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FRANKFURT - 2023

Nonfiction

NOTES OF GRACE (Hachette Books)

A Memoir of Music and Transformation

By Vijay Gupta

NA: Hachette Books, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

A powerful chronicle of a member of the LA Philharmonic and MacArthur Fellow who finds forgiveness, connection, and family while first performing for then playing with people in Skid Row, mental hospitals, and LA County Jails.

Proposal is available, MS due March, 2025

Vijay Gupta is hailed by *The New Yorker* as a “visionary violinist...one of the most radical thinkers in the unradical world of American classical music.” But Vijay didn’t realize he needed saving. This would come unexpectedly when a member of an audience on LA’s Skid Row looked at him and asked “what’s eating at you, baby?” Juilliard-trained, a violinist in the first section at the LA Philharmonic, Gupta was a decorated international performer in the competitive world of classical music. But in reality he was falling apart. When Gupta began performing on Skid Row he didn’t know what he meant to accomplish at first, but the experiences fulfilled a deep need to connect. He founded Street Symphony, a non-profit dedicated to creating and sharing music in places filled with suffering. The music became a lifeline for the audiences, his colleagues, and himself. But his work with Street Symphony precipitated a crisis. What’s eating at you, baby? The son of hard-charging immigrant tiger parents from Bengal, Vijay had worked tirelessly to satisfy their expectations. He loved music. But his aptitude for practice and performance was directly tied to their love and approval, especially his father’s. His father had special hand signals he would use to communicate with Vijay while he performed (one gesture meant “play from the heart”) and the more Vijay succeeded the more approval he received. And the more he succeeded the greater were their expectations of him. In spite of exceeding those very expectations by becoming the youngest violinist ever hired by the LA Philharmonic, his parents expressed only disappointment at his choices. And they regularly reminded him how much weight he’d gained. Street Symphony? Madness. And when Vijay fell in love with a white woman his parents dubbed her “the creature,” and disowned him, precipitating a tragic rupture.

Vijay served as a member of the first violin section of the Los Angeles Philharmonic for 12 years under Esa-Pekka Salonen and Gustavo Dudamel, and has collaborated with the Kronos Quartet, the Philharmonia Orchestra of London, and Yo-Yo Ma, among many others. Gupta is a MacArthur Fellow, has also won 2017 Kennedy Center Citizen Artist Fellowship, a 2010-2013 TED Senior Fellowship, the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award, and an honorary doctorate from the University of La Verne. In 2019, he was named one of TIME Magazine’s “Next 100.” He has appeared on NPR, TIME Magazine, *The New Yorker*, Dateline NBC, PBS NewsHour, 60 Minutes, and others. His 3 TED Talks have garnered over 5 million views and he has 30,000 followers over various social media platforms.

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SEA OF TIME (Norton)

Whales and the Creation of the Modern World
by Ryan Tucker Jones

NA: Norton, UK: Scribe, Translation: (Holland/Balans)

A dramatic new look at the history of whaling by an environmental historian at University of Oregon. “Because whaling historians have so misjudged whales, they have also misjudged the history of whaling.”

Proposal is available, MS Due: January, 2026

SEA OF TIME centers the whales themselves and non-European peoples which opens up new stories, insights, and understandings of one of our most profound interspecies relationships. “... we can see how conceptions of whales as kin and ancestors enriched many peoples’ lives, how whaling abetted colonialism in some parts of the world while frustrating it in others, how Indigenous forms of knowledge contributed to modern whaling, and how older relationships with whales also spread to the Western world.” New breakthroughs in research about whales have also contributed tremendously. “Scientists’ new awareness of whales’ changing cultures is, if anything, even more revelatory. For the first time, we can begin to how whales’ own cultures evolved, especially in response to human hunting. This means both that human histories have been shaped by whales’ choices and that – through whales’ changing lives – we can get a rare glimpse into another species’ experience of the last millennium of life on this planet.”

It's hard to understate how consequential the relationship between humans and whales has been. And also how misunderstood. “SEA OF TIME will show how humanity’s long relationship with whales helps explain – indeed often helped drive – the process of globalization. From the rise of modern capitalism to the spread of European and East Asian colonialism, to the creation of multicultural societies, modern science, and transnational environmental management, whales and whaling were crucial. In fact, whales, with their vast migrations and use of a great diversity of environments, were global long before humans were. It is in part through attacking them that humanity also acquired a global character.” SEA OF TIME will also address globalization as an ecological and oceanic process, one that humans have not always controlled. And whales provide an excellent window through which to explore the human relationship to the wider ocean, revealing patterns in humanity’s use and conception of saltwater.

Ryan Tucker Jones is environmental historian at the University of Oregon. Trained in both Russian history and environmental history, he is the author of *Empire of Extinction: Russians and the Strange Beasts of the Sea* (Oxford University Press, 2017) and *Red Leviathan: The Secret History of Soviet Whaling* (Chicago, 2022). He is co-editor of the *Journal of Pacific History*.

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THE SECRET MENU (FSG)

Appetite, Identity, and Chinese Food

By Shiamin Kwa

NA: FSG, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

THE SECRET MENU is a deeply attentive and generous look at food, flavor, feelings, hunger, and heritage.

Proposal is available, MS Due January, 2025, publishing 2026.

Chinese Food was Shiamin Kwa's comfort food when her ethnically Chinese family first moved to the US from Malaysia, where they'd lived for generations, and where they instilled in her a deep sense of her and their Chineseness. As a ten-year-old in US Middle School, she satisfied her hunger for both flavor and a sense of home with Chinese Food, even though it was nothing like any food she'd ever eaten. Whatever this food was, it nourished her, often in secret, as she adjusted to life in a new country, with its own strange customs around eating, dishes, and meals. And race. Her encounters with (mostly white) Americans always involved questions about Shiamin's background. Who (or what) was she? But all this began to change when Shiamin began to cook and to study the history of "Chinese Food." As she says, "I did not think that I was searching for myself when I started searching for 'authentic' Chinese-American food." But it was through this history and its food and flavors that she came to terms with how to be and feed herself. "From my childhood in Malaysia to American teenage-hood and beyond, I have learned how to eat, often in translation. That has been an important skill that has given me insight into other eras and other people... Most of all, it has taught me about myself. Who I am is as simple as what has been with me all along in many forms: in a steaming bowl among elbow-bumping customers at a night market melamine tabletop in Penang, in a pot of spicy instant noodles cooked surreptitiously in a forbidden rice cooker in a New Hampshire dormitory room, in a waxed paper carton gobbled alone in front of a television in a hotel room. The small and impermanent triumphs of a dish of food have taught me about the messy accumulations that we call culture and history, and it is a dish of food that gives succor to those who feel out of place."

Shiamin Kwa is a writer, translator, and award-winning professor of literature at Bryn Mawr College and the author of four books, all published by University Presses. She is published widely in her field, across theater and fiction, food studies, graphic narratives, literary studies, cultural studies, comparative and world literature, and literary and narrative theory. She is a first-generation naturalized U.S. citizen of "Overseas Chinese" parents.

THE FUTURE WAS NOW (Flatiron)

Madmen, Mavericks, and the Summer Sci-Fi Snatched Hollywood

Chris Nashawaty

NA: Flatiron, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

The story of eight unforgettable films released during one summer involving the biggest names in Hollywood that changed movie making forever

MS is available, publishing July 30th, 2024

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In the summer of 1982, eight science fiction films were released within six weeks of each other, changing the careers of some of Hollywood's biggest names and altering the business and art of movies to this day. In *The Future Was Now*, Chris Nashawaty recounts the riotous genesis of these films, featuring an all-star cast of Hollywood luminaries and gadflies alike: Steven Spielberg, at the height of his powers, conceives E.T. as an unlikely family tale, and quietly takes over the troubled production of *Poltergeist*, a horror film he had been nurturing for years. Ridley Scott, fresh off the success of *Alien*, tries his hand at an odd Philip K. Dick story that becomes *Blade Runner*—a box office failure turned cult classic. Similar stories arise for films like *Tron*, *Conan the Barbarian*, and *The Thing*. Taken as a whole, these films show a precarious turning-point in Hollywood history, when baffled film executives finally began to understand the potential of these high-concept films: a rabid fanbase, merchandising potential, and endless possible sequels. Expertly researched, energetically told, and written with an unabashed love for the art of cinema, *The Future was Now* is a monumental accomplishment—a chronicle of how the revolution sparked in a galaxy far, far away finally took root and changed Hollywood forever.

Chris Nashawaty was the film critic at *EW* for over 25 years. He is the author of *CADDYSHACK (Flatiron)* and *CRAB MEN, TEENAGE MONSTERS, AND CANDY STRIPE NURSES (Abrams)*, a biography of the films of Roger Corman.

THE INCORRUPTIBLES (Little, Brown)

A Secret Vice Crusade, the Jewish Underworld & the Origins of Organized Crime

By Dan Slater

NA: Little, Brown, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

A secret vice squad wages war on the Lower East Side underworld, a Jewish *Peaky Blinders* or *Gangs of New York*.

MS is available, publishing July, 2024

The Incorruptibles were a secret vice squad privately funded by wealthy uptown German Jews (Lehman, Guggenheim, Schiff) in order to rescue the reputation of Jews in America from the escapades of a sensational network of gangs in Manhattan's Lower East Side, the most crowded neighborhood in the world in 1910. The rich and atmospheric narrative follows the heroic efforts of Abe Shoenfeld, a young tailor's son who must turn against the gang members he grew up with to save the neighborhood he loves; Antonia Rolnick, his one-time love interest, later informant and partner in crime-fighting, an immigrant girl who escapes a massacre in Russia only to fall into prostitution as a teen; and the canny maneuverings of another tailor's son, Arnold Rothstein, who sees, in each new reform effort, opportunities for enormous power and graft. A tale that moves from lavish parties in marble mansions to the horror of horse-poisoning gangsters, from Wall Street bankers to a corporation of pimps, *The Incorruptibles* unlikely success emboldened one of history's most dynamic criminal masterminds, the godfather of organized crime.

Dan Slater has been researching this project for five years, poring over century-old trial transcripts, visiting archives in Israel, and accessing the unpublished memoirs of his main character. The result reads like a Jewish *Gangs of New York*, set 50 years later, and is reminiscent of E.L Doctorow's *Ragtime*, Luc Sante's *Low Life*, *The Alienist*, and *The Devil in the White City*. Slater is the author of *WOLF BOYS (S&S)* and a former reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*, who has written for *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe* and many others.

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SPIRITED (Avid Reader Press)

A Memoir of Family, Feminism, and Supernatural Romance

By Alia Volz

WE: Avid Reader Press, Translation: CLA

SPIRITED is the story of Alia’s great-grandmother who considered herself married to an amorous ghost with whom she had ecstatic sex for forty years, until her death at 103, and who documented her experiences in an extraordinary series of recordings, the effects of which Alia follows through her eccentric family and into her own coming of age in order to claim her inheritance on her own terms.

Proposal is available, MS due February 2025

At the heart of Alia Volz’ brilliant new book is a haunting in Levittown, Long Island, the original American suburban development. For nearly forty years, Alia’s great-grandmother Paula considered herself married to the ghost of a former lover named Ed Clayton—and even changed her legal name to Paula Long-Clayton. Paula, who lived to be 103, communicated with Ed through a Ouija board, but their primary interactions were sexual. Every afternoon at one o’clock, she shuffled into her bedroom to make love with the ghost, returning refreshed and rejuvenated, even in extreme old age. Paula documented her supernatural romance in an audio-journal recorded on cassette tapes, which she gave to Alia during their last visit, saying, “I didn’t know how it would be with you. But you belong. You belong.” Alia, however, wanted nothing to do with that side of her family: not the ghost story; not her sweet but supremely weird great-grandmother; not her austere grandmother Jan who was Paula’s caretaker for many years; nor her own father Doug who had failed Alia and her mother at key moments. Then, after Alia had fallen in love and was thinking about starting her own family, she came across a Sony Walkman in a thrift store with a note taped to it that read, *It works*. Listening to her great-grandmother’s account years after her death provoked a series of revelations about womanhood, motherhood, freedom, and estrangement, ultimately changing way Alia understood her female ancestors and what might be possible for herself.

Alia Volz’ debut memoir *Home Baked* (HMH, 2020) was the winner of the 2020 Golden Poppy Award for Nonfiction and finalist for the NBCC. She’s been published in *The Best American Essays*, *The New York Times*, *Bon Appetit*, *LitHub*, *Salon*, *Tin House*, *Shondaland*, *The Threepenny Review*, and numerous other venues. Alia has received fellowships from MacDowell, the Ucross Foundation, Monson Arts, and Chateau de la Napoule in France, where she serves on the 2023 selection committee. She now resides in Portugal and is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.

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Backlist:

ALL THE BEAUTY IN THE WORLD (S&S)

A Museum Guard's Memoir of Life, Loss, and Art

by Patrick Bringley

NA:S&S, **UK:** Bodley Head, **Translation:** CLA (**China**/Citic, **Germany**/Ullstein, **Japan**/Shobunsha, **Korea**/Woongjin Think Big, **Poland**/Arkady, **Spain**/Paidos, **Taiwan**/China Times

With over 7 printings and 39,000 hardcovers in print.

MS is available, published February, 2023

PAIN KILLER (Random House)

An Empire of Deceit and the Origins of America's Opioid Epidemic (Random House)

By Barry Meier

NA: Random House, **UK**/Sceptre, **Translation:** CLA (**China**/MoveableType **Italy**/Mondadori, **Japan**/Shobun-Sha, **Poland**/Poradnia)

The book behind the six-episode Netflix series PAINKILLER, starring Uzo Aduba, Matthew Broderick, West Duchovny, Dina Shihabi, and John Rothman. Peter Berg (Friday Night Lights) is the director, and Eric Newman (Narcos) and Alex Gibney (Going Clear, the Inventory) are producers.

HIDDEN SYSTEMS (Random House Graphic)

Water, Electricity, the Internet, and the Secrets Behind the Systems We Use Every Day

By Dan Nott

NA: Random House Graphic, **UK:** Abner Stein, **Translation:** CLA (**China**/Luminaire, **Japan**/Kawade-Shobo, **Korea**/Forest Book Publishing, **Portugal**/Classica Editora, **Spain**/Planeta)

Longlisted for the 2023 National Book Award, this nonfiction science graphic novel takes readers on a journey from how the most essential systems were developed to how they are implemented in our world today and how they will be used in the future.

This book is 288 pages, 6 x 9, and has been published simultaneously in HC (\$23.99) and trade paperback (\$17.99). There are less than 10,000 words total to be translated and the estimated file fee from PRH is \$500.