanings of art." As a collection that aims to exemplify "new ways of seeing" to break through a "spin cycle of terrified paranoia," this will leave readers eager to reengage with art they know well, and explore art as yet new to them. (May)

Let Them Eat Tweets: How the Right Rules in an Age of Extreme Inequality

Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson. Liveright, \$26.95 (272p) ISBN 978-1-63149-684-4

Political scientists Hacker and Pierson (*American Amnesia*) analyze the modern Republican Party's shift toward "pluto-cratic populism" in this barbed and cogent account. Contending that all conservative parties within democracies face the same dilemma of how to protect the interests of the "economic elite" while winning electoral support from the masses, Hacker and Pierson document Richard Nixon's efforts to win over white, working-class voters; Newt Gingrich's partisan warfare during the Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations; the rise of the Koch brothers' libertarian agenda; and Donald Trump's embrace of the "most radical" Republican priorities. They examine the role of evangelical Christians, the NRA, and the right-wing media in Republican efforts to solve the "Conservative Dilemma" despite the unpopularity of their legislative pursuits (repeal of the Affordable Care Act, tax cuts for the wealthy), and note that gerrymandering, restrictive voter ID laws, the Electoral College, and malapportionment in the U.S. Senate help to ensure that conservative voters have an outsized voice. Though much of this will be familiar to politically minded readers, Hacker and Pierson pull disparate pieces into a lucid narrative that goes a long way toward explaining the current iteration of the Republican Party. Liberals will be equal parts enraged and edified by this deeply sourced polemic. *Agent: Sydelle Kramer, the Susan Rabiner Literary Agency. (May)*

★ The Museum of Whales You Will Never See: And Other Excursions to Iceland's Most Unusual Museums

A. Kendra Greene. Penguin, \$22 (272p) ISBN 978-0-1431-3546-3

Artist and *Southwest Review* associate editor Greene (*Vagrants and Uncommon Visitors*) delivers a delightful one-of-a-kind journey through some of Iceland's, if not the world's, most unusual museums. Greene takes the reader all over the small island nation, from remote Bíldudalur, home of the Icelandic Sea Monster Museum, to tiny

[Q&A]

PW TALKS WITH ZEPHYR TEACHOUT

The New Antimonopoly Moment

In *Break 'Em Up* (All Points, May; reviewed on p. 52), attorney Teachout writes that the time to take on corporate monopolies is now.

How did you get the idea to compare the plight of rural chicken farmers, most of whose businesses are controlled by one of three big processors, to workers in the gig economy?

I had a fellowship in what became the Open Markets Institute, and one of the fellows there was an extraordinary writer by the name of Chris Leonard, who had just finished a book called *The Meat Racket*, in which he unearths the term *chickenization*. It's a very real term that people in the pork and beef industries use to describe the way their industries are changing. But it quickly became clear that it wasn't just beef and pork—it was also sellers getting "chickenized" on



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Amazon. And the word *chicken* is so powerful because it's also about fear. One of the things that I care the most about is reinserting the language of both power and fear into the way that we talk about the economy. So much economic thinking takes out the human element and describes it all in terms of dollars and cents.

One of the book's chapters is titled "No, You Don't Have to Boycott Amazon." Why not?

It's important that we relocate our power first and foremost as citizens who have the power to change laws. When there's a critique of a big corporation, people think their first moral obligation is to dissociate from

the corporation. But the problem with these monopolies is that they're totally integrated into our society—boycotting them is like boycotting public water. And certainly the less power you have, the less ability you have to boycott. So there's a strong class element. But most importantly, there's a dangerous joining of neoliberal market ideology with language and images from some very powerful boycott movements to suggest that our primary role is that of a consumer instead of a citizen. One of the things that I've noticed is that when people don't feel like they can boycott these monopolies, they're overcome with guilt and shame that they no longer

have the standing to object. It's really, really disempowering.

How do voters incentivize politicians to adopt antitrust solutions?

Politicians who are ready to tap into this are tapping into a well of fire. There is so much anger and understanding already out there. We're in a new antimonopoly moment—which means it's going to be a major fight. Some of the most powerful forces in world history have every interest in stopping this nascent movement. But our job is not to create the movement; it's to tie together all the pieces that are already out there. That was one of the purposes of the book.

—TARA SAUNDERS

[Q&A]

PW TALKS WITH LORETTA LYNN

Remembering Patsy Cline

In *Me & Patsy Kickin' Up Dust* (Grand Central, Apr.; reviewed on p. 56), Lynn recalls her friendship with country singer Patsy Cline.

Why this book now?

Well, me and Patsy [Lynn's daughter, Patsy Lynn Russell] got to talking about it, and we decided we should do it. Me and Patsy [Cline] bonded as sisters. I miss her, and as the years have passed, I haven't stopped loving her or talking to her. She changed my life forever. I want folks to know how good Patsy was—

at music, at business, and at being a friend.



This is your
fourth book.

What was it like
writing this one?

Coal Miner's Daughter was the hardest book to write, because it was all about me and my life. This was one easier, because it was all about Patsy and me and our running around together and about all the things we went through together.

What is your favorite memory of Patsy?

She was a great cook. There was nothing she couldn't do. God got a good one when she left us. I think my funniest memories of me and her are just of us riding around in the car talking girl talk.

How did Patsy influence you?

She helped bring me up in the business and taught me a lot about how to run my business. I felt she was watching

over me, and I still feel that way. I know she is, because sometimes when I'm getting ready to do a show and my knees start to shake, I'll look up and see Patsy. She'll tell me, "You've got this." My life without her would have been a lot emptier.

If she had lived, what do you think her music would be like today?

I think she'd be doing pop music with a little country flavor. She'd have a lot of hits. Turn her loose and she could sing anything.

What was her greatest contribution to music?

She made a great contribution to all kinds of music, not just in

Nashville. Willie Nelson, who gave her the song “Crazy,” knew what kind of talent she was. She loved to be a friend with the guys because she got along better with them than she did with the women, though she got along with them, too. Patsy was well-liked by everyone.

What would you like readers to take from your book?

I hope they have a friend like I had; if they don't have one, they need to get a friend like the one I had in Patsy.

—HENRY CARRIGAN JR.



Lynn (l.) with her daughter Patsy Lynn Russell

Skógar, home to 21 people and to Iceland's largest museum outside of Reykjavík. The institutions visited range from collections of mundane artifacts from Iceland's once-thriving herring industry to the most unlikely of museums, the Icelandic Phallological Museum, a "kind of mammal-phallus Noah's Ark." Greene turns what easily could have become a mere cabinet of curiosities into a thoughtful and complex work. Insightful meditations on the nature of collecting and writers' role as organizers and curators of their own work complement passages on Icelandic history, and all add color and context to the museums described. Almost as hard to classify as it would be not to enjoy, Greene's expertly assembled blend of travel writing, history, museum studies, and memoir proves as memorable as any museum exhibition.

(May)

On Account of Race: The Supreme Court, White Supremacy, and the Ravaging of African American Voting Rights

Lawrence Goldstone. Counterpoint, \$26 (288p) ISBN 978-1-64009-392-8

The 1965 Voting Rights Act guaranteeing African-Americans “equal access to the ballot” was necessitated by post-Civil War U.S. Supreme Court decisions that allowed “white supremacist” state governments in the South to deny blacks their constitutional rights, according to this lucid legal history. Novelist and historian Goldstone (*Stolen Justice*) critiques the “sham neutrality” of Supreme Court justices in the 1873 *Slaughter-House Cases* decision undermining the “privileges and immunities” clause of the 14th Amendment; *United States v. Reese* (1874), which weakened federal protections for black voting rights; and a series of turn-of-the-century cases upholding state laws that required voters to pass literacy tests and pay poll taxes. Due to these and other rulings, African-Americans were unable to prevent state legislatures from passing Jim Crow laws throughout the South. Though the Voting Rights Act “has been widely considered the single most effective piece of civil rights legislation,” Goldstone writes, the court ruled one of its key provisions unconstitutional in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder* (2013). He sketches the contours and ramifications of each case skillfully,

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Dark Mirror: Edward Snowden and the American Surveillance State

Barton Gellman. Penguin Press, \$30 (448p) ISBN 978-1-59420-601-6

Pulitzer Prize–winner Gellman (*Angler: The Cheney Vice Presidency*) delivers an eloquent behind-the-scenes account of his reporting on NSA contractor Edward Snowden’s leak of top-secret U.S. intelligence documents in 2013. Introduced to Snowden (at that point known only by the code name Verax) by documentary filmmaker Laura Poitras, Gellman first had to convince Snowden of the value of working with a “card-carrying member of the mainstream media,” then keep a massive cache of classified documents from falling into the hands of foreign intelligence agents while publishing excerpts and analysis in the *Washington Post*. By revealing that the NSA was engaged in “mass domestic surveillance,” Snowden did “substantially more good than harm,” Gellman writes, though he gives space in the book to dissenting opinions from an array of national security officials. Gellman also describes some of his personal cybersecurity measures, hints at the secrets he withheld from publication, explores the ramifications of Snowden’s leaks in the Trump era, and settles scores with Glenn Greenwald, who broke the first story on the matter. Enriching the high-level technical and legal analysis with a sharp sense of humor, Gellman presents an exhaustive study of intelligence gathering in the digital age. Even readers who have followed the Snowden story closely will learn something new. *Agent: Andrew Wylie, the Wylie Agency (May).*



paternal great-grandfather’s roots in Louisiana Creole country send Jerkins to Natchitoches Parish, where she wrestles with her preconceptions about skin color and relates the story of the Metoyer family, once the “wealthiest free people of color” in America. In Oklahoma, she investigates links between African-Americans and Native Americans; in L.A., she juxtaposes the myth of California in the black community with the reality of white flight and gang violence. Jerkins’s careful research and revelatory conversations with historians, activists, and genealogists result in a disturbing yet ultimately empowering chronicle of the African-American experience. Readers will be moved by this brave and inquisitive book. *Agent: Monica Odom, Liza Dawson Assoc. (May)*

You Talkin’ to Me?: The Unruly History of New York English

E.J. White. Oxford Univ., \$19.95 (288p) ISBN 978-0-19-065721-5

White, who teaches at Stony Brook

University, debuts with an enjoyable work of popular linguistics. The book traces New York City’s phonetic history, including such trivia as how the “upgliding diphthong” that leads to “thirty” being pronounced as “toidy” was, at the beginning of the 20th century, a marker of upper-class speech (there are sound recordings of Teddy Roosevelt using that pronunciation), or how East Coast elites of a later period, such as that other famous Roosevelt, FDR, favored the nonrhotic, or “r-less,” pronunciation style originating in Southern England. Other chapters dig into different linguistic and cultural influences on city place names, and how it came to be that Midwestern speech replaced “New York English” as the “standard” American accent—White notes the oddity of a major cultural and financial center comparable to London, Paris, or Rome not defining standard speech for the rest of the country. White also covers gangster slang, the language of popular music, code switching between different language variants, and

the relationship of accent to class. The result is a heartfelt tribute to, and insightful inquiry into, everyday speech in New York. *(May)*

Me & Patsy Kickin’ Up Dust: My Friendship with Patsy Cline

Loretta Lynn. Grand Central, \$28 (256p) ISBN 978-1-5387-0166-9

A cracking good storyteller, Grammy Award–winning songwriter and singer Lynn reminisces on her friendship with country music legend Patsy Cline (1932–1963) in this humorous and loving memoir. Holding nothing back, Lynn (*Loretta Lynn: Coal Miner’s Daughter*) shares stories of Cline’s generosity—she sewed curtains for Lynn’s first house—and her fierce way of speaking her mind. By the time the two met in 1961, Cline was already a star, while Lynn’s career was just beginning. When Lynn signed with Decca Records that year, she felt like just



one of many singers trying to make it in country music, and it never crossed her mind that she could become famous. After she learned that Cline was nearly killed in a car accident, Lynn performed at the Grand Ole Opry and sang a song Cline had just released titled “I Fall to Pieces.” When Cline heard Lynn on the radio, she sent for Lynn, and they soon discovered how much they had in common: they were the same age, they both grew up poor, and both had to grow up too fast. Over the course of their friendship, Cline taught Lynn how to handle grabby men like bluegrass musician Bill Monroe, as well as how to take control of her own business affairs, how to drive, and, ultimately, how to stand up for herself. Recalling Cline’s death in a 1963 plane crash, Lynn writes, “Reliving all the times Patsy and I had together for this book has been good, but it’s also reopened that feeling of empty sadness.” As in her songwriting, Lynn imbues her tribute with honesty and tenderness. *(Apr.)*

Lifestyle

Food & Drink

Basic Bitchen: 100+ Everyday Recipes— From Nacho Average Nachos to Gossip-Worthy Sunday Pancakes— For the Basic Bitch in Your Life

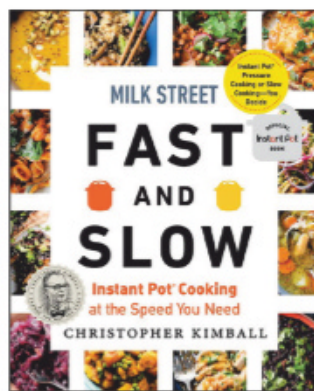
Joey Skladany. Tiller, \$29.99 (224p) ISBN 978-1-982138-38-7

In this humorously irreverent debut cookbook, Chowhound editor-at-large Skladany presents over 100 “tried-and-true recipes that are not only delicious but super easy to make.” He opens with beverages—including a frosé, made with rosé and frozen strawberries, and a non-alcoholic pumpkin spice latte—and quick appetizers that can be prepared in 20 minutes or less, such as avocado toast and caprese salad with burrata cheese. Many of the entrees are healthy options, including sheet pan salmon with lemon-dill dressing and black bean-quinoa burgers, but there are also plenty of indulgent dishes as well, grilled cheese with cheesy fries and truffle macaroni and cheese among them. Desserts feature palatable fare such as chocolate chip cookies and strawberry macaroons, while a chapter on brunch offers classic dishes like chicken and waffles and quiche. Less experienced cooks will appreciate the tips that Skladany sprinkles throughout (“I opted for margarine... because it has a higher melting point than butter”), and may chuckle at some racy recipe introductions (“My grandma says if she’s not dead by ninety, she’ll become a heroin addict”; “Boys on Grindr looking for ‘friends’ are like me walking into a Chinese restaurant and looking for bok choy”). The recipes are straightforward and easy to follow, making this book a reliable resource for home cooks looking to build a repertoire. (May)

Milk Street Fast and Slow: Instant Pot Cooking at the Speed You Need

Christopher Kimball. Voracious, \$30 (304p) ISBN 978-0-316-42307-6

Kimball (*The Cook’s Bible*), founder of the Milk Street culinary media company, takes on the Instant Pot multicooker in this sharp collection. All recipes include either pressure-cooker or slow cooker instructions, with some offering both.



But as Kimball admits, not all are time savers: a puttanesca pasta (with a whopping half cup of capers) requires 45 minutes and breaking spaghetti in half to fit in the machine. There are many recipes for soups and stews, and several for basic items with variations: black beans can be repurposed, for instance, as refried beans or tossed with corn. Kimball errs on the side of supplying arguably too much information in recipes; typical is the recipe for a North African eggplant tagine, which includes active time, cooking times, a headnote, a cautionary note, and prep, fast, slow, and finishing instructions. As always, the ace up Milk Street’s sleeve is its command of a wide range of cuisines: a Georgian stew, Mexican pork carnitas paired with quickly pickled red onions, and French chicken en cocotte with mustard and tarragon all hold appeal. Home cooks whose regular rotation includes Instant Pot fare will appreciate this useful and wide-ranging volume. (Apr.)

Simple Spice Vegetarian: Easy Indian Vegetarian Recipes from Just 10 Spices

Cyrus Todiwala. Mitchell Beazley, \$26.99 (208p) ISBN 978-1-78472-576-1

Todiwala, who has three restaurants in London and hosts BBC’s *Saturday Kitchen*, gathers a flavorful range of meat-free Indian recipes in this satisfying volume. The author restricts the recipes to using only 10 spices, and while that simplifies ingredient lists, it does make the flavor profiles somewhat repetitious. However, he incorporates a casual tone, and offers flexible instructions with numerous variations (make a zucchini, split pea, and mint salad heartier with feta or hard-boiled eggs). A breakfast chapter includes a hearty oatmeal, spiced with ginger and chilies, and rich unbaked fudge-like bars made with ghee, coconut, and cardamom. A chapter on eggs, in keeping with the author’s Parsee heritage, presents a trove of intriguing options, including a chapatti-wrapped omelet and savory French toast. Desserts include a chocolate cake made

with grated zucchini and hazelnut and a refreshing cardamom kulfi. Detracting from the cookbook’s appeal are bizarre moments, such as the warning that “rice is one of the most dangerous foods in the house” that prefaces a rice and bean salad, and unexplained U.K. expressions such as “cabinet pudding” and “drunken wet nelly.” While the recipes don’t break new ground, home cooks new to Indian cooking will find this a decent primer. (Apr.)

Eat for Life: The Breakthrough Nutrient-Rich Program for Longevity, Disease Reversal, and Sustained Weight Loss

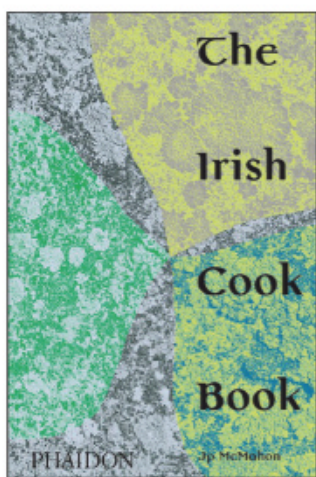
Joel Fuhrman. HarperOne, \$28.99 (392p) ISBN 978-0-06-224931-9

Celebrity doctor Fuhrman (*Eat to Live*) lays out his case for the “Nutrarian” diet in this heavily notated guide to healthier eating. Fuhrman posits that the Nutrarian diet—a regimen focused on nutrient-rich, mostly vegan foods—“is the pinnacle of excellence in the nutrition world” and can slow aging, prevent disease, and boost longevity. He bolsters those claims with case studies of those who’ve conquered diabetes, hepatitis, cardiovascular disease, and even stage IV melanoma by following his plan, and supplements his argument with citations of his own studies as well as those done by other physicians (he concludes with nearly 50 pages of notes referencing various scientific studies). Those worried about palate fatigue will appreciate the breadth of dishes in these 100-plus recipes, such as black bean and butternut squash chili; Asian ginger lime zucchini noodles; a meatless Bolognese (made with tempeh); buffalo cauliflower; no-bake brownies; crispy onion rings; Mac and Peas (a combination of oats, vegetable broth, miso, and yeast replaces the cheese); and huevos rancheros (made with scrambled tofu). Ingredients are easily sourced, and Fuhrman’s directions are easy to follow. Home cooks looking to change their lifestyles will feel in good hands with Fuhrman’s encouraging and detailed guide. (Mar.)

The Irish Cookbook

JP McMahon. Phaidon, \$49.95 (432p) ISBN 978-1-8386-6056-7

McMahon, a Galway chef and restaurateur, takes a comprehensive look at the



past, present, and future of Irish cooking in this thoroughly researched collection of more than 500 recipes. An advocate for using wild and sustainable ingredients, McMahon is

especially inventive when it comes to fruit: duck breasts are served in a port and red currant sauce, crab is prepared with curry mayonnaise and pineapple, and a haunch of venison gets treated with with plums, port and cinnamon. Some desserts are literally earthy: carrageen moss pudding combines seaweed with honey and milk, while hay ice cream is flavored with toasted hay and sugar. The vegetable chapter includes such standouts as spinach with hazelnuts and wild garlic; steamed asparagus wrapped in sea lettuce; as well as many a potato side dish (curried potatoes; hasselback potatoes with smoked bacon and beer). The book is pleasantly laid out with two to three recipes per page opposite a spacious full-color photo of a plated

entrée. In addition to the recipes, McMahon provides a useful field guide for foraging plants, seaweed, and mushrooms (for more adventurous cooks), as well as a succinct history of food in Ireland. With an eye on terrain, McMahon offers both authentic and innovative approaches to modern Irish cooking. (*Mar.*)

The Outdoor Kitchen: Live Fire Cooking from the Grill

Eric Werner, with Nils Bernstein. Ten Speed,
\$35 (256p) ISBN 978-0-39958-237-0

In this exacting grilling guide, Werner, chef and owner of the Hartwood restaurant in Tulum, Mexico, elevates outdoor cooking. He begins with instructions for assembling a rugged backyard grill and smoker (he recommends befriending an ironworker), complete with sketches and measurements for a made-to-order model, as well as advice for hacking a store-bought one. Cooking in embers is a favored technique, as seen in a surprisingly lengthy collection of vegetable recipes, from eggplant to bell peppers, all of which cook nicely in direct heat. Elsewhere in the vegetable kingdom, there are 10 recipes for grilled corn, including corn ice cream and corn salsa. Flavorful entrees in the

seafood chapter include rainbow trout with cumin and burnt citrus vinaigrette. The importance of brining is explained in a brief poultry chapter that features butterflied chicken with toasted mustard seed oil. And among the several steak options, Newport steak with mole is a standout for its unique sauce flavored with grilled apples, banana, and onion. Backyard chefs seeking challenges beyond the propane grill will find much to enjoy in this vibrant collection. (*Mar.*)

Share: Delicious Sharing Boards for Social Dining

Theo A. Michaels. Ryland Peters & Small,
\$19.95 (160p) ISBN 978-1-78879-211-0

Michaels (*Orexei!*), a semifinalist on BBC's *MasterChef*, inventively combines ingredients and foods in a way that invites families or groups "to enjoy a sociable, shared dining experience" in this fun and accessible cookbook. Notions of what constitutes a brunch buffet yield artful arrangements of French toast topped with crisped pancetta and pan-seared bananas; chubby rolls of ouzo-cured salmon; and individual pots of yogurt with roasted rhubarb and pistachio. The "Ocean" chapter features a sharing board that can include scallops baked in half shells with chipotle butter; chunks of pickled swordfish with pink peppercorns; langoustines, and a fennel-green apple salad. In the "Barbecue" chapter, Michaels suggests Greek-style lamb chops; chicken souvlaki with date molasses and tahini dressing; and chili-and-ginger infused pork burgers with a cucumber relish. Recipe measurements are given in both grams and ounces, and Michaels includes tips about which flavors, textures, and platings work best together (complementary colors; no juicy things next to crunchy ones). These tempting recipes will inspire both novice and skilled party hosts. (*Mar.*)

Health & Fitness

The Complete Guide to Keto: The Never Hungry Diet

Michelle Stacey. Centennial, \$19.99 (192p)
ISBN 978-1-951274-10-8

Stacey (*Fasting Girl*) provides an accessible introduction to the keto diet in a guide rich with photos, charts, and lively text. She begins by explaining how the

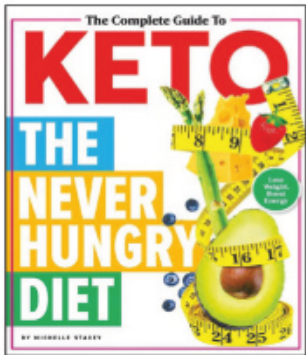
★ Chi Spacca: A New Approach to American Cooking

Nancy Silverton, with Ryan DeNicola and Carolyn Carreño.
Knopf. \$35 (384p) ISBN 978-0-525-65465-0

Restaurateur Silverton (*The Mozza Cookbook*) gives her all in this excellent carnivorous compendium of dishes served at her eponymous restaurant in Los Angeles. Despite the American cooking referred to in the title, these recipes “are inspired by how an Italian butcher might cook.” This is the rare Italian-accented cookbook without a chapter on pasta, but with a grilling tutorial instead, here from executive chef DeNicola. Recipes are solid and aren’t always simplified for the home kitchen: focaccia di Recco (which, Silverton notes, is ordered by 85% of the tables at Chi Spacca) requires a 14-inch copper pizza pan and cheese that needs to dry in the refrigerator for 10 days to two weeks before being used, and the preparation of a beef cheek and bone marrow pie is best spread over three days. Nose-to-tail ethos can be seen in dishes such as toasts made with beef drippings and roasted amberjack collars. The latter are part of a fish chapter with surprising depth, given the carnivorous nature of the proceedings. Best suited for experienced cooks, this outstanding volume is poised to expand Silverton’s considerable audience. (*Apr.*)



diet works. Readers will learn about good and bad carbohydrates, the regimen's potential health benefits, and the four kinds of keto diets (standard, targeted, cyclical, and high-protein). Part II, "Ready, Set, Keto," covers getting started. Preparation tips address setting up the kitchen and include a shopping list. Stacey provides a helpful keto "cheat sheet" with



substitutions for conventional carb favorites to help readers quench snack cravings. She also shares tips on "eating out on keto," exercising,

and avoiding common mistakes. The best section, though, is Part III, "Cook Keto," which kicks off with a seven-day meal plan (featuring three meals and two snacks each day) and contains nearly 60 pages of recipes, complete with mouth-watering photos that should go far to encourage dieters to give keto a try. Stacey's well-produced book will please keto neophytes with its surplus of tips, encouragement, and ideas. (Apr.)

Eat Like the Animals: What Nature Teaches Us About the Science of Healthy Eating

David Raubenheimer and Stephen J.

Simpson. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$28 (256p) ISBN 978-1-328-58785-5

Entomologists Raubenheimer and Simpson (*The Nature of Nutrition*, coauthors) discuss what humans can learn from other animals about eating in this revelatory work of health science. The authors open with their central question—how do living things know what to eat?—and go on to describe conducting an experiment that found locusts instinctively eat a set amount of protein and carbs, but if confronted with an unbalanced diet, prioritize the former. A follow-up experiment with human volunteers found the same. Their search for other species which manifest "protein leveraging" leads them to study gorillas in the forests of Uganda, wild yaks in the Bhutanese Himalayas, and other species in far-flung locations. The authors observe that while many animals' "food environments" have not substantially changed over time, those of humans have,

with ready access to "ultraprocessed" foods (high in fats and carbs). The "strong appetite for protein shared by all animals," they assert, drives human overeating and consequent health problems. The authors conclude with helpful advice on making balanced dietary choices. Whether readers are drawn to the book's health takeaways or to the scientific nitty-gritty, they will find much food for thought in this fascinating study. (Apr.)

The M Word:

How to Thrive in Menopause

Ginni Mansberg. Murdoch, \$19.99 trade paper (320p) ISBN 978-1911632382

In informative, scientific, and often humorous language, physician Mansberg (*How to Handle Your Hormones*) presents a frank discussion of a variety of menopause symptoms and the many choices women have to relieve them. Measured and professional, Mansberg sets the record straight on the 2002 Women's Health Initiative study that the media misinterpreted to say that hormone replacement treatment (HRT) caused breast cancer and which resulted in pharmaceutical companies abandoning menopause medication. Today, Mansberg notes, a reexamination of HRT reveals it as a viable treatment for some women. Mansberg passionately urges women to reject unproven treatments, such as detoxing, and to empower themselves through self-education on how the body changes during menopause. She also discusses the function of estrogen and progesterone; lifestyle changes that can reduce hot flashes; vaginal dryness and libido; incontinence; and the link between hormones and mood. Anecdotes from patients and friends provide real-life examples with appropriate treatment options. Perimenopausal and menopausal women, as well as health-care professionals, will appreciate the wealth of evidence, advice, and topics covered in Mansberg's candid guide. (Apr.)

Jiffy Body: The 10-Minute System to Avoid Joint and Muscle Pain

Bart Potter. Blue River Publishing, \$20 trade paper (146p) ISBN 978-1-73398-430-0

Potter, founder of a fitness-training company, presents a system designed to eliminate joint and muscle pain in this positive and uncomplicated look at the

body and how to use it properly. Using amusing cartoons, Potter explains that even routine activities such as sitting, standing, and exercise can lead to muscle imbalances that can cause pain, stiffness, and swelling. To combat these symptoms, Potter outlines a program of different exercises targeting combinations of muscle groups, providing photographs and detailed illustrations to show the relationship between movements and muscle groups. One caveat is that the low-resolution photos are inconsistent with the clarity of the illustrations. However, Potter's tone is enthusiastic and his stories are inspiring, encouraging readers to embark on the assorted exercise programs. Filled with succinct explanations and extensive variations on exercise routines suited to a wide range of abilities, this is an inviting tool for achieving better health. (Self-published)

Hobbies & Crafts

Animal Friends to Sew: Simple Handmade Décor, Toys, and Gifts for Kids

Sanae Ishida. Sasquatch, \$22.95 (240p) ISBN 978-1-63217-235-8

Ishida (*Sewing Happiness*), a children's book and crafting guide author, provides a slew of child-friendly projects as adorable as they are functional. A chapter on sewing and embroidering basics should get readers up to speed before they begin the projects, which are divided among décor, toys, and "wearables," with the last section being the stand-out. It includes koala and monkey bibs for messy meal-times and hooded capes suitable either for Halloween, or, when made out of "cozy" terry cloth, as baby bathrobes. Helpfully, the wearables aren't too labor intensive—to wit, Ishida's baby slippers can be sewn in nine steps. For home decor, she adds a whimsical spark to common household items, turning easy rope baskets into a dog and cat design with the addition of



embroidered details. In the toy section, particularly charming plans are provided for stacking blocks, "ideal for the crawling and

toddling set,” with embroidered mouse, raccoon, bear, and elephant faces. Ishida provides templates for users to cut out or trace and, in the closing resource section, shares info on fabric sources, reference titles, and online sewing help. These sweet DIY projects will appeal to parents who are also avid or aspiring sewers, not to mention to their kids. (May)

Religion/Spirituality

Broken Roads:

Returning to My Amish Father

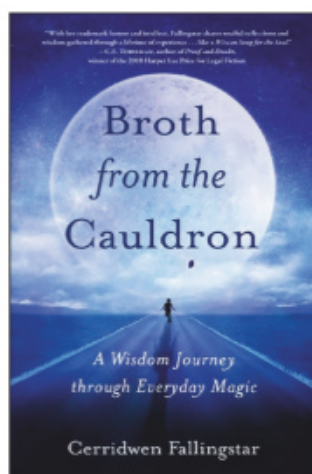
Ira Wagler. FaithWords, \$16.99 trade paper (272p) ISBN 978-1-5460-1206-1

Wagler follows his memoir *Growing Up Amish* with this soul-searching but muddled recollection of what happened after he left the Amish faith at age 26. He shares his experience eagerly gaining formal education, first at a community college in the late 1980s, and then his adoring memories of his time at Bob Jones University. He then speeds through recounting his time at Dickinson School of Law and the collapse of his marriage of seven years in 2007. Some of the frustrating lack of specifics are partially explained later when Wagler describes starting a discussion and sermon-listening men’s group with the man his wife had an affair with (a fact which is awkwardly added with little unpacking or explanation). He also writes of how his divorce led him to drink too much and helped inspire a career shift from lawyer to writer. Wagler’s reflections are most engaging when he explores tensions and compromises in visits back to his parents, but, disappointingly, the individual narrative threads do not coalesce into obvious themes and leave a somewhat disjointed feel. This memoir of post-Amish life stumbles, but will help readers see the long-term emotional costs of the decision to leave. (May)

Broth from the Cauldron: A Wisdom Journey Through Everyday Magic

Cerridwen Fallingstar. She Writes, \$16.95 trade paper (256p) ISBN 978-1-63152-699-2

Shamanic witch Fallingstar (*The Heart of Fire*) explores her life of spiritual seeking and magical experiences in this intriguing collection of reflections.



Fallingstar’s “silly, simple and profound, and all true” tales will appeal to practitioners of wicca, who will likely recognize the rituals and tools referred to, though

Fallingstar’s anecdotes are tailored for a general audience. She relates her early aptitude for energy reception, psychic abilities, and past-life memories, as well as stories of creating magic circles in the woods and other spellwork. The section covering the psychedelic visions she’s had while on sinsemilla honey is particularly trippy. Fallingstar’s husband and children also play crucial roles in the stories, including many family camping trips where she had spiritual awakenings. Readers into witchcraft will find much to enjoy in this touching and humorous memoir. (May)

Diary of a Pastor’s Soul: The Holy Moments in a Life of Ministry

M. Craig Barnes. Brazos, \$18.99 trade paper (240p) ISBN 978-1-58743-444-0

Barnes (*Searching for Home*), president of Princeton Theological Seminary, shares his experiences of ministry work in this reflective and partially fictionalized diary. Barnes writes that his decision to mix fact and fiction was due to pastoral confidentiality and because he wanted “to rewrite some of my own stories that I might have lived differently if I had known then what I know now.” The entries address a wide array of topics, among them what to think about the desire to have a relaxing morning at home instead of attending, the experience of guiding kids and parents through the college application process, and how to approach the firing of a long-term employee. Throughout, he questions his effectiveness—as when he failed to fully empathize and relate to a sick child while keeping his own cancer a secret. This thoughtful though opaque work will propel readers to reflect on their own vocation. *Agent: Kathryn Helmers, Creative Trust.* (May)

Good Work: How Blue Collar Business Can Change Lives, Communities, and the World

Dave Hataj. Moody, \$15.99 trade paper (240p) ISBN 978-0-8024-1957-6

Hataj, owner of Wisconsin gear manufacturer Edgerton Gear, argues in his impactful debut that finding one’s purpose in the kingdom of God can be wrapped up neatly into what one does for a living. The desire to do well in business and serve God need not be mutually exclusive, he contends, and businesses where owners and workers figure out how to combine the two can make for a God-serving community. He gleans insight from culture and biblical stories, and shares personal stories about deciding to take over his family gear shop. For Hataj, once profit isn’t seen as the end-all for motivation, a job becomes a tool for fulfilling personal purpose while serving customers and employees. Work relationships must survive through both boom and bust times, Hataj points out, and how one reacts to adversity can help spread Christianity within one’s workplace and communities. One memory about his father’s overcoming prejudice to treat customers well is particularly affecting. He also lauds the “three-legged stool” of business—quality, value, and service—and gives tips on leadership and customer service that can benefit all workers. Christians who struggle with wondering how to serve God will find Hataj’s impassioned testament quite persuasive. (May)

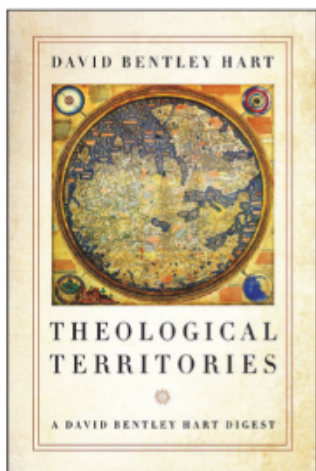
★ Theological Territories:

A David Bentley Hart Digest

David Bentley Hart. Univ. of Notre Dame, \$29 (420p) ISBN 978-0-268-10718-5

In this scintillating compilation of essays based on lectures—most published here for the first time—Eastern Orthodox scholar and cultural commentator Hart (*That All Shall Be Saved*) examines the intersection of theology with other academic fields, including ethics, science, literature, and biblical hermeneutics. Whether conversing with theologian Rowan Williams on the healing purpose of tragedy, or meditating on “the Problem of Evil” as laid out by Dostoyevsky, Hart’s witty, erudite writing proves unsettling and invigorating. Essays

include conversations with Catholic priest Tomas Halik on postmodern theology and Barthian scholar Bruce McCormack on Trinitarian theology, a harsh critique of work by secular atheist Daniel Dennett,



and theological insights gleaned from Hart's translation of the New Testament. Hart also examines the relationship between theology and science in the provocative

"Should Science Think?" and ponders the correlation between Christian aesthetics and morality. A particularly memorable entry is his obliteration of Edward Feser and Joseph M. Bessette's Catholic defense of capital punishment. Theologians and scholarly readers alike will find much wisdom in this impressive work. (May)

This Too Shall Last: Finding Grace When Suffering Lingers

K.J. Ramsey. Zondervan, \$18.99 trade paper (224p) ISBN 978-0-310-10725-5

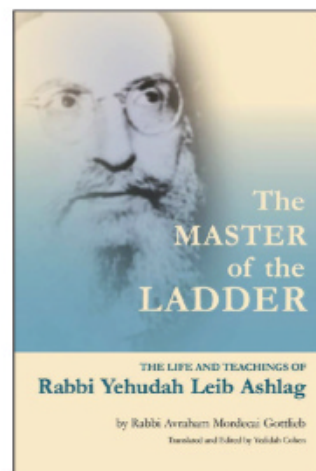
In this contemplative debut, therapist Ramsey, who has an autoimmune disease, explores living with pain and explains that she has a messy "middle story" rather than a tidy "before and after." Ramsey argues that most Christians believe in God's ability to heal the body physically and spiritually, and therefore have trouble dealing with long-term suffering. She chronicles her adult life, revealing how suffering exposes self-sufficiency ("Our unique ways of escaping and avoiding suffering are rooted in a self-sufficiency that will never be enough") and suggesting that though pain may seem like the enemy, not facing it will only create more problems. She includes many moments taken from scripture that detail God's goodness and also warns against the tendency to minimize or overly spiritualize suffering. Quoting Jesus's words to his disciples, she refutes the perception that suffering results from a lack of faith: "I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world." She also challenges assumptions about repentance (described

by Ramsey as self-reflection and commitment to self-betterment) by reframing it through the perspective of grace and communion with God: "repentance is remembering that all of life is an opportunity for communion and choosing to live as such right now." Christians dealing with pain will appreciate Ramsey's comforting, candid memoir. (May)

The Master of the Ladder: The Life and Teachings of Rabbi Yehudah Leib Ashlag

Avraham Mordecai Gottlieb, trans. from the Hebrew by Yedidah Cohen. Nehora, \$28.95 trade paper (390p) ISBN 978-965-7222-12-6

Rabbi Gottlieb effectively combines profile and theology in this accessible and enlightening biography of Rabbi Yehudah Leib Ashlag (1885–1954), a master of the kabbalah, who is widely credited with opening the study of kabbalistic texts to ordinary people. Gottlieb, a student of Ashlag's son, opens in 1892, with a legend about the rabbi, then a



seven-year-old child in Warsaw and himself the son of a Hasidic rabbi; according to the story, Ashlag was lying in bed when he was struck in the head by a book that fell from a

shelf. His father told him that the volume, a book of kabbalah, was meant only for angels, but the precocious child insisted, "If it has been printed, it must be meant for everyone." Gottlieb goes on to trace his subject's life, including his rabbinic ordination and marriage, prodigious scholarly output, his immigration to what became the nation of Israel in 1921, and production of the essential kabbalist textbook *Talmud Eser Sefirot*. Lay readers may be most interested in the religious figure's teachings, which include such messages as, "Each of us needs to learn that the whole purpose of our spiritual work is to come to love our fellow." Gottlieb's glowing work preserves the life and legacy of a significant, if now obscure, religious thinker. (Self-published)

ONLINE ONLY

www.publishersweekly.com

FICTION

August *Callan Wink*. Random House, ISBN 978-0-8129-9375-2, Mar.

Iditarod Nights *Cindy Hiday*. Ooligan, ISBN 978-1-947845-13-8, Apr.

In Our Other Lives *Theodore Wheeler*. Little A, ISBN 978-1-5420-1652-0, Mar.

L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future, Vol. 36, edited by David Farland. Galaxy, ISBN 978-1-61986-659-1, Apr.

Money Man *Nancy Herkness*. Montlake Romance, ISBN 978-1-5420-0016-1, Apr.

Queen *Timothy Zahn*. Tor, ISBN 978-0-7653-2968-4, Apr.

She Has a Broken Thing Where Her Heart Should Be *J.D. Barker*. Hampton Creek, ISBN 978-1-73421-041-5, Apr.

The Society of Reluctant Dreamers *José Eduardo Agualusa*, trans. from the Portuguese by Daniel Hahn. Archipelago, ISBN 978-1-93981-048-9, Mar.

COMICS

Before the Storm (Aero #1) *Zhou Liefen, Keng, and Greg Pak*, trans. from the Mandarin by Yifan Jiang and Winni Woo. Marvel, ISBN 978-1-302-91944-3, Feb.

NONFICTION

The Age of Football: Soccer and the Twenty-First Century *David Goldblatt*. Norton, ISBN 978-0-393-63511-9, Feb.

Brown Bohemians: Honoring the Light and Magic of Our Creative Community *Vanessa Coore Vernon, Morgan Ashley, and Wendy Pruitt*. PowerHouse, ISBN 978-1-5768-7923-8, Feb.

Burning Down the House: Newt Gingrich, the Fall of a Speaker, and the Rise of the New Republican Party *Julian E. Zelizer*. Penguin Press, ISBN 978-1-59420-665-8, Apr.

Dark Towers: Deutsche Bank, Donald Trump, and an Epic Trail of Destruction *David Enrich*. Custom House, ISBN 978-0-06-287884-7, Apr.

Smithsonian Handbook of Interesting Insects *Gavin R. Broad et al.* Smithsonian, ISBN 978-1-58834-686-5, Apr.

The Sum of the People: How the Census Has Shaped Nations, from the Ancient World to the Modern Age *Andrew Whitby*. Basic, ISBN 978-1-5416-1934-0, Mar.

Ted Templeman: A Platinum Producer's Life in Music *Ted Templeman, as told to Greg Renoff*. ECW, ISBN 978-1-77041-483-9, Apr.

Children's/YA

Picture Books

Mrs Bibi's Elephant

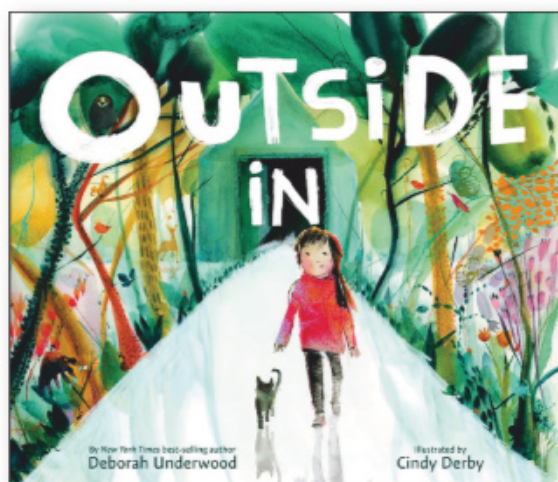
Reza Dalvand. Flying Eye, \$16.95 (32p)
ISBN 978-1-912497-16-4

The children in Mrs Bibi's town love Mrs Bibi and her pet elephant; when she and her pet go out in the morning, kids use the pachyderm as a playground. Dalvand (*What Could That Be?*) paints tiny figures cavorting on the elephant's head as the gigantic creature showers them gently. Mrs Bibi cares tenderly for her pet at home, too: at night, she "told her elephant stories so that he would have nice dreams." But the adults in town have other ideas about him. Dalvand depicts a grouchy crowd admonishing her: "They said that instead of talking to an elephant, Mrs Bibi should read the newspaper, check the stock market and keep up to date with economics!" They sentence her elephant to the zoo, but their attempt ends in town-wide distress. Delicate lines, pastel colors, and finely worked patterns give coziness to Dalvand's spreads. His didactic portrayal of the tension between the eccentric pet owner and her neighbors make it clear where his sympathies lie as Mrs Bibi's neighbors discover that quality of life can exist outside mundane concerns. Ages 3–5. (Apr.)

Dirt Cheap

Mark Hoffman. Knopf, \$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-1-5247-1994-4

Every great businessperson starts out small. Hoffman's (*Fruit Bowl*) unseen interlocutor introduces readers to Birdie, a girl with huge yellow glasses who yearns for a XR1000 Super Extreme Soccer Ball that costs \$24.95: "It's so beautiful. I want it. I need it!" she tells the audience. "Well," says the narrator, "soccer balls cost money. How much ya got?" The answer is zilch—until Birdie, noticing how she's surrounded by yards and gardens, starts selling the dirt from her yard at 25¢ a bag. As the colorful acrylic and pencil drawings depict the customers literally piling up, readers also get a lesson in money-related computation—Birdie discovers that 25¢ can be five nickels, 25 pennies, and so on. But the



Underwood and Derby remark on people's largely indoor lives in a new picture book (reviewed on this page).

joy of owning the XR1000 is short-lived; now Birdie has no yard to play in, and in a wordless, bird's-eye view spread, Birdie's parents emerge from the front door and discover the trench that now encircles their house. Capitalism to the rescue again—only no more selling stuff. Birdie earns the money to replace the dirt by entering the gig economy: "Try Birdie's Lawn Care." Can an IPO be far behind? Ages 3–7. (Apr.)

★ Outside In

Deborah Underwood, illus. by Cindy Derby. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-1-328-86682-0

"Once/ we were part of Outside/ and Outside was part of us/ There was nothing between us," begins Underwood (*Ducks!*) in plainspoken lines. "Now/ sometimes even when/ we're outside.../ we're inside." Derby (*How to Walk an Ant*) portrays this tension in a gentle series of illustrations that mix gauzy, muted tones and textures with punctuations of color. The pictures follow a small child and family, visualizing moments, indoors and out, when "outside reminds us" of its abiding presence. Inside, "flashes at the window" illuminate a hallway, a window-side transformation exemplifies nature's "slow magic tricks," a tiny snail sneaks in on a bunch of kale, and rooftop serenades include "chirps/ and rustles/ and tap-taps on the roof." Even when the girl sits ("in wooden chairs,/ once trees") or stands at the bathroom sink ("rivers come inside"), the outdoors communicates its presence, requesting attention. In the final pages, the child and a cat step outside into a feathery, vibrant landscape—a moving

reminder that nature's beckoning need not go unrequited. Ages 4–7. *Author's agent: Erin Murphy, Erin Murphy Literary. Illustrator's agent: Jennifer Laughran, Andrea Brown Literary. (Apr.)*

Lali's Feather

Farhana Zia, illus. by Stephanie Fizer Coleman. Peachtree, \$17.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-68263-129-4

Zia (*Child of Spring*) dives right into this buoyant tale, which draws its energy from folktale-like storytelling and lots of chatter. Lali, an Indian girl with a long black braid, finds a feather and asks the neighborhood birds one by one if it's theirs. They answer scornfully: "Na, Lali, na!" the rooster responds, "My feather is a big feather. It makes me a lordly bird." All right, Lali thinks—if it doesn't belong to any of the birds, she'll play with it herself. The feather can write, she finds, and fan and sweep. "Oo ma," Duck cries, "I didn't know pokey feather could do that!" Exclamations make the exchanges even funnier. "Wah! It's a clever feather!" the birds agree, showing a new appreciation for it. A third sequence begins when wind sweeps the feather away and the good-hearted birds offer Lali substitutes, then help her search. Stylized spreads by Coleman (the *Who Made My Lunch?* series) portray the birds and the mango and tamarind trees of Lali's world energetically but without detracting from the story's forward momentum. It's all dialogue all the time—a prime candidate for reading aloud. Ages 4–8. *Author's agent: Jennifer Unter, the Unter Agency. Illustrator's agent: Anne Moore Armstrong, the Bright Agency. (Apr.)*

The Yawns Are Coming!

Christopher Eliopoulos. Dial, \$17.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-984816-30-6

Eliopoulos (*Monster Mayhem*) has created a sneakily effective bedtime book focused on an interest shared by kids everywhere: valiantly resisting sleep. Two best friends, a brown-skinned narrator sporting a blue bear onesie and his guest, white-skinned Noodles, who wears a green dinosaur onesie, make a long list of sleepover plans—none of which, naturally, involves snoozing. The pair play games, jump on the trampoline, and collect fireflies, but their plan goes awry when, in the middle of a card game, Noodles frantically announces: "THE

YAWNS ARE COMING!" Sure enough, hundreds of little blue, smiling creatures—the Yawns—soon swarm the friends, who “ran. And we climbed. And we sneaked. And we hid” before being caught out. The two begin to yawn, mouths wide open despite their protestations, when “SPLAP!” a glassy-eyed Doze lands on Noodles’s head. Fluttering SnORES arrive just behind it, and a calming, blanketlike Sleepie wraps the bear-suited boy up warm and safe. Amid fun-filled antics in Eliopoulos’s signature style, his use of soothing cool colors plays out against ample white space, cleverly centering exaggerated yawns and bleary eyes that are all too easy to mimic, making for a surprisingly soporific read. Ages 4–8. (Apr.)

Gnome

Fred Blunt. Andersen Press USA, \$17.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-5415-9624-5

Blunt (*Santa Claus vs. the Easter Bunny*) gives garden gnomes a lesson-laden origin story in this tale. With a permanent frown, Mr. Gnome has an obstinate attachment to the word *no*. “Say hello to the readers, Mr. Gnome,” the narrator requests. “No,” says Mr. Gnome, arms crossed in front of his belly. Asked if the narrator and readers can join his fishing trip, the white-bearded Mr. Gnome emerges from his mushroom home with a “NO!” Unsurprisingly, “NO” is also Mr. Gnome’s response to a request for help from a hedgehog with an apple lodged in his quills. When a witch appears and requests that Mr. Gnome stop fishing in her pond (to be fair, the sign says “no fishing”), it’s clear things won’t turn out well, and when the witch then turns Mr. Gnome to stone for being rude, it seems like a just punishment. But the moral twists when the narrator pleads for Mr. Gnome to be changed back and the witch, apparently an entrepreneur, refuses—turns out she’s in the stone garden gnome business. With a coldhearted capitalist for a witch, an irritatingly insistent narrator, and a curmudgeonly Gnome, Blunt presents an ensemble of characters that are each dislikable in their own way, and yet his scenes overall feel sunny and straightforward; it’s hard to know what kids will take away from this tale’s mixed message. Ages 4–9. (Apr.)

What a Masterpiece!

Riccardo Guasco. Eerdmans, \$17.99 (32p) ISBN 978-0-8028-5539-8

This wordless fantasy stars a boy who travels through one famous art and design masterpiece after another. For those in the know, the fun comes from being able to identify the works of art as the boy encounters them, from the time he wakes up in a familiar-looking bedroom (hint: it’s in Arles) to the moment he puts his



hands to his mouth in a horrified scream. Silkscreen-like artwork unifies disparate works with a palette of warm shades;

sometimes a single spread visually quotes several iconic pieces. Guasco shows the boy waking to a selection of melted alarm clocks, then trailing into the bathroom followed by a tall, thin shadow shaped like a Giacometti sculpture. Botticelli, Mondrian, and even Banksy make appearances (so do design objects from Starck and Bialetti) as the child journeys through the art to leave his mark on a giant collaborative sculpture. Because the narrative of this composite introduction to Western art is so simple—the boy walks from left to right—small children can leaf through the pages with enjoyment even if they can’t identify the references. And a key in the back provides answers for the perplexed or uninitiated. Ages 5–9. (Apr.)

Wherever I Go

Mary Wagley Copp, illus. by Munir D. Mohammed. Atheneum, \$17.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-5344-1919-3

Debut author Copp, who has worked in refugee resettlement, creates a hero whose life in an Ethiopian refugee camp is the only one she’s ever known. “I am Queen Abia of the Shimelba Camp,” she announces. Artist Mohammed, making his picture book debut, paints the brown-skinned girl in a vibrant blue dress that stands out against the camp’s dry red dust. She contributes to daily life with panache: “Even though I’m a queen, I still have to pump water. I just sing louder than everyone else.” Mohammed’s documentary-style paintings sweep across the landscape and close in on interior scenes with equal care. His

portraits of Abia and her family have classic, sculptural dimensions. At the time of the full moon, Mama retells the story of their escape: “Mama says gunfire crackled all night, but I just cooed at the moon.” Papa looks to the future, saying that they’ll find a new home, a forever home. Queen Abia is wary; in the end, though, Mohammed shows her sitting in an airplane, flying away from the rows of tents with a story of her own to tell—a story of resilience and strength. Ages 6–9. *Author’s agent: Kelly Sonnack, Andrea Brown Literary. Illustrator’s agent: Lara Perkins, Andrea Brown Literary.* (Apr.)

My Mastodon

Barbara Lowell, illus. by Antonio Marinoni. Creative Editions, \$19.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-56846-327-8

Charles Willson Peale was an important 18th-century portraitist and also the proprietor of America’s first natural history museum, in Philadelphia. Lowell (*Sparky & Spike*) imagines a voice for Peale’s young daughter Sybilla, who helps her father and brothers as they reassemble a mastodon skeleton for display. “My favorite place is beneath his bones,” she says, as Italian artist Marinoni paints her taking tea with a doll underneath it. When a request comes to put the mastodon on temporary exhibit in London, Sybilla rebels. Her father and older brother Rembrandt acquiesce; their gentle approach allows Sybilla to reconsider. She consults the mastodon: “My mastodon says yes, in his own quiet way.” Architecturally detailed, theatrically lit illustrations by Marinoni set the swoops and curves of the fossilized mastodon against period dress and household furnishings. Nurtured by intelligent, eccentric family members and permitted familiarity with priceless scientific curiosities, Sybilla has an ideal Enlightenment-era childhood. An author’s note provides historical context. Ages 8–up. (Apr.)

Fiction

The Space Between Lost and Found
Sandy Stark-McGinnis. Bloomsbury, \$16.99 (272p) ISBN 978-1-5476-0123-3

Cassie Rodrigues’s adventurous mother was the vital heart of her family, always

singing and making grand plans. Now that she has been diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's, she's childlike, unpredictable, and unable to remember Cassie's name. Cassie's father wants to keep her mom indoors to protect her, but Cassie, an artist, knows that Mom, who "has always loved being outside and going places," needs to walk in the canyon near their Santa Fe home and do the things that bring her joy. Though the fifth grader has pulled back from her best friend Bailey, she enlists Bailey's help to take her mother on one last adventure—secretly achieving her mom's lifelong dream to swim with dolphins in San Diego—before she's moved to a care facility. The moving narrative gives readers a sense of the condition's advancement through Cassie's memories of her mother, pre-Alzheimer's. Though Cassie's endless patience with her mother's behavior at times strains credulity, it shows the depth of her love amid the disease's realities, convincingly portrayed alongside the heartbreaking loss that Cassie and her father experience. Ages 8–11. *Agent: Patricia Nelson, Marsal Lyon Literary.* (Apr.)

Lila and Hadley

Kody Keplinger. Scholastic Press, \$16.99 (256p) ISBN 978-1-338-30609-5

When her mother lands in prison, 12-year-old Hadley moves from Tennessee to stay with her estranged sister, Beth, in a Kentucky suburb. She's also navigating worsening eyesight due to retinitis pigmentosa, and the frustrations layer into sadness and anger—Hadley avoids speaking to her mom, lashes out at Beth, and refuses to take mobility classes as her condition advances. When Lila, a depressed pit bull at the rescue where Beth works as a trainer, takes to Hadley, the sisters are tasked with fostering Lila—socializing her so she can be adopted. Spending time with Lila pushes Hadley to make some changes in her own life, accepting the hard things she faces and the love being offered. Like Hadley, Keplinger (*That's Not What Happened*) is legally blind, and details, such as a passage about using a cane, lend the story authenticity. Hadley's anger at her situation and changing ability is sensitively wrought, and her growth is organic and true in this touching story of acceptance, forgiveness, and interspecies friendship. Ages 8–12.

Agent: Brianne Johnson, Writers House. (Apr.)

The Prettiest

Brigit Young. Roaring Brook, \$16.99 (320p) ISBN 978-1-62672-923-0

Sexism, harassment, and finding one's identity are the topics addressed in this timely novel. Drama explodes in the eighth grade class when someone posts a list of the 50 prettiest girls. Jewish Eve Hoffman, #1 prettiest, just wants to "slide by, unnoticed," but she's suddenly receiving a lot of unwanted attention, including an onslaught of inappropriate texts ("I know you stuff your bra"). Eve's plus-size best friend, Nessa Flores-Brady, didn't make the list and is sick of being devalued because of her size and Latinx heritage. And blonde queen-bee Sophie Kane is furious about her number two ranking. While the administration tries to find out who's behind the rankings, the three girls join forces to launch their own investigation, learning something about each other and themselves. Written using language that middle schoolers will find relatable ("Eve could feel them staring"), Young (*Worth a Thousand Words*) conveys a timely message about bullying and sexism, digging beneath the surface to show her protagonists' intelligence, distinct talents, and misguided preconceptions. Ages 8–12. *Agent: Melissa Edwards, Stonesong.* (Apr.)

★ Echo Mountain

Lauren Wolk. Dutton, \$17.99 (368p) ISBN 978-0-525-55556-8

A girl realizes her standout gifts as a healer in this exquisitely layered historical novel set in Depression-era Maine. After the financial crash forces a tight-knit family of five to move from town to build a cabin on Echo Mountain, a tree-felling accident puts 12-year-old narrator Ellie's father into a coma. The family's struggle to survive intensifies, made worse by fears about whether their beloved father—a tailor turned woodsman who, like Ellie, loves the wild—will ever awaken. Complex family dynamics loom large amid day-to-day matters: Ellie's mother and sister long for their former life and blame Ellie for her father's state; Ellie, who discovers a gift for healing, further upsets them by trying to startle her father awake. When a dog leads Ellie to "the hag," a woman who knows about cures and is herself suffering,



the girl lends a hand, resulting in further tensions, this time within the interconnected mountain community. Via strongly sketched cabin-life cadences and memorable, empathic characterizations—including, perhaps most vividly, of the wilderness itself—Newbery Honoree Wolk (*Wolf Hollow*) builds a powerful, well-paced portrait of interconnectedness, work and learning, and strength in a time of crisis. Ages 10–up. (Apr.)

Girls Save the World in This One

Ash Parsons. Philomel, \$18.99 (432p) ISBN 978-0-525-51532-6

Zombies are unleashed on small-town Georgia in this adventuresome survival tale. High school senior June Blue just wants to have a fabulous day at ZombieCon! and make Special Memories with her best friends Imani and Siggy, but things go from thrilling to strange to downright terrifying as some of the zombies shambling through the con turn out to be more than cosplayers. When the girls discover that they've been locked in and essentially left to die, they use their obsession with the zombie show *Human Wasteland* along with their wit and wiles to guide a small group of survivors through the convention center in a desperate bid for safety. Though this book starts slow, with the first third taken up by ordinary convention activities, the descent into horror and chaos is rapid and immersive. The best friends stick together, protecting each another and the survivors they encounter, deepening the bonds of friendship and leaning into each other's strengths. This is an excellent read for any teen who loves thrills, action, and stories of survival. Ages 12–up. (Apr.)

Redemption Prep

Samuel Miller. HarperCollins/Tegen, \$17.99 (416p) ISBN 978-0-06-266203-3

When popular Emmalynn Donahue goes missing from elite Redemption Prep in 1995, it sparks a campus-wide manhunt as

well as concern among friends and rivals at the Christian school, located on a remote Utah mountain. Among those concerned are her boyfriend, basketball star Aiden; her roommate, Neesha; and Evan, a student who's been stalking her. Did Emma find a way to escape the school, or was she taken? Was her vanishing connected to her selling an experimental study drug to most of the student body? As the mystery behind Emma's disappearance deepens, other secrets—including Redemption's strange past and true purpose—come to light, prompting Aiden, Neesha, and their new allies to seek answers and explanations at any cost. Miller (*A Lite Too Bright*) crafts an unpredictable, twisty story of ambition, competition, and manipulation. While a multiperspective approach, coupled with interview transcripts and student journal entries, allows Miller to get inside his characters' heads, slow pacing and a sometimes meandering story line may keep readers from becoming fully invested in the mystery. Ages 13–up. (Apr.)

Regenerate

Emily Goldthwaite. Rainfly, \$14.99 paper (330p) ISBN 978-1-73306-880-2

Goldthwaite's engaging, if didactic, debut—a dystopian romance concerned with social engineering, Panopticon tactics, and government-sanctioned “neuropathic disruptors”—explores the value of human interaction. Like her friends, Averielle Gouch, 17, is a GAP (Grandparent Adopted Posterity), one of the lucky children who has survived their Lost parents—a generation too addicted to tech for child rearing. Heralded as preservers of the human race, the GAPs have their lives planned and tracked by nebulous Organizers. Averielle has been predicted to enter into a relationship with Raxtin North, her best friend, and everything seems to be going to plan, until transfer Lander Lazarus Finch appears in Averielle's social circle. Despite Lander's cockiness, there's something about him that draws Averielle's affections. As Averielle grows closer to Lander, the Organizers decide to reunite her with a long-lost Gran, Jo, outside their village walls. But Lander and Jo know too much about their cosseted world, and it's darker than it appears. Though the dystopian framework and characters are familiar,

the pacing is quick, and Goldthwaite succeeds in highlighting issues with tech dependence and societal commodification amid a story of compassion and friendship. Ages 13–up. (Self-published)

The Best Laid Plans

Cameron Lund. Razorbill, \$18.99 (368p) ISBN 978-0-593-11491-9

Everyone at Keely's tiny Vermont high school has known each other forever, and since her lifelong best friend, Andrew, is a guy, the other guys at school seem to think she's one, too. She can just about bear being one of two known senior class female virgins, until, at her 18th birthday party, she walks in on the other one getting it on. So when she gets a job at the local video store and her handsome college-student coworker, Dean, seems to like her—or at least the more sophisticated version of herself she's pretending to be—she decides that it's time. Worried that Dean will freak when he finds out she's a virgin, she asks Andrew, who's known as a bit of a player, for help. In her debut, Lund takes the right-under-your-nose rom-com trope to the extreme, and when the scales finally fall from Keely's eyes, readers may wish the endless detours could have been avoided. Still, watching Keely take risks and be brave once she knows what she wants is satisfying. Ages 14–up. *Agent: Taylor Haggerty, Root Literary.* (Apr.)

Unscripted

Nicole Kronzer. Amulet, \$17.99 (336p) ISBN 978-1-4197-4084-8

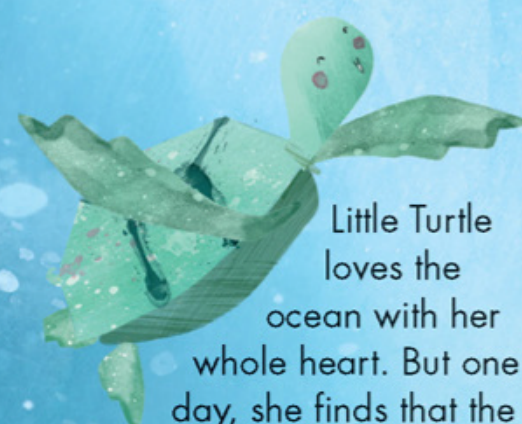
Seventeen-year-old Zelda Bailey-Cho is ready to spend her summer at a prominent Colorado improv camp with her step-brother, Will, and his boyfriend. Landing a spot on the camp's varsity team is the first step toward her goal of landing on *SNL* by age 25, but she quickly realizes the camp, while founded by a notable female comic, is rife with sexism and toxic masculinity. Out of 200 campers, only five—Zelda's bunkmates in counselor-less cabin Gilda Radner—are female; Zelda is the first to make varsity in 15 years. Ben, the 20-year-old varsity coach, shows an immediate interest in Zelda, which both flatters and unsettles her, but it seems harmless next to the constant sexism and sexual innuendo of her varsity teammates. As the general harassment intensifies, and

tiger tales

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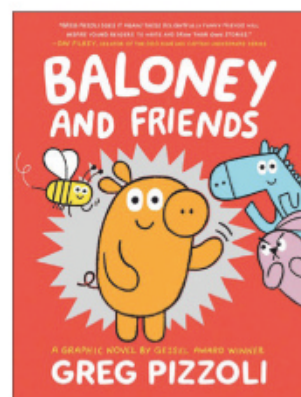
Zelda becomes increasingly alarmed by Ben's erratic behavior and gaslighting, her growing bond with her cabinmates and with a few Boy Scout troop guides from the neighboring camp allows for moments of connection and romance. Kronzer excels at balancing humor with difficult subjects, portraying sexism and toxic masculinity in comedy with appropriate gravity while celebrating positive, healthy relationships and growth through active choices. Ages 14–up. *Agent: Sara Crowe, Pippin Properties.* (Apr.)

Comics

Baloney and Friends (Baloney and Friends #1)

Greg Pizzoli. Little, Brown, \$12.99 (96p)
ISBN 978-1-368-05454-6

In a mix of short comics and single-spread minicomics, this first in an amiable new graphic novel series from Pizzoli (*The Book Hog*) introduces early readers to four animal pals and their friendship's dynamics. The titular Baloney, an eager-looking orange pig, breaks the fourth wall early on: "Hello! I'm Baloney! This is MY



book." But when his friends arrive—Peanut, an excitable blue horse; upbeat yellow bee Bizz; and Krabbit, a grumpy purple rabbit—Baloney is forced to amend

his earlier statement: "OKAY, FINE!... This is our book." Star or no, Baloney is the most fully fleshed out of the group, and subsequent stories explore his emotional reactions against those of his more archetypal companions. In brief stories featuring a magic performance (with a humorous lack of magic), a fear of swimming, and a case of the blues, Baloney's reactions serve as a proxy for readers'. Pizzoli's approachable art style communicates emotions and personalities through exaggerated facial expressions that should be clear to readers moving into chapter books. Back matter includes simple instructions for drawing each character. Ages 5–8. *Agent: Steven Malk, Writers House.* (Apr.)

★ When Stars Are Scattered

Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed. Dial, \$20.99 (264p) ISBN 978-0-525-55391-5;
\$12.99 paper ISBN 978-0-525-55390-8

Based on coauthor Mohamed's childhood after fleeing Somalia on foot with his younger brother, this affecting graphic novel follows the brothers' life in a Kenyan refugee camp. Though loving foster mother Fatuma cares for the boys, Mohamed watches out for his largely nonverbal younger brother, Hassan, who experiences occasional seizures, and is fearful of leaving him even to attend school. Mohamed longs to find their biological mother, and—like nearly everyone in the vast camp—waits for a life-changing, seemingly arbitrary UN interview that will determine whether the boys will be resettled, perhaps in the U.S. or Canada. Jamieson and Mohamed together craft a cohesive, winding story that balances daily life and boredom, past traumas, and unforeseen outcomes alongside camp denizens' ingenuity and community. Expressive, memorable characters by Jamieson (*Roller Girl*) work and play against backdrops of round-topped UN tents, while colorist Iman Geddy's deep purple skies drive home the title. The result of this team effort is a personal and poignant entry point for young readers trying to understand an unfair world. Back matter includes photographs of the brothers and authors' notes. Ages 9–12. (Apr.)



Witchlight

Jessi Zabarsky. Random House Graphic,
\$24.99 (208p) ISBN 978-0-593-12418-5;
\$16.99 paper ISBN 978-0-593-11999-0

Lelek, a brown-skinned witch, meets subdued Sanja, who is white, while being run out of town for conning the townsfolk. Impressed by Sanja's skill with a blade, Lelek abducts her, hoping to gain a tutor. After seeing Lelek's untenable lifestyle, Sanja strikes a bargain: in exchange for sword lessons, Lelek must stop cheating and hurting people, and the two will make a living



challenging local witches to prize fights. Lelek agrees, and the two wander from town to town encountering different magic styles and ways of life, meanwhile searching for the missing half of Lelek's soul, which she lost as a child. A leisurely exploration of the young women's evolving bond addresses themes of forgiveness, purpose, and community. The story's framing includes flash-

backs and dreams, presenting a unique, vibrant universe but also making some plot elements feel disconnected. Dynamic art is suffused with light (shout out to colorist Geov Chouteau), illuminating a strange and varied world filled with people, mainly female, with bodies in every shape, size, and color. The overall effect is warm and bewitching. Ages 12–up. *Agent: Judy Hansen, Hansen Literary.* (Apr.)

Nonfiction

The Boy and the Wild Blue Girl

Keith Negley. HarperCollins/Balzer + Bray,
\$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-0-06-284680-8

Negley (*Mary Wears What She Wants*) animates his exploration of early wind power with breezy energy, drawing the wind as an exuberant blue girl in dungarees whose perpetual motion blows hats off, scatters leaves and flowers, and tangles kite strings: "Everyone thought the wild blue girl was a nuisance." Crisp, confident colored pencil and collage artwork shows townspeople with their hair awry and their clothing askew as the girl tears through with a friendly smile on her face. A boy named Poul sees her worth, understanding

the possibilities that her power offers: "We just need to show them." She stands right next to him as he studies the problem in various ways, then erects a great tower above the town's buildings. Once the propellers are up, the wild blue girl takes to the air, and the townspeople stare open mouthed with amazement as the blades begin spinning. Negley has a gift for distilling action into kinetic lines and figures; though readers won't come away with an understanding of how wind turbines work, this maker story conveys the excitement of discovery and the simplicity of Poul's innovative idea. An afterword gives further details about Poul la Cour, a 19th-century Danish inventor. Ages 4–8. (Apr.)

★ The Cat Man of Aleppo

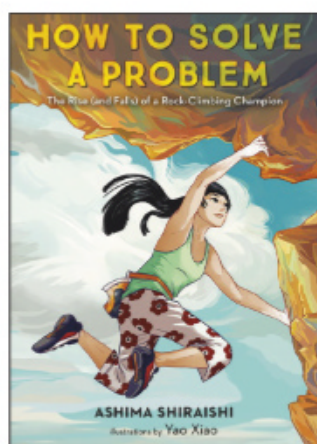
Irene Latham and Karim Shamsi-Basha, illus. by Yuko Shimizu. Putnam, \$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-1-9848-1378-7

In this picture book biography of an unexpected war hero, Mohammad Alaa Aljaleel—Alaa—is first seen in the old covered market of Aleppo, his native city. When war comes to Syria, many inhabitants leave, but Alaa stays to help: as an ambulance driver, "he swerves through the rubble streets and carries the wounded to safety." Intricate digitally colored ink drawings by Shimizu (*Barbed Wire Baseball*) portray scenes of desolation in this story by Latham (*This Poem Is a Nest*) and Shamsi-Basha, a Syrian-born writer and photographer. With meticulous care, Shimizu draws the destroyed buildings, the empty streets, and the cats that fleeing Syrians have left behind. In one striking spread, a huge olive tree towers over Alaa, two cats eyeing him from its branches. He starts bringing the strays food and water. "Together we can save them all," he tells his neighbors. Donors who hear about his efforts help him fund a sanctuary ("Alaa is able to rescue other animals, too"), a playground for children, and a well. "All he did was love the cats, and that love multiplied and multiplied again." Latham and Shamsi-Basha pick out the glimmers of light that make up Alaa's story, and Shimizu portrays their beauty. Author's notes give more information—including where to donate. Ages 4–8. *Authors' agents: Rosemary Stimola, Stimola Literary Studio (for Latham); Rena Rossner, Deborah Harris Agency (for Shamsi-Basha).* (Apr.)

★ How to Solve a Problem: The Rise (and Falls) of a Rock-Climbing Champion

Ashima Shiraishi, illus. by Yao Xiao. Make Me a World, \$17.99 (40p) ISBN 978-1-5247-7327-4

Teen author and climber Shiraishi doesn't just scale rocks—she solves problems, "which is to say, I make them mine." In crisp, vibrant spreads, Xiao, making her picture book debut, shows Shiraishi confronting a massive rock face. "Once I had a problem and it stretched into the sky," she writes. The next spread shows the boulder covered with images, visual mnemonics to help her along the way. "One part was arched like a question mark, another part stuck out like my father's elbow... and



another was shaped like the bolts of fabric stacked in my mother's sewing room." Now Shiraishi starts climbing, using no ropes.

Vignettes show her at each hold, twisting, pushing, grasping. Then she falls, hard. She takes a break, taking in "the new information the fall had given me. Each fall is a message, a hint, an idea." She climbs and falls again until, eventually, she scales the wall. When problem-solving is a necessary part of any process—one that informs and aids in resilience—the specter of failure disappears. Xiao's cleanly outlined forms and intensely saturated hues show Ashima honing analytical skills whose power reaches beyond the climbing wall to the rest of life. Ages 4–8. (Apr.)

Rescuing the Declaration of Independence: How We Almost Lost the Words That Built America

Anna Crowley Redding, illus. by Edwin Fotheringham. HarperCollins, \$18.99 (40p) ISBN 978-0-06-274032-8

Fotheringham's (*Most Wanted*) action-packed illustrations, hand-drawn and digitally rendered, bring to life a little-known piece of United States history. If not for Stephen Pleasonton, a clerk for then-Secretary of State James Monroe, the burning of the nascent nation's capital by British troops during the War of 1812 would have meant the destruction of

important records. "Stephen lived and breathed paper. His job was not a powerful post, but it came with a particularly spectacular perk"—caring for the nation's important founding documents. Redding (*Google It*) imbues her often-alliterative narration with a sense of urgency, echoed in the artwork, as Pleasonton works to save original manuscripts such as the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Nearly every spread features exigent motion, whether a galloping horse or Pleasonton running. The clerk oversees the sewing of large sacks for the documents, flags down evacuating wagons on which to stow them, and then hides them in the Virginia countryside while Washington burns. Back matter provides interesting historical details about some of the manuscripts and their road to the National Archives. Ages 4–8. (Apr.)

This Is a Book to Read with a Worm

Jodi Wheeler-Toppin, illus. by Margaret McCartney. Charlesbridge, \$16.99 (32p) ISBN 978-1-58089-897-3

Just in time for spring, Wheeler-Toppin (*Cat Science Unleashed*) invites young scientists to head outside for an up-close-and-personal earthworm encounter. Her interactive activity guide uses a conversational narrative to speak directly to readers. "Run your fingers across your worm's back. Feel the bump-bump-bump as you slide across the rings." McCartney's picture book debut employs digitally colored ink and pencil cartoons featuring a pair of curious children who carefully observe and enact the suggested mini-experiments. Materials such as a wet paper towel, flashlight, plastic bag, and cotton swab are used to learn about a worm's sensory reactions and locomotion, culminating in the final project: making an overnight "worm hotel" from a plastic bottle. Speech-bubble asides from a worm in fashionable John Lennon glasses and scarf provide additional facts and occasional humor. Though prefaced with a note reminding experimenters to "Treat me gently and... put me back where you found me," these hands-on observations of a living creature are likely most appropriate alongside a monitoring grown-up. Illustrated back matter anticipates further questions with plenty more worm facts and a resource list. Ages 5–8. (Apr.)

“The Arabian Nights has retained its power and preeminence in the cultural consciousness for good reason, but it’s time some new voices had the opportunity to be heard as well”

Moving Beyond the ‘Arabian Nights’

The director of an Arabic book prize argues that the time has come for more Arabic works to be translated

BY MOUZA AL SHAMSI

The *Arabian Nights* (also known as *One Thousand and One Nights*) is a collection of centuries-old stories originating in the Arab world that has traveled far and wide and had an enduring influence on global literature. The captivating tales tell of merchants, treasures, voyages, and adventure, and of thieves, slavery, lust, and violence, all tied together by the storyteller Scheherazade, the princess who famously uses the power of these narratives to delay her own death sentence. This masterpiece of the Islamic Golden Age has been a pervasive force in the cultural imagination, creating a reference point for “Arabian” storytelling that has endured for generations, and is in many ways still the best-known work of Arabic literature.

Yet in my view, the secret to *Arabian Nights*’ fame is not only in the interweaving plots, fantasies, and illusions of its narratives but also in the fact of its retelling. These tales passed from storytellers and travelers throughout history and around the world, surfacing in texts from Chaucer to Shakespeare, before being published in French in the 18th century and rewritten by authors and scholars in many languages ever since. When we speak of the *Arabian Nights* and its success, we are celebrating not only the power of exceptional storytelling but the power of translation.

The Arab world is a mosaic of countries and creativity, yet perceptions from the outside are all too often filtered through the lens of current affairs: discussions of conflict, politics, and natural resources can come together to present a distorted picture of the region. But as the director of a leading prize for Arabic writing, I am acutely aware that the ideas, innovation, and myriad voices coming out of this part of the world are multifaceted, diverse, and deserving of an audience.

Over the four years I have been director of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award, I have had the pleasure of witnessing the honoring of some of the finest pieces of modern writing in Arabic literature and the humanities. However, many of the honored authors—such as Hussein Al Mutawwa, Ahmed Al Qarmalawy,



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

Abbas Beydoun—are not known outside the Arab world. This is a loss felt by all: the authors deserving of recognition; the wider public, who are deprived of great works of literature; and the entire world, in missing the opportunity for deeper understanding between cultures.

In recent years, literary prizes have become drivers of translation, recognizing the urgent need to celebrate Arabic literature of quality and ensure it is shared

with the world. In 2018, we launched the Sheikh Zayed Book Award Translation Fund, in recognition of the active role of translation in fostering cultural communication and in promoting the diversity of Arabic literature internationally. By providing grants for foreign publishers to translate our winning titles, we are able to share stories that represent the differences in our culture, history, and experience but that transcend cultural differences to locate what is universal.

A fantastic example of how translation can open up productive dialogues between cultures is a wonderful children’s book called *The Dinoraf*, by Emirati author Hessa Al Muhairi. In this story about crossing borders and finding common ground, the main character is a dinosaur who searches for his closest relatives among the other animals. Along the way, he discovers the value of what makes each creature different and forges a special connection with the giraffe, so ending his journey as a “dinoraf.” Through our grants, *The Dinoraf* was translated into English, French, and Italian.

I’d encourage more foreign publishers to look to the Arab world, where some of the most exciting work being produced by authors today is deepening and challenging the idea of what it means to write in the Arabic tradition and to live in the glorious many-sidedness of the Middle East. It is the role of literary prizes and institutional bodies to smooth the path for translators and publishers, encouraging them to take risks and challenge audiences with new perspectives.

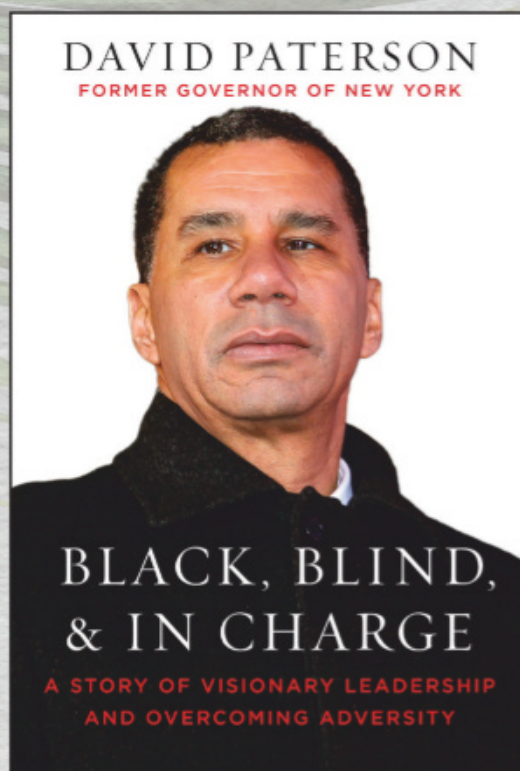
If the circulation of stories across borders was possible throughout the Byzantine era and the Middle Ages, we shouldn’t be facing barriers to accessing translated texts in a globalized, technologically advanced world with a formal publishing industry. The *Arabian Nights* has retained its power and preeminence in the cultural consciousness for good reason, but it’s time some new voices had the opportunity to be heard as well. ■

Mouza Al Shamsi is the director of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award.

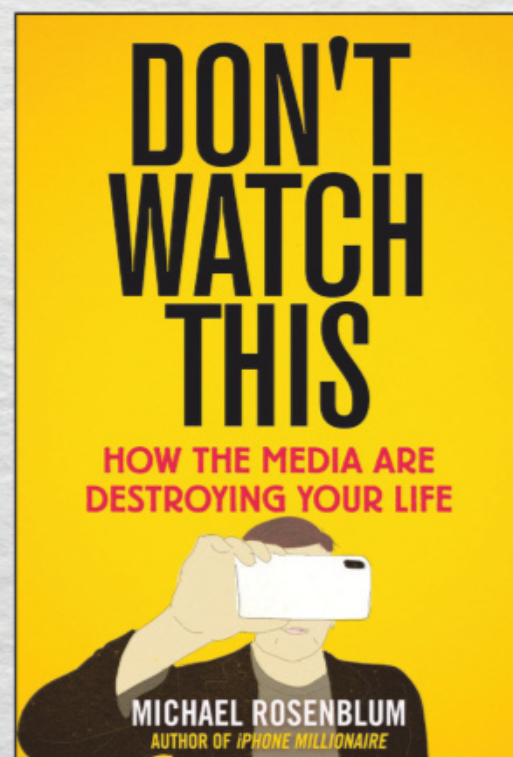
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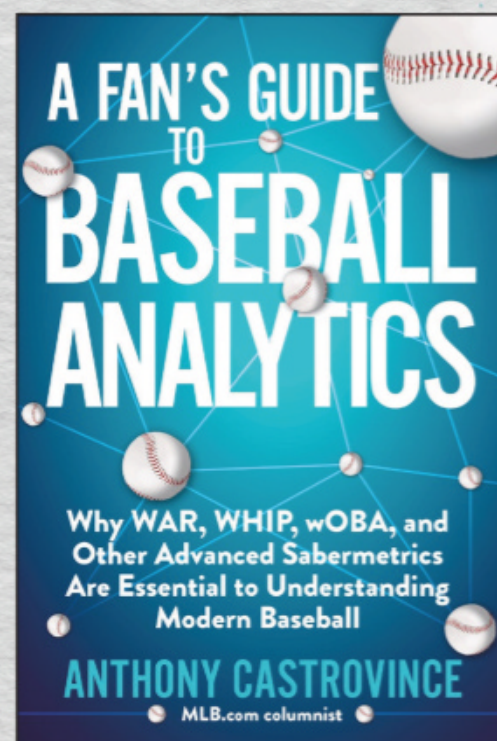
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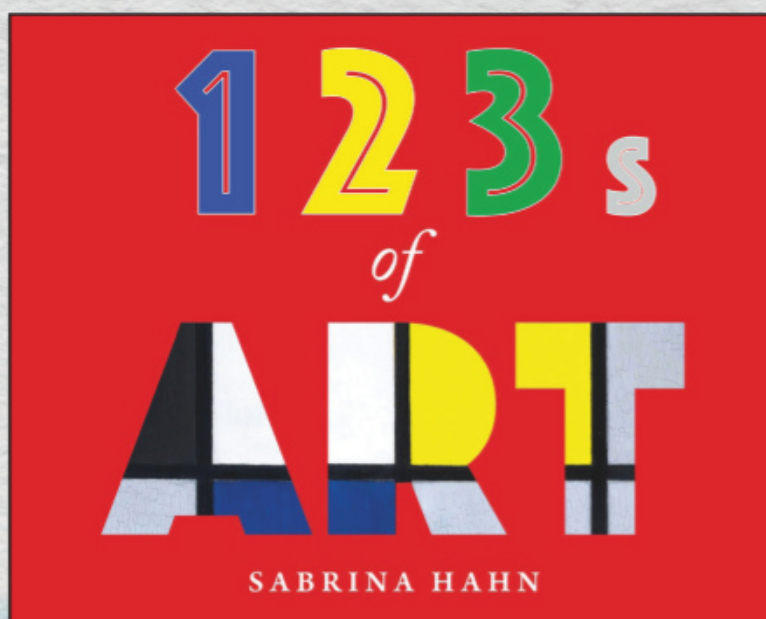
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