



FRANCES GOLDIN LITERARY AGENCY, INC.

HOTLIST
London 2024

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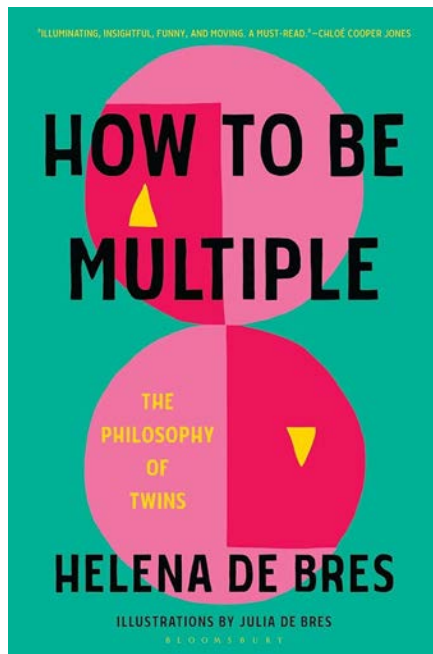
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FRANCES GOLDIN LITERARY AGENCY, INC.

NONFICTION



HELENA DE BRES is a professor of philosophy at Wellesley College, where she researches and teaches ethics, philosophy of literature, and political theory. Her essays and humor writing have appeared in *The Point*, the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, and elsewhere. Her book *Artful Truths: The Philosophy of Memoir* was published by the University of Chicago Press in 2021.

- **US & Can:** Bloomsbury
- **US Editor:** Callie Garnett
- **UK:** Manchester University Press
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Final manuscript available**
- **Publication:** November 2023
- **Domestic Agent:** Alison Lewis

HOW TO BE MULTIPLE: The Philosophy of Twins

Philosopher Helena de Bres uses the curious experience of being a twin as a lens to reconsider our place in the world.

Wait, are you you or the other one? Which is the evil twin? Have you ever switched partners? Can you read each other's mind? Twins get asked the weirdest questions by strangers, loved ones, even themselves. For Helena de Bres, a twin and philosophy professor, these questions are closely tied to some of philosophy's most unnerving unknowns. *What makes someone themselves rather than someone else? Can one person be housed in two bodies? What does perfect love look like? Can we really act freely? At what point does wonder morph into objectification?*

Accompanied by her identical twin Julia's drawings, Helena uses twinhood to rethink the limits of personhood, consciousness, love, freedom, and justice. With her inimitably candid, wry voice, she explores the long tradition of twin representations in art, myth, and popular culture; twins' peculiar social standing; and what it's really like to be one of two. With insight, hope, and humor, she argues that our reactions to twins reveal our broader desires and fears about selfhood, fate, and human connection, and that reflecting on twinhood can help each of us—twins and singletons alike—recognize our own multiplicity, and approach life with greater curiosity, imagination, and courage.

“Lucid, curious, and deeply felt, *How to Be Multiple* is a work of philosophy, an autobiography of twindom, and a captivating exploration of selfhood... What a fun, gorgeous book.” —**Melissa Febos**, **National Book Critics Circle Award-winning author of *Girlhood***

“Profoundly illuminating, insightful, funny, and moving—*How to Be Multiple* is a must-read.” —**Chloé Cooper Jones**, author of *Easy Beauty*

“Vivacious...[de Bres] stitches the project together with brio.” —**Parul Seghal**, *The New Yorker*

“[de Bres] draws on her own experience as a way to explore mind-body boundaries and the nature of individualism and autonomy...Fascinating.” —**Wall Street Journal**

“Stunning . . . In fluid prose, de Bres gracefully clarifies philosophical notions for the lay reader, and her own observations as an identical twin invigorate the book's emotional center while leaving room for the many unsolved mysteries of identity, kinship, and closeness. This will challenge the way readers see the world.” —**Publishers Weekly**, **starred review**



STEPHANIE BURT is a poet, literary critic, and professor with nine published books, including *Close Calls with Nonsense* (Graywolf Press, 2009) which was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Her most recent poetry collection is *We Are Mermaids* (Graywolf, 2022). Her culture writing has appeared in many venues including *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, the *London Review of Books* and *TLS*. She is a Guggenheim award winner and the Donald P. and Katherine B. Loker Professor of English at Harvard University

- **World English:** Basic Books
- **US Editor:** Lara Heimert
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Proposal:** Available
- **MS Due:** January 2025
- **Domestic Agent:** Matt McGowan

UNTITLED ON TAYLOR SWIFT

Sold in Six figure pre-empt

A leading literary and pop culture critic looks at Taylor Swift at the height of her success

Based on her forthcoming course at Harvard University, the announcement of which received major media coverage from around the world, *Untitled on Taylor Swift* will be the first serious work of cultural criticism about Taylor Swift as an artist and creator, touching on girlhood, fame, privilege, costume, economics, song and stagecraft, and the author's own transition to womanhood. In the vein of Sarah Smarsh's *She Come By It Natural*, on Dolly Parton, or Touré's *I Would Die 4 U: Why Prince Became an Icon*, Burt's book will be an appreciation and analysis of one of the most influential pop stars of a generation.



KYLE CHAYKA is a staff writer at The New Yorker, where he writes a column on digital technology and the impact of the Internet and social media on culture. His debut nonfiction book, *THE LONGING FOR LESS* was published in 2020. As a journalist and critic he has contributed to publications including *The New York Times Magazine*, *Harper's*, *The New Republic*, and *Vox*. Kyle is also the co-founder of Study Hall, an online community for journalists, and *Dirt*, a newsletter about digital culture.

- **US & Can:** Doubleday
- **US Editor:** Thomas Gebremedhin
- **UK:** Bonnier | **Brazil:** Editora Saraiva
- Spain:** Gatopardo | **Italy:** Roi Edizioni
- Korea:** MiraeBooks | **Dutch:** Ten Have |
- Russia:** Corpus | **Chinese (simple):** China Translation & Publishing
- **Other Translation:** FGLA
- **Final Manuscript Available**
- **Publication:** January 16, 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Caroline Eisenmann

FILTERWORLD: How Algorithms Flattened Culture

From *New Yorker* staff writer and author of *The Longing for Less* Kyle Chayka comes a timely history and investigation of a world ruled by algorithms, which determine the shape of culture itself.

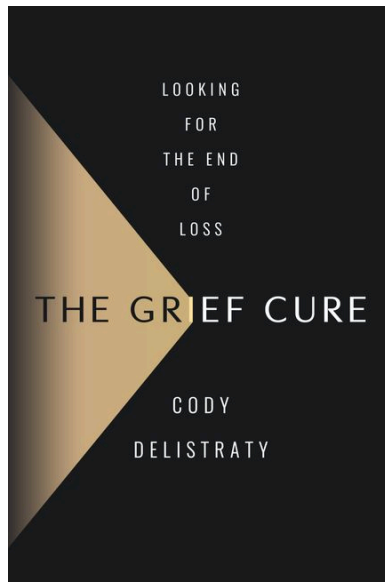
From trendy restaurants to city grids, to TikTok and Netflix feeds the world round, algorithmic recommendations dictate our experiences and choices. The algorithm is present in the familiar neon signs and exposed brick of Internet cafes, be it in Nairobi or Portland, and the skeletal, modern furniture of Airbnbs in cities big and small. Over the last decade, this network of mathematically determined decisions has taken over, almost unnoticed—informing the songs we listen to, the friends with whom we stay in touch—as we’ve grown increasingly accustomed to our insipid new normal.

This ever-tightening web woven by algorithms is called “Filterworld.” Kyle Chayka shows us how online and offline spaces alike have been engineered for seamless consumption, becoming a source of pervasive anxiety in the process. Users of technology have been forced to contend with data-driven equations that try to anticipate their desires—and often get them wrong. What results is a state of docility that allows tech companies to curtail human experiences—human lives—for profit. But to have our tastes, behaviors, and emotions governed by computers, while convenient, does nothing short of call the very notion of free will into question.

In *Filterworld*, Chayka traces this creeping, machine-guided curation as it infiltrates the furthest reaches of our digital, physical, and psychological spaces. With algorithms increasingly influencing not just what culture we consume, but what culture is produced, urgent questions arise: What happens when shareability supersedes messiness, innovation, and creativity—the qualities that make us human? What does it mean to make a choice when the options have been so carefully arranged for us? Is personal freedom possible on the Internet? To the last question, *Filterworld* argues yes—but to escape Filterworld, and even transcend it, we must first understand it.

“[*Filterworld*] evokes less transient impulses than genuine, lingering feelings: depression about our big-box corporate dystopia and admiration for Chayka’s curiosity and clear writing style.” —
Alexandra Jacobs, *The New York Times Book Review*

“[Chayka] brings stark clarity... [*Filterworld*] does the near impossible... This is a book about technology and culture. But it is also, in the end—in its own inputs and outputs and signals—a book about politics.” —**Megan Garber, *The Atlantic***



CODY DELISTRATY is a writer and editor, most recently working as the culture editor at the *Wall Street Journal Magazine*. He has written for the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, and was the European arts columnist for *The Paris Review* in Paris. He has degrees in politics from New York University and history from the University of Oxford. He and his work have been featured on WNYC, France 5, and Arté, and British *Vogue* named him a best young writer of the year. He has also given corporate talks about tragedy, art, and creativity to companies like PwC. He lives in New York City.

- **US & Can:** HarperCollins
- **US Editor:** Sarah Haugen
- **Korea:** Booken
- **UK:** Matt Turner / RCW
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Proposal available**
- **Delivery:** October 2023
- **Publication:** June 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Caroline Eisenmann

THE GRIEF CURE: *Looking for the End of Loss*

In this lyrical and moving story of the world of Prolonged Grief, journalist Cody Delistraty reflects on his experience with loss and explores what modern science, history, and literature reveal about the nature of our relationship to grief and our changing attitudes toward its cure.

When Cody Delistraty lost his mother to cancer in his early 20s, he found himself unsure how to move forward. The typical advice was to move through the five stages, achieve closure, get back to work, go back to normal. So begins a journey into the new frontiers of grief, where Delistraty seeks out the researchers, technologists, therapists, marketers, and communities around the world who may be able to cure the pain of loss in novel ways. From the neuroscience of memory deletion to book prescriptions, laughter therapy, psilocybin, and Breakup Bootcamp, what ultimately emerges is not so much a cure as a fresh understanding of what living with grief truly means.

As Delistraty created his own ad hoc treatment plan, the American Psychiatric Association and the World Health Organization gave extended, disruptive grief an official name: Prolonged Grief Disorder. A diagnosis, based on meeting several symptoms and contingencies, has opened innovative avenues of treatment and an important conversation about a debilitating form of grief, but it has also opened a debate as to whether this form of grief, no matter how severe and unrelenting, is best approached medically at all.

Braiding deep, emotional resonance with sharp research and historical insight, Delistraty places his own experience in dialogue with great writers and thinkers throughout history who have puzzled over this eternal question: how might we best face loss?

“A wise and perceptive journey into grief and the ways we seek to assuage it. Incredibly powerful...” –
–**Lauren Elkin**, author of *Flâneuse* and *Art Monsters*

"With great sensitivity and rigor, Cody Delistraty appeals to the heart *and* the brain to demystify one of life's most isolating experiences... With this moving, thought-provoking book as my companion, young me would have felt a lot less lonely, and a lot more hopeful." — **Kate Bolick**, author of *Spinster: Making a Life of One's Own*



LEORA FRIDMAN is a writer whose work is concerned with issues of identity, care, ability, and embodiment. She is author of *Static Palace*, a collection of essays about chronic illness, art and politics (punctum books 2022), *My Fault*, selected by Eileen Myles for the Cleveland State University Press First Book Prize, and other books of prose, poetry and translation. Her work appears or is forthcoming in *Fence*, the *Millions*, the *New York Times*, the *Rumpus*, *Tricycle Magazine*, *Matters of Feminist Practice* and the *Believer*, among others. She was recently Curator in Residence at the Jewish Museum of Maryland and is currently Faculty Associate in the Narrative Medicine program at Columbia University.

- **World English:** Wayne State University Press
- **US Editor:** Sandra Korn
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Final MS Available March 2024**
- **Publication:** September 24, 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Tess Weitzner

BOUND UP: On Kink, Power, and Belonging

A powerful work of nonfiction on kink, assimilation, and inherited trauma.

Beginning from the author's own experience as a Jewish person exploring Nazi kink, the book expands into a wider conversation about how sexuality and embodied practices meet historical oppressions. Combining the personal and critical, *BOUND UP* reads across alt-right Furies, emerging BDSM cultures, and the slipperiness of racialization to reckon with trauma, humor, and systemic vs. individual responsibility—and ultimately to argue for the essential role of the body in grappling with history.

Particularly relevant in the wake of #metoo and our ongoing cultural discussion of consent, *BOUND UP* insists on the resilience of sexuality and the restorative power of kink. How can honest play and direct communication lead to true forms of rehabilitation on both personal and political levels?

In smart, often darkly funny prose, Fridman builds on the legacy of autofiction from writers like Chris Kraus and Sheila Heti, discussions of queer healing in Maggie Nelson and Audre Lorde, and the work of feminist and queer researchers and critics including Saidiya Hartman, J. Jack Halberstam, and Hannah Arendt. An earlier version was shortlisted for the 2020 Graywolf Prize in Nonfiction.



COURTNEY GUSTAFSON, is the creator of @PoetsSquareCats on TikTok (1M) and Instagram (107k). Her cats and rescue work have been featured on *The Dodo*, *Newsweek*, *Best Friends Animal Society Magazine*, and elsewhere. Before she had thirty cats, she completed a master's degree and PhD coursework in rhetoric and composition at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

- **US&C:** Crown (PRH)
- **US Editor:** Libby Burton
- **UK:** Fig Tree (Penguin UK)
- **German:** Ullstein
- **Italian:** Modadori Oscar
- **Dutch:** Nieuw Amsterdam
- **Other Translation:** FGLA
- **Edited Manuscript:** April 2024
- **Publication:** April 2025
- **Domestic Agent:** Caroline Eisenmann

POETS SQUARE: *Essays on Cats & Community*

****Sold in a six figure preempt****

When Courtney Gustafson moved into a new rental in the Poets Square neighborhood in Tucson, Arizona, she would have never guessed that a colony of feral cats living in her driveway would change her life forever. Settling into a secure romantic relationship while it felt like the world around her was burning down, she couldn't know how reluctantly, then profoundly, she would come to care about the health and safety of those thirty-some-odd neglected cats. She had no idea about the grief and hardship of animal rescue, the staggering size of the problem. And she couldn't have imagined how that struggle—towards an ethics of care, of individuals trying their best amidst spectacularly failing systems—would help pierce a personal darkness she'd wrestled with much of her life.

POETS SQUARE: Essays on Cats & Community is a memoir-in-essays about becoming an accidental cat rescuer, going viral, creating community, and surviving capitalism. These essays tell the brutal and tender stories of cats Courtney has saved (or failed to save) as a lens to explore everything from poverty and mental health to morality and misogyny. We see how cat rescue—despite its often-enormous sadness—paradoxically helped in a struggle with depression, showing the way towards an interrelated community of cats and care. The book explores caretaking and kindness in the face of a broken system: what it means for an individual to refuse to throw their hands up, to insist on showing up regardless of insurmountable problems, to search for ways to be a good person in the face of crushing overwhelm.

POETS SQUARE is beautifully written literary nonfiction about animals with a profound core like *H IS FOR HAWK* and *FOX AND I*. Structured in smart, snappy personal essays that probe at the problems of personhood in the internet age, it will appeal to fans of Melissa Broder or Jia Tolentino, and its introspective, generous thinking on self and society evokes *WINTERING*.



JAMIE HOOD is a critic, memoirist, and poet, and the author of *how to be a good girl* (Grieveland 2020). Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Baffler*, *The Nation*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The New Inquiry*, *Observer*, *The Drift*, *SSENSE*, *Bookforum*, *Vogue*, and elsewhere. She lives in Brooklyn.

- **US:** Pantheon/Random House
- **US Editor:** Zach Phillips
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Proposal Available**
- **Delivery Date:** Spring 2024
- **Publication:** Spring, 2025
- **UK Rep:** Holly Faulks at Greene & Heaton
- **Domestic Agent:** Ayla Zuraw-Friedland

TRAUMA PLOT

*****Sold in a six figure pre-empt*****

In many ways, *TRAUMA PLOT* is the book that essayist, critic, and poet Jamie Hood has been writing her entire life. In the thirty years since her first sexual assault (age six, by the neighbor), it has taken many forms: a chronological, straight memoir of violence; a book-length poem; a manifesto; a novel. In the wake of each subsequent attack (twice as a teenager, several times in graduate school, most recently at a Brooklyn bar), and resultant attempt to narrativize the violence, what became clear was that no single genre was able to capture the entirety of what she was trying to say.

Trauma disorients the very possibility of straightforward narrative, so then why do we expect our tellings of it to be linear and easily digestible? *TRAUMA PLOT* asks: what is rape at its core? And beyond: how would an account of rape that acknowledges and incorporates the truth of trauma as an experience shift the conversation?

Told in nine parts—media historical, political, poetic, autofictional, literary critical, and memoiristic—*TRAUMA PLOT* reckons with the confessional imperative of survivors and the role of rape narratives in our collective consciousness. Weaving between genres and throughout history, Hood consults Artemesia Gentileschi and other foremothers in revenge and witness, documents a month of walking the exact route that she took to escape an assailant, tangles with the specter of Dick Wolf and *Law and Order*, reflects on her own coping mechanisms and childhood in Virginia, probes the specific silence around trans women's experience of rape, and interrogates what it means to enter a post-#MeToo era of backlash in 2022.

TRAUMA PLOT is a necessarily illuminating text, imagining stranger, more radical models of storytelling. Combining the hybridity of Camen Maria Machado's *IN THE DREAM HOUSE* with the intensity of Maggie Nelson's *THE ART OF CRUELTY*, *TRAUMA PLOT* promises to do for sexual violence what *CITIZEN* did for conversations around race, and become part of a new wave of cultural resistance.



BITTER KALLI (they/them) is a writer, artist, and land worker. Currently based in Philadelphia, their work has appeared in outlets including *Guernica*, *Urban Omnibus*, *Brooklyn Rail*, *Architectural Digest*, *Triquarterly Magazine*, and has been nominated for the PEN Robert Dau Short Story Prize.

- **US:** Amistad / HarperCollins
- **US Editor:** Alexa Frank
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Edited Manuscript:** March 2024
- **Publication:** Winter 2025
- **Domestic Agent:** Ayla Zuraw-Friedland

MOUNTED: On Horses, Blackness and Liberation

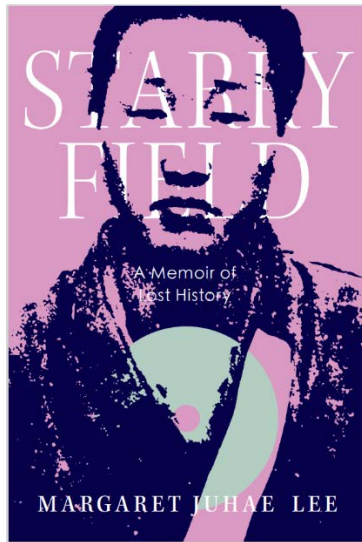
In 2015, the LA Times tweeted side-by-side images of Serena Williams and racehorse American Pharoah along with the question “Who’s the Real Sports person of the Year?” in reference to the annual title awarded by Sports Illustrated. This wasn’t the first time a Black athlete had been compared to a horse, or even made to compete against one. Throughout American history, the relationship between horses and Black people has become a singular site for complex performances of status, labor, racial hierarchy, and white anxiety.

MOUNTED: ON HORSES, BLACKNESS, AND LIBERATION examines the shared history of Blackness and horses, exploring what the image of the horse can teach us about nationhood, race, and American landscapes both mythical and physical. Drawing on their personal history as a former urban equestrian, Black queer person, and child of Jamaican and Filipino immigrants, essayist and art critic Bitter Kalli (they/them) argues for the horse as a critical site of power and identity.

In a series of approximately a dozen essays, Kalli explores the work of Black artists and media makers from Beyonce to filmmakers Tiona Nekkia-McClodden and Jeymes Samuel, and their own relationship to horses throughout their life. Alternatively playful and critical, meditative and biting, these essays chart a course throughout time and place—from the shadows of racetracks where jockey culture and the ubiquity of “equestrian chic” originated, to the reclamation (or, to borrow Lil Nas X’s word, yeehawification) of the image of the cowboy and fraught connections of equestrian sport to US militarization and European colonial domination. What emerges is a central question: What does it mean for Black people to ride and tend horses in the context of a culture that has also used horses against them?

Throughout these essays, Kalli also works to untangle their own experiences as the sole Black member of their equestrian team at Columbia, and how the aesthetics, ethos, and practice of horse stewardship contributed to their understanding of gender, sexuality, and radical community building

Combining the cultural acuity of *THEY CAN’T KILL US UNTIL THEY KILL US* and *GLITCH FEMINISM* with the striking personal narratives of *HOW FAR THE LIGHT REACHES* and *TACKY*, **MOUNTED seeks to move beyond the reductive stereotypes that often define our perceptions of “horse people”—their swaggering masculinity, their snooty elitism—and their assumed whiteness, to honor the nuance and resistance of how Black people relate to the image and physical presence of the horse in all its forms.**



MARGARET JUHAEE LEE is an Oakland-based writer and a former literary editor of *The Nation* magazine. She has been the recipient of a Bunting Fellowship from Harvard University, a Korean Studies Fellowship from the Korean Foundation. She is also a Tin House scholar, and has been awarded residencies at the Mesa Refuge, the Anderson Center, and Mineral School. Her articles, reviews, and interviews have been published in *The Nation*, *Newsday*, *Elle*, *ARTnews*, *The Advocate*, *The Progressive* and most recently in *The Rumpus*.

- **US & UK:** Melville House
- **US Editor:** Carl Bromley
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Final Manuscript Available**
- **Publication:** March 5, 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Ayla Zuraw-Friedland

STARRY FIELD: *A Memoir of Lost History*

This poignant memoir traces 4 generations of family trauma against the backdrop of Korea’s modern history for readers who love a sweeping intergenerational story like *Pachinko* and *The Return*.

Journalist and critic Margaret Juhae Lee tells the story of her search for the truth about the life and early death of her grandfather, Lee Chul Ha, a student revolutionary who was jailed for protesting the Japanese colonization of Korea in 1929.

At the end of her life, her grandmother, Halmani, opens up about Margaret’s grandfather, the “criminal” who was imprisoned and a source of shame for the family. What Margaret unearths is a trove of extraordinary material concerning the life of her grandfather, information that both affirms and explodes what she had always believed about herself, her father, and their legacy. Combining investigative journalism, oral history, and archival research, *Starry Field* weaves together the stories of Margaret’s grandparents, parents, and herself against the backdrop of Korea’s tumultuous modern history, from the colonial era to its technological boom.

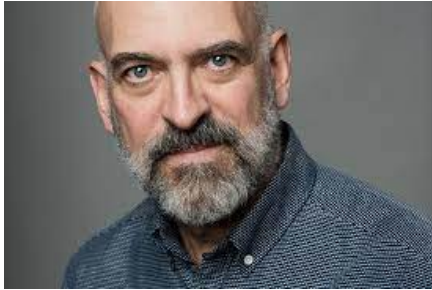
The moving memoir is told in a series of short chapters anchored by 3 long-form interviews Margaret conducted with Halmani before her death. Though she initially sets out to uncover the secrecy around her grandfather’s life, what she finds instead is a deep bond between her and her grandmother—2 women, 2 generations apart, living on opposite sides of the world, with the shared desire to start a family and find something called home. 20 memorable photographs will be included.

“This winding investigation of long-buried family secrets succeeds” — *Publishers Weekly*

“Engaging, intriguing...[Starry Field is] a poignant reclamation of a hidden history, leavened by a sense of personal growth and understanding.” — *Kirkus Reviews*

“[Lee] reminds us that even knowing where we came from won’t tell us where we’re going – but it will help along the way.” — **Susan Choi**, National Book Award winning author of *Trust Exercise*

“With the propulsive force of a mystery... a probing, companionable tale about the search for self and home by a fiercely observant, funny, and important writer.” — **Sabina Murray**



PAUL LISICKY is the author of five books, including *THE NARROW DOOR* and *FAMOUS BUILDER*. A graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, his awards include fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the James Michener/Copernicus Society, and the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, among others. He teaches in the MFA program at Rutgers University and lives in Brooklyn.

- **US & Can.:** HarperOne
- **US Editor:** Rakesh Satyal
- **UK & Translation:** FGLA
- **Manuscript:** Due Fall 2023
- **Publication:** Summer 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Matt McGowan

SONG SO WILD AND BLUE: A *Life with Joni Mitchell*

From the author of *THE NARROW DOOR* and *LATER*, Paul Lisicky's *SONG SO WILD AND BLUE* will be a look back at the life of a writer forged by the distinctive and radical artistry of Joni Mitchell. It will be a book about creativity, about Lisicky's beginnings as a songwriter, studying music as a kid, publishing and recording music his late teens, before bringing that energy to writing. At the same time it will be a book about building and revising a self over time. Does Joni Mitchell offer lessons in survival? *SONG SO WILD AND BLUE* makes a case for that by thinking about Lisicky's own doubts and beliefs up against Mitchell's, especially as dramatized in her individual songs.

Praise for *THE NARROW DOOR*:

"The most moving account of love among artists I've ever read. *The Narrow Door* is astonishing."
—**Garth Greenwell**

"Paul Lisicky always has the capacity to break your heart for he has the diviner's gift for finding the wellsprings of the quietest sorrows." —**Joy Williams**

"Breathtaking and heartbreaking." —***Publishers Weekly***

"An elegy, an apologia, and a triumph." —**Alexander Chee, *The New York Times Book Review***

"Mr. Lisicky has a gift for understanding suffering, an added bundle of receptors for detecting loneliness." —***The New York Times***



STEVEN PHELPS is director of The Center for Brain, Behavior and Evolution at the University of Texas in Austin, the work of which has been featured in the New York Times, Washington Post, National Geographic, Newsweek, and many others. Phelps is a recent Guggenheim and Radcliffe fellow and his writing has been published in The Atlantic, Aeon, Nature, the New York Times, and Scientific American.

- **US + Can:** Algonquin
- **US Editor:** Madeline Jones
- **UK Rep:** Rachel Clements/ Abner Stein
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Proposal Available**
- **Domestic Agent:** Matt McGowan

LET US AVOID HEARTACHE: A Natural History of Intimacy

A personal and scientific exploration of intimacy by a leading neurobiologist

Let Us Avoid Heartache braids the science of social bonding with personal narrative to deepen the reader's understanding of human intimacy and how it sits within the array of animal affections. The book will move chronologically through a human life, taking us from the physiological tensions of pregnancy to the early networks of care and play among siblings, to pair bonding and the neuroscience of romantic love, and ultimately to the site in the brain where love and grief inextricably reside. Along this journey we encounter a strange but revealing bestiary: the peculiar goose that begat attachment theory, the parenting habits of poison frogs, the alien friendships among bats, the bonding of prairie voles. And we draw close to the author, a half-Arab, gay man who grew up in poverty in the rural Midwest. The story of Steve's relationships deepen the science: his single mother who hid her pregnancy and planned to give him over to the state but for a moment of bonding, hardened childhood friends deprived of care who landed in jail, his own reluctant domestication with his partner (and dog), the aftermath of a close friend who committed suicide and the blossoming of a new friendship with the hiker who found the body.

Let Us Avoid Heartache gives us, with scientific fact and emotive force, the hows and whys of the relationships that make us who we are. They shape us indelibly before we're done growing, propel us out into the world, sustain us with all that life can throw at us, and allow us to continue when they come to an end.



CAMERON RUSSELL has spent the last eighteen years working as a model. With over 38 million views and counting, she gave one of the top ten most popular TED talks of all time on the power of image. She is the recipient of the 2018 *Harpers Bazaar Women of the Year Award* and the *GCFA's Changemaker Award*, and was nominated for a Shorty Award for her work organizing models to expose systemic sexual harassment and abuse in fashion. She has twice been named model of the year (humanitarian and social media star) by models.com, provider of the industry's most influential model rankings. In 2012 she graduated with honors from Columbia University with a degree in economics and political science.

- **US & Can:** Random House
- **US Editor:** Marie Pantojan
- **UK:** Oneworld
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Fully Edited MS Available:** Oct 2023
- **Publication:** March 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Caroline Eisenmann

HOW TO MAKE HERSELF AGREEABLE TO EVERYONE: A *Memoir*

A bold and innovative memoir that explores who holds the power in an image-obsessed culture, from the model and activist who helped organize the movement to bring equity to fashion.

By elevating me for something I have no control over, the industry and economy signal to all women: There is almost nothing you can do or create that is as valuable as how you look.

Scouted by a modeling agent when she was just sixteen years old, Cameron Russell first approached her job with some reservations: She was a serious student with her sights set on college, not the runway. But modeling was a job that seemed to offer young women like herself unprecedented access to wealth, fame, and influence. Besides, as she was often reminded, “there are a million girls in line” who would eagerly replace her.

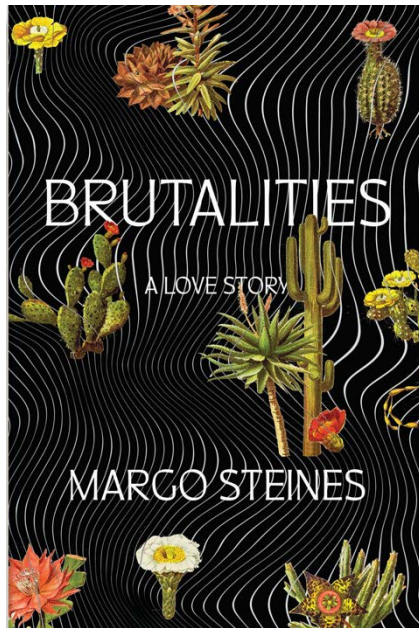
In her powerful memoir, Russell chronicles how she learned to navigate the dizzying space between physical appearance and interiority and making money in an often-exploitative system. Being “agreeable,” she found, led to more success: more bookings and more opportunities to work with the world’s top photographers and biggest brands.

But as her prominence grew, Russell found that achievement under these conditions was deeply isolating and ultimately unsatisfying. Instead of freedom, she was often required to perform the role of compliant femme fatale, so she began organizing with her peers, helping to coordinate movements for labor rights, climate and racial justice, and bringing MeToo to the fashion industry. Intimate and illuminating, *How to Make Herself Agreeable to Everyone* is a nuanced, deeply felt memoir about beauty, complicity, and the fight for a better world.

“Fiercely intellectual, deeply vulnerable, and unapologetically honest.”—**Imani Perry, National Book Award-winning author of *South to America***

“...unique and honest... Russell doesn’t just hold the door open for more voices from within fashion, she makes a compelling argument as to why they must be heard.”—**Christy Turlington Burns, founder and president of *Every Mother Counts* and model**

“[*How to Make Herself Agreeable to Everyone*] artfully pivots toward repair and locates truths in the actual bodies, experiences, and imaginations of those who hold the clothes up... Russell’s writing... will become malleable legend.”—**Kiese Laymon, author of *Heavy***



MARGO STEINES holds an MFA in creative nonfiction from the University of Arizona, where she teaches writing. Her work has appeared in the New York Times (Modern Love), the Sun, and elsewhere. A native New Yorker, she lives in Tucson, Arizona.

- **WO English:** W.W. Norton
- **US Editor:** Drew Weitman
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Manuscript Available**
- **Publication:** October 2023
- **Domestic Agent:** Matt McGowan

BRUTALITIES

A searing, vivid memoir that investigates the dynamics of violence, power, desire, and a body pushed to the brink.

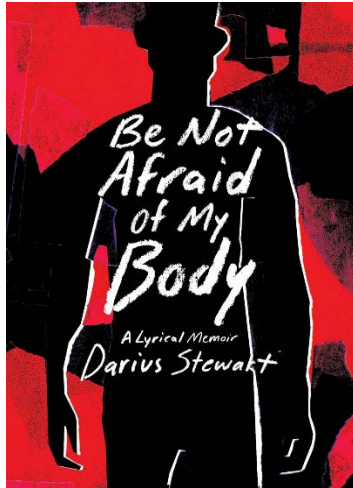
Quarantined in a southwestern desert city in the midst of her high-risk pregnancy, Margo Steines felt her life narrow around her growing body, compelling her to reckon with the violence entangled in its history. She was a professional dominatrix in New York City, a homestead farmer in a brutal relationship, a welder on a high-rise building crew, and a mixed martial arts enthusiast; each of her many lives brought a new perspective on how power and masculinity coalesce—and how far she could push her body toward the brink. With unflinching candor, Steines searches for the roots of her erstwhile attraction to pain while charting the complicated triumph of gentleness and love.

Steines manages to keep her reader close, writing with a rare crystalline precision as she explores her fixation with violence and with certain forms of traditional masculinity... What elevates Steines's book above the difficult, often extreme experiences she shares is her willingness to look honestly and objectively at her desires."— **Casey Schwartz, *New York Times Book Review***

"Steines tackles complex, nuanced truths about power and violence through clear writing and an unflinching gaze... [A] propulsive debut... The author's skillful prose expresses pain clearly...but this discomfort is tempered by her clearheaded insights and retroactive self-empathy."— **Kirkus (starred review)**

"Brutalities is electric with insight, riveted by its commitments—to love and bewilderment, to bearing witness—and utterly propulsive." —**Leslie Jamison, author of *The Empathy Exams***

"*Brutalities* is a perfect book. Reading it felt like consuming something designed precisely for me and of course, I won't be alone in this—that is the genius of great works of art: they reach our deepest interiors by naming the unspoken ordinary, the things we fear seeing or being seen as. There is nothing ordinary about this book, however. It is a brainy, elegant, erotic, brutal, funny, hypnotic achievement by an author obsessed with the far reaches of what it means to live in a body, and how some kinds of love look like violence while others can be medicine. It has made a devotee of me; I'll read anything Margo Steines ever writes." —**Melissa Febos, author of *Girlhood and Whip Smart***



DARIUS STEWART is a poet and writer from Knoxville, Tennessee. He is the author of the poetry collection *Intimacies in Borrowed Light* (EastOver Press 2022). His poems and creative nonfiction have appeared in the Brooklyn Review, Cimarron Review, Fourth Genre, Salamander, Verse Daily, and others. He holds MFAs from the Michener Center for Writers and the University of Iowa's Nonfiction Writing Program. Currently, he is a Lulu Johnson Doctoral Fellow in Literary Studies at the University of Iowa.

- **WO English:** Belt Publishing
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Manuscript Available**
- **Publication:** February 6, 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Matt McGowan

BE NOT AFRAID OF MY BODY: A *Lyrical Memoir*

From an exhilarating new voice, a breathtaking memoir about gay desire, Blackness, and growing up.

Darius Stewart spent his childhood in the Lonsdale projects of Knoxville, navigating school, friendship, and his own family life in a context that often felt perilous. As we learn about his life in Tennessee—and eventually in Texas and Iowa, where he studies to become a poet—he details the obstacles to his most crucial desires: hiding his earliest attraction to boys in his neighborhood, predatory stalkers, doomed affairs, his struggles with alcohol addiction, and his eventual diagnosis with HIV. Through a mix of straightforward memoir, brilliantly surreal reveries, and moments of startling imagery and insight, Stewart's explorations of love, illness, chemical dependency, desire, family, joy, shame, loneliness, and beauty coalesce into a wrenching, musical whole. A lyrical narrative reminiscent of Saeed Jones's *How We Fight for Our Lives* and Kiese Laymon's *Heavy*, *Be Not Afraid of My Body* stands as a compelling testament to growing up Black and gay and to the drive in all of us to collect the fragments of our own experience and transform them into a story that does justice to the multitudes we contain.

"Reading the marvelous (it is indeed a marvel!) *Be Not Afraid of My Body* incited a very particular need in me: to lovingly strike Darius Stewart because what else is there to do when his just-don't-make-no-damn-sense brilliance leaves you ecstatically bewildered? It is a common practice in Black churches: the need to lovingly strike because, say, a member of the choir's voice has inched you closer to the divine. Within these pages is another voice, a literary one, that inches us ever closer to the divine." —**DK Nnuro, author of *What Napoleon Could Not Do***

"*Be Not Afraid of My Body* is a gift, an assembly of grace, wit, candor, outrage, bewilderment, charm, and wisdom of stunning beauty." —**John D'Agata, author of *About a Mountain and The Lifespan of a Fact***

"Darius Stewart is a charming, searching, and unflinching interlocutor, whether he's speaking through the book's presiding influence, Essex Hemphill, or regaling the reader with messy hookups and botched attempts to snort coke through a cigarette. Calling *Be Not Afraid of My Body* artful belies just how readable, dazzlingly propulsive this book is. I already can't wait to read it again." —**Kaveh Akbar, author of *Pilgrim Bell* and *Calling a Wolf a Wolf***



KATE WAGNER is an architecture critic and journalist based in Chicago and Ljubljana, Slovenia. First known as the creator of the popular blog McMansion Hell, she currently serves as architecture critic at The Nation and has previously been a columnist at The New Republic, The Baffler, and Curbed. Her writing about architecture and culture has been published widely in outlets including The Atlantic and The Washington Post. In 2018 Wagner graduated with a Master of Arts from Johns Hopkins University's Peabody Institute, where her research focused on formal typologies of late modern concert halls and the history of architectural acoustics from 1960-1990.

- **US:** W.W. Norton
- **US Editor:** Maria Goldverg
- **UK:** Carrie Plitt, Felicity Bryan Associates
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Proposal Available Spring 2024**
- **Publication:** Spring 2027
- **Domestic Agent:** Caroline Eisenmann

STRUCTURAL ISSUES

A highly entertaining journey through why modern buildings look the way they do—and why we dislike them so much—from one of architecture's brightest and most popular writers.

Kate Wagner got an unconventional start in architecture writing when, at the age of just 23, her blog McMansion Hell went wildly viral. A scathing mixture of humor, architectural explanation, and social criticism, the blog was devoted to deconstructing the American McMansion: shoddily built, aesthetically incoherent, comically super-sized houses which look “less like a cohesive whole and more like a Frankenstein of ornate mini-houses attached to a massive garage”. The project unpacked the way our deeply held ideas and values are expressed in housing, showing how the McMansion was inextricably shaped by the conditions and culture of the time.

Wagner's ascent through the world of architecture writing has continued dizzyingly from that point: at 25, her architecture column for The New Republic made her the youngest ever writer to hold such a post in the field, and she currently serves as Architecture Critic for The Nation, which has described her as the successor to the legendary critic Michael Sorkin. Wagner is now known for her unsparing, sharply funny critiques of the built environment, ranging from NYC's Vessel (“the depth of architectural thinking at work here makes a kiddie-pool seem oceanic”) to windowless bedrooms (“building codes, for all their often problematic stuffiness, do exist to protect us”) to towering new glass constructions (“like a bland, visible scar reminding residents of the city's gentrification”).

STRUCTURAL ISSUES is a culmination of Wagner's career thinking and writing about buildings, and why those buildings so often make us unhappy. We live and work inside of architecture—it profoundly shapes our day-to-day experience, our emotional and social lives, and our world—and yet few of us truly can explain why the built environment looks and feels the way it does. Why does interior design use so much endless, mind-numbing gray now? Who on earth thought that open-floor plan offices were a good idea? Why do clothing stores feel less like spaces to buy things, and more like screechy, brand-focused “experiences” meant to be Instagrammed?

STRUCTURAL ISSUES provides a guide to understanding the way we build in the world, moving from private spaces—houses, apartment buildings, and interior design—to the public spaces many of us have come to dread. It ends in the field of architecture itself, explaining the underlying workings of a practice that so often ends up producing these dysfunctional buildings. Wagner's rejection of much of what she sees in architecture is fueled by a belief that bad architecture springs from the bad conditions in the broader world—or, as she would put it, “we build in a society”. Hating architecture is also a vital expression of wanting architecture to be better, and fighting for better architecture also means fighting for a better world.



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FICTION



YSABELLE CHEUNG is a writer and editor based in Hong Kong. Her fiction, including stories from this collection, has appeared in or is forthcoming from *Granta*, *The Rumpus*, *Joyland*, and *Slate*. The titular story ‘Please, Get Out and Dance,’ published in *The Margins* (Asian American Writers Workshop), was nominated for the 2022 Pushcart Prize. Her essays and cultural criticism have appeared in the *Atlantic*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Artforum*, and *Lithub*, among others. She holds a BA in English Literature and Creative Writing from the University of East Anglia.

- **US:** Blair/Carolina Wren Press
- **US Editor:** Robin Miura
- **Translation Rights Available**
- **Unedited Manuscript Available**
- **Delivery Date:** Fall 2023
- **Publication:** Fall/Winter 2025
- **Domestic Agent:** Jade Wong-Baxter

PLEASE GET OUT AND DANCE: STORIES

Set between Hong Kong and America, between the present day and an uncannily altered future, this speculative collection warps the familiar rules of our world to ask: what does it mean to be Asian, and to be a woman, living under the specter of state and technological surveillance – or trying to break free from it?

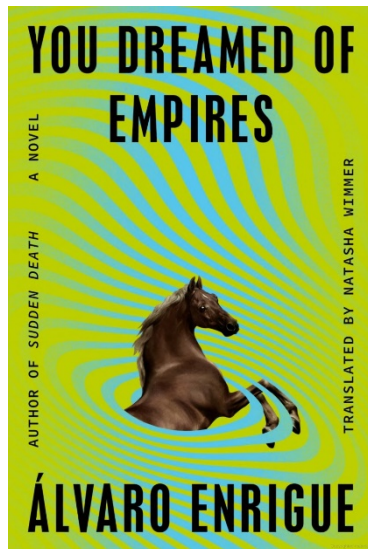
In the collection’s title story, a group of rebels escapes a city that is literally disappearing around them – building by building, person by person – to migrate to a new home beneath the ocean, defying their government’s mandate. In “The Patchwork Dolls”, a young woman of color realizes she can make her fortune by surgically selling her facial features to whiter, wealthier clients, plunging her deep into the ethical conundrum of racial passing and the thorniness of ‘selling out’ women’s bodies. And “Herbs” follows an elderly widow who, when the clones of her dead husband start to appear uninvited in her home, must grapple with her memories and the question of whether it’s possible to break free from the cycles of past relationships.

PLEASE GET OUT AND DANCE weaves together eerie fabulism in the tradition of Carmen Maria Machado or Kelly Link with the surrealism of Te-Ping Chen’s *LAND OF BIG NUMBERS* and the dystopian-adjacent elements of Sequoia Nagamatsu’s *HOW HIGH WE GO IN THE DARK*. In each of these stories, Ysabelle tilts the world just slightly off its axis – moving between technology and nature, womanhood, violence, surveillance and escape – to bring together a haunting meditation on what it means to survive within our increasingly digitized and mechanized world.

“...Cheung’s protagonists grapple with intimacies of power from the personal to the political to the changing natural world. Yet, what draws me to these stories is not only their relevance, but their intelligent dedication to accuracy of individual feeling, no matter what the form, device, or imagination required. In other words, while these stories are set in various times, Cheung does not shy away from the present. Neither science fiction, myth, nor magical realism, but some amalgamation of it all, *Please Get Out and Dance* offers fugitive possibilities against the hauntings of our historical moment.”

– **Yanyi** (*Dream of the Divided Field; The Year of Blue Water*)

“With grace and precision, Ysabelle Cheung conjures up uncanny worlds... that cove[r] a full spectrum of human emotions resting underneath a glaze of unreality. A startling debut with evocative haunting tales that evoke Angela Carter, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Carmen Maria Machado; I devoured this book in one sitting.” – **Karen Cheung** (*The Impossible City*)



ÁLVARO ENRIGUE is the award-winning author of five novels and two books of short stories. His first novel *La muerte de un instalador* won the 1996 Joaquín Mortiz Prize. He was, in 2008, *GQ* Magazine's (Latin America) Writer of the Year. In 2011 he was awarded the Cullman Fellowship by the New York Public Library Center for Scholars and Writers. His novel *SUDDEN DEATH* (2013) was awarded the Premio Herralde and published in 14 languages.

- **US & Can:** Riverhead (PRH)
- **UK:** Harvill Secker
- **WO Spanish:** Anagrama (Oct 2022)
- **Italy:** Feltrinelli | **Germany:** Blessing
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Final Spanish MS available
- **Final English MS available
- October 26th**
- **Publication:** January 9, 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Ria Julien

YOU DREAMED OF EMPIRES

From the visionary author of *Sudden Death*, a hallucinatory, revelatory colonial revenge story.

Álvaro Enrigue returns to sixteenth century Mexico, in his wildly inventive new novel, to reimagine the final face-off between Cortes and Moctezuma, where Malinalli and a hallucinogenic cactus will save the empire, rout Cortes, and rewrite the history of the world. Part revisionist epic, part sublime comedy *Of Empires Was Your Dream* takes place over a span of seven hours, as the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma hosts Cortes and his fellow Spanish conquistadors at the Emperor's palace in Tenochtitlan, all the while unaware that the Spaniards have amassed enemy forces at the empire's gates.

Moctezuma, for his part, is an emperor in the late style—decadent, melancholic and retreating from political life into the company of his priests and shamans. Having sent his Empress, along with his priests and chief counsel, to host their guests, Moctezuma spends the better part of a languid afternoon locked away from the conflict, lunching, napping, and taking increasing doses of hallucinogens. Meanwhile, over an elaborate and nauseating meal with the Spaniards, the empress Atotozin and Tenochtitlan's mayor are confounded and overcome with concern that the empire will be lost to hostile guests whom they have welcomed.

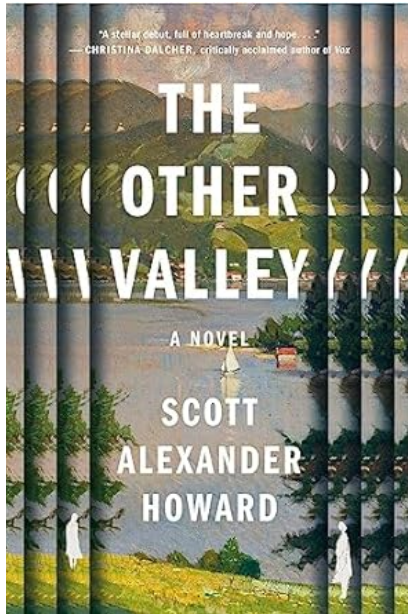
Told in four parts—Before the Siesta, The Imperial Nap, The Afternoon and Hernan Cortes' Dream—the novel closely chronicles the unfolding diplomatic drama—from the folly of the conquistadors, to the palace intrigue of nobles, to the psychedelic religiosity of the emperor. Painting on a rich historic canvas, the novel takes up the question of civilization—turning on its head the civilized and the civilizer—with humor, levity, and not without blood.

"Short, strange, spiky and sublime...Enrigue [is] a major talent." – *The New York Times*

"Rendered in earthy, demotic, wryly unhistorical English by translator Natasha Wimmer...Enrigue's antic style is high-minded, richly detailed, vulgar and sophisticated all at once — reminiscent of the films of Peter Greenaway or Derek Jarman." – *The Washington Post*

"Riotously entertaining...Enrigue revels in the salacious and the scatological, serving up a sensory feast" – *The Financial Times*

"Enrigue (and in English his excellent translator, Natasha Wimmer) boldly uses modern language to recreate the past...It's a rich approach that achieves a hallucinatory vividness" – *The Guardian*



SCOTT ALEXANDER HOWARD lives in Vancouver, British Columbia. He has a PhD in philosophy from the University of Toronto and was a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard, where his work focused on the relationship between memory, emotion, and literature. *The Other Valley* is his first novel.

- **US:** Atria (S&S)
- **US Editor:** Loan Le
- **Canada:** Scribner Canada (S&S)
- **UK:** Atlantic
- **Germany:** Diogenes
- **Italy:** Mercurio
- **Portugal:** Casa das letras | Leya group
- **Korea:** Dasan Books
- **Other Translation:** FGLA
- **Film/TV:** Chris Lupo
- **Final available**
- **Publication:** February 27, 2024
- **Domestic Agent:** Roz Foster

THE OTHER VALLEY

****Sold in a 6-figure preempt for two titles****

****Universal won TV rights in a 10-way auction. Working Title to produce****

To the east is the future. To the west is the past. If you were permitted to cross the valley's border, which direction would you go?

For fans of David Mitchell, Ruth Ozeki, and Kazuo Ishiguro, an exquisite literary speculative novel about an isolated town neighbored by its own past and future.

Sixteen-year-old Odile vies for a coveted seat on the Conseil. If she earns the position, she'll decide who may cross her town's heavily guarded borders. On either side, it's the same valley, the same town. To the east, the town is twenty years ahead in time. To the west, it's twenty years behind. The towns repeat in an endless sequence across the wilderness.

When Odile recognizes two visitors she wasn't supposed to see, she realizes that the grieving parents of her friend Edme have been escorted across the border, on a mourning tour, to view their son while he's still alive in Odile's present. Edme—who is brilliant, funny, and the only person to truly know Odile—is about to die. Sworn to secrecy in order to preserve the timeline, Odile now becomes the Conseil's top candidate. Yet she finds herself drawing closer to the doomed boy, imperiling her entire future.

"Astonishingly brilliant. My book of the year."

—**Liz Nugent, author of *Strange Sally Diamond*.**

Filled to the brim with heart and hope... It's going to knock your socks off."

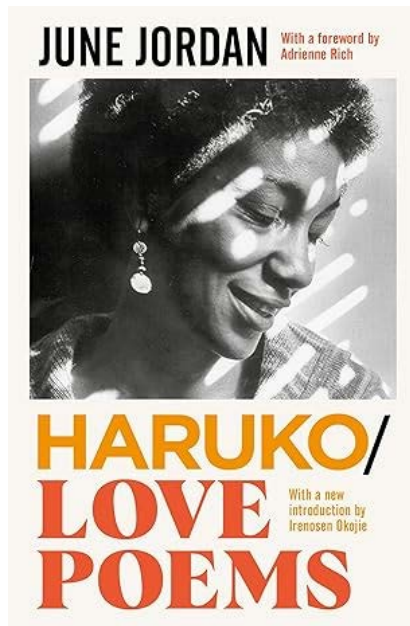
—**Sylvain Neuvel, author of *Sleeping Giants***

"A stellar debut, full of heartbreak and hope wrapped up in gorgeous prose"

—**Christina Dalcher, internationally bestselling author of *Vox***

"Part Ishiguro, part Amis, and somehow all its own, *The Other Valley* marks the debut of a phenomenally talented writer. Pay attention."

—**Sarah Langan, author of *Good Neighbor***



JUNE JORDAN (1936 - 2002) became, in her lifetime, the most published Black poet in American history. Known for her fierce commitment to human rights and political activism, she founded the Poetry for the People program at U.C. Berkeley and received, among many honors, a congressional citation for her outstanding contributions to literature, the progressive movement and the civil rights movement.

- **UK / Commonwealth:** Serpent's Tail
- **UK Editor:** Leonora Craig Cohen
- **US & Translation:** FGLA
- **Book & Final Manuscript available**
- **Re-Print edition:** January 26, 2023
- **Domestic Agent:** Alison Lewis

HARUKO/LOVE POEMS

Searingly beautiful poems about compassion, resistance and desire by an iconic Black American activist and writer, with a foreword by Adrienne Rich

In trailblazing poet, essayist, teacher and activist June Jordan's poems, love is a vision of revolutionary solidarity, crossing borders both emotional and literal with an outstretched hand. *Haruko* traces the faltering arc of a passionate love affair with another woman while *Love Poems* encompasses relationships with men and women, political resistance, the need for self-care in a demanding, uncaring world and apocalyptic visions of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius that destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum.

A contemporary of Alice Walker, Toni Morrison and Audre Lorde, June Jordan's spectacular poetry remains profoundly politically potent, lyrically inventive and breathtakingly romantic. First published in 1994, *Haruko/Love Poems* is a vitally important modern classic.

PRAISE FOR JUNE JORDAN:

"Poetry that looks as closely into lilac buds as into death's mouth...Flawless art."
—**Toni Morrison**

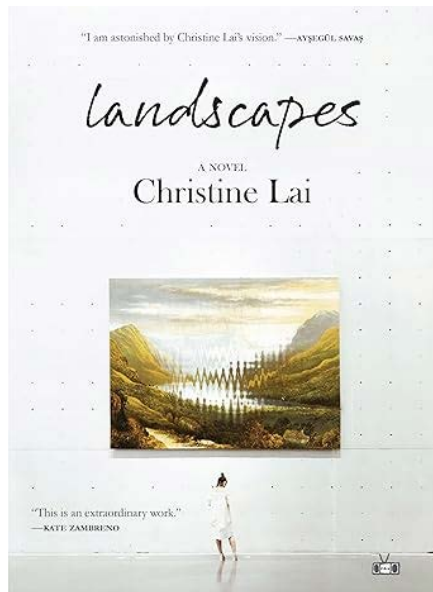
"She is the bravest of us, the most outraged. She feels for us all. She is the universal poet." —**Alice Walker**

"A writer of integrity and will." —**Darryl Pinckney, *The New York Times***

"The poetry of June Jordan is fully alive, set free in brilliant, timeless flight." —***The Guardian***

"Her lifelong devotion to justice, equality, and radical democracy seemed to revolve around the pleasure she felt in hurling beautiful words at a world full of racism, poverty, homophobia and inane politicians...There was always joy in her rage." —**Angela Davis**

"A poet of the people ... The legacy of June Jordan is a gift to us in that it allows another opportunity to think not only about what poems are, but also about what poems can do."
— **Jericho Brown**



CHRISTINE LAI holds a PhD in English Literature from University College London and an MPhil from the University of Cambridge. She lives in Vancouver, Canada.

- **US:** Two-Dollar Radio
- **US Editor:** Eric Obenauf
- **Canada:** Doubleday
- **Canadian Editor:** Kiara Kent
- **UK + Translation:** FGLA
- **Final Manuscript Available**
- **US Publication:** September, 2023
- **Domestic Agent:** Alison Lewis

LANDSCAPES

An entrancing and prismatic debut novel, set in a near future fraught with ecological collapse, *Landscapes* brilliantly explores memory, empathy, preservation, and art as an instrument for recollection and renewal.

In the English countryside—decimated by heat and drought—Penelope archives what remains of an estate’s once notable collection. The dilapidated country house has been her home for two decades and a refuge for those who have been displaced by disasters. But out of necessity, Penelope and her partner, Aidan, have sold the house and its scheduled demolition marks the pressing deadline for completing the archive. With it comes the impending return of Aidan’s brother, Julian, at whose hands Penelope suffered during a brief, violent relationship twenty-two years before. As Julian’s visit looms, Penelope finds herself unable to suppress the past, and she clings to art as a means of understanding, of survival, and of reckoning.

Recalling the works of Rachel Cusk and Kazuo Ishiguro, *Landscapes* is an elegiac and spellbinding blend of narrative, essay, and diary that reinvents the pastoral and the country house novel for our age of catastrophe, and announces the arrival of an extraordinarily gifted new writer.

*** An October 2023 ABA "Indie Next List" Pick***

*** A Publishers Weekly's "Writer to Watch" (Fall 2023)*z**

Longlisted for the 2024 Republic of Consciousness Prize

“I envy readers entering this world for the first time. You will find beauty here, and wisdom.” —**Ayşegül Savaş** (author of *White on White*), *Electric Literature*

“This is an extraordinary work.” —**Kate Zambreno**, author of *Drifts* and *The Light Room*

“A transcendent, achingly beautiful debut.” —**Omar El Akkad**, Giller Prize-winning author of *What Strange Paradise* and *American War*

“[*Landscapes*] builds an electric undercurrent of doom. In cool, sinewy prose, this astute and timely novel explores the roles of beauty, art, and passion in a time of survival.”
—**The Believer**

“This is the ultimate piece of fiction about noticing what’s been overlooked.” —**Los Angeles Times**



ERICA PEPLIN is a writer from Detroit, Michigan, now based in Brooklyn. Her short stories and essays have appeared in *n+1*, *Joyland*, *The Millions*, *McSweeney's*, *Autostraddle*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *The Village Voice*, *Cosmonauts Avenue*, *Another Gaze*, and *Hobart*. From 2015-16, she worked in the advertising department of the *New York Times*. Since then, she's worked as a shipping clerk, a high school custodian, and a restaurant server.

- **US & Can:** Gallery (S&S)
- **US Editor:** Frances Yackel
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **UK rep:** Laura Williams, Greene & Heaton
- **Film/TV rep:** Tara Taminsky, Grandview
- **Edited MS available**
- **Publication:** June 2025
- **Domestic Agent:** Alison Lewis

WORK NIGHTS

A wry, warm, and irresistible debut following a young queer woman who finds herself in a love triangle with an unobtainable intern and a quick-tempered musician, set between the sterile office of a newspaper and the intoxicating night scene of New York City, and pitched as Sally Rooney meets *The Devil Wears Prada*.

It's 2015 and Jane Grabowski, a self-described "dumpy dyke," is living in Bushwick and working in advertising at the nation's most storied newspaper. By day, she is reluctantly dragged into a glamorous, precarious, and changing industry, and into the lives of a motley crew of office workers, who alternately horrify and delight her. By night, she goes out with the cool and flighty Madeline Navarro, an ostensibly straight, staggeringly pretty Guatemalan intern with an expensive lifestyle. Despite many signs to the contrary, it feels like Madeline might be the one—except her visa is about to run out.

Also, Jane keeps running into Addy, a temperamental, deeply moral, slightly uncool singer-songwriter. Something shifts, and Jane finds herself spiraling, terrifyingly, towards love. But Madeline's feelings are shifting too, and it feels truly impossible—and maybe unnecessary—to choose. As small betrayals pile up, alongside the soulless dramas of work, Jane finds herself stuck and desperately unhappy. She's determined to grow up, quit her job, and change her life. But the comforts of the known, and the thrill of the chase, keep pulling her back, until all her unmade decisions collide.

Wry, tender, and acutely attuned to the spiky intimacies of love, work, and friendship, *Work Nights* delves deep into the existential conundrums of finding your way in a cold, capitalist world—a world that is also occasionally alight with beauty and strangeness. It joins the small but growing cannon of novels examining the casualties of modern offices, from Joshua Ferris's *Then We Came to the End* to Halle Butler's *The New Me* and Sarah Thankam Mathews' *All This Could Be Different*, and writers like Kristen Arnett, Rachel Khong, Elif Batuman, and Sally Rooney, whose smart, offbeat protagonists are alert to the delusions of the world around them, though not always to their own.



SHELLY JAY SHORE (she/they) is a writer, digital strategist, and nonprofit fundraiser. Their writing on queer Jewish identity has been published by Autostraddle, Alma, and the Bi Resource Center. **RULES FOR GHOSTING** is her debut novel.

- **US & CAN:** Ballantine (PRH)
- **US Editor:** Jesse Shuman
- **UK:** Trapeze/Orion (Hachette UK)
- **UK Editor:** Serena Arthur
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Copyedited MS expected Summer 2024**
- **Publication:** August 20, 2024
- **UK Agent:** Laura Williams (Heaton & Greene)
- **Domestic Agent:** Ayla Zuraw-Friedland

RULES FOR GHOSTING

****Sold in a 6-figure preempt****

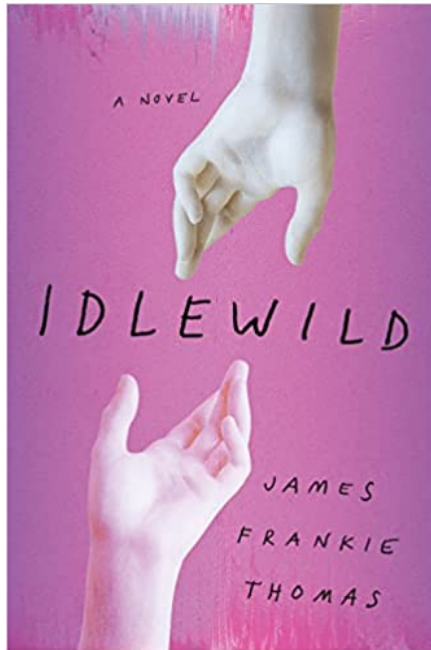
Twenty-eight-year-old Ezra Friedman is only a little bit clairvoyant, but enough to make growing up in a funeral home miserable. Maybe it wouldn't have been so bad if his Zayde's ghost didn't keep giving him this look of betrayal and disapproval as he went through an HRT-induced second puberty, or if the dead's hands weren't so cold. But, it's no wonder that Ezra would want to get as far away as possible from the family business.

With his parents' marriage imploding, Ezra finds himself pulled back into the effort to help save the Friedman Family Memorial Chapel from financial ruin. That means long days of puzzling out his mom's cryptic filing systems while surrounded by the ghosts no one else can see, while balancing his role as referee between the warring factions of his family. Add in his unfortunate crush on the cute funeral home volunteer who just happens to live downstairs from where Ezra and his ex are now living together as friends, and the new ghost who keeps breaking every spectral rule Ezra's managed to figure out about the dead, and Ezra's more than ready to make another run for the hills.

The more Ezra learns about the tangled web of secrets that haunt the Chapel's halls, the harder it is to maintain the distance that (he thought) kept him sane. As the pressure mounts to figure out how to keep the funeral home from being snapped up by a corporate "body farm", Ezra is forced to do something he never thought possible. **RULES FOR GHOSTING** combines the humor, fraught-but-loving family dynamics, and obsession with death seen in books like **MOSTLY DEAD THINGS**, **ONE LAST STOP**, and **FUN HOME**. It is the gay, Jewish, **SIX FEET UNDER** we've all been waiting for.

"As unabashedly queer as it is loudly and beautifully Jewish, **RULES FOR GHOSTING** is one of the most unique, poignant novels I've read in a long, long time." —**Carlyn Greenwald, author of *SIZZLE REEL***

"A tender, heart-filled novel, **Rules for Ghosting** is a beautiful story about identity, family, faith, community, and first love. . . . A breathtaking debut." —**Ashley Herring Blake, author of *Delilah Green Doesn't Care***



JAMES FRANKIE THOMAS holds an MFA in fiction from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Their fiction has been published in the *Paris Review online*, Vol. 1 *Brooklyn*, and *The Toast*, among other publications. One of these essays is included in the anthology *We Are the Baby-Sitters Club*, and another was adapted into a PBS NewsHour segment.

- **WO English:** Overlook (Abrams)
- **US Editor:** Abby Muller
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Final Books Available**
- **Publication:** September 2023
- **Domestic Agent:** Ayla Zuraw-Friedland

IDLEWILD

Idlewild is a tiny, artsy Quaker high school in lower Manhattan. Students call their teachers by their first names, there are no grades or awards, and every day begins with 20 minutes of contemplative silence. It is during one of those moments of worship that two airplanes hit the World Trade Center.

For two Idlewild outcasts, 9/11 serves as the first day of an intense, 18-month friendship. Fay is a prickly, aloof rich kid who is obsessed with gay men; Nell is a shy, sensitive scholarship student who is obsessed with Fay. The two of them bond fiercely over being the only two openly queer kids at Idlewild. But, as they rehearse for the school's production of *Othello*, they notice two sexually ambiguous boys, Theo and Christopher, who are potential candidates for their exclusive Invert Society (née Gay-Straight Alliance). The pairs become mirrors of one another's desires, anxieties, and loneliness. Their devotion to one another becomes an obsession, driving them to do things that they'll regret for the rest of their lives.

Looking back on these events as adults, Fay and Nell, who haven't spoken to each other in fifteen years, are haunted by shame over their Idlewild days. From alternating perspectives, they wonder if they could have done anything to save their friendship, or if it was meant to remain an artifact that couldn't have existed outside of Idlewild's walls.

A darkly funny and much gayer imagining of the classic prep school novel, *IDLEWILD* will appeal to readers of Curtis Sittenfeld's *PREP* and Donna Tartt's *THE SECRET HISTORY*.

Praise for IDLEWILD

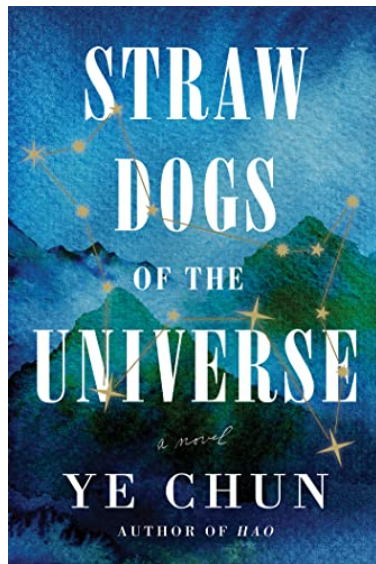
"[An] intoxicating debut." — *Publishers Weekly*

"An aching precise novel about a very specific stage . . . *Idlewild*'s pleasures aren't accessible only to the relatively small group of people who appreciate the nuances between a Blogspot and a LiveJournal. There's something universal in the book's careful excavation of complicated relationships, its compassionate understanding of how friends at that age can love and resent and envy and condescend to each other all at once."

— *Vanity Fair*

"A deeply relatable portrait of queer adolescence . . . With any hope, it will go down in the annals of high-school-theater-kid literary history like Susan Choi's *Trust Exercise*."

— *Vogue*, *Best LGBTQ+ Books of the Year (So Far)*



YE CHUN is a bilingual Chinese American writer and literary translator. She has published two books of poetry, *Travel Over Water* and *Lantern Puzzle*; a novel in Chinese, 《海上的桃树》 (Peach Tree in the Sea); and four volumes of translations. A recipient of an NEA Literature Fellowship, a Sustainable Arts Foundation Award, and three Pushcart Prizes, she teaches at Providence College and lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

- **World English:** Catapult
- **US Editor:** Acquired by Megha Majumdar, edited by Kendall Storey
- **Italian:** Neripozza
- **Translation:** FGLA
- **Edited manuscript available**
- **Publication:** October 2023
- **Domestic Agent:** Caroline Eisenmann

STRAW DOGS OF THE UNIVERSE

A harrowing and redemptive immigrant story for readers of *Pachinko*

A sweeping historical novel of the American West from the little-seen perspective of those who helped to build it, **STRAW DOGS OF THE UNIVERSE** traces the story of one Chinese father and his young daughter, desperate to find him against all odds.

After her village is devastated by famine, 10-year-old Sixiang is sold to a human trafficker for a bag of rice and six silver coins. Her mother is reluctant to let her go, but the promise of a better life for her beloved daughter ultimately sways her. Arriving in America with the profits from her sale and a single photograph of Guifeng, her absent father, Sixiang journeys across an unfamiliar American landscape in the hopes of reuniting her family.

As she makes her way through an unforgiving new world, her father, a railroad worker in California, finds his attempts to build a life for himself both upended and defined by a long-lost love and the seemingly inescapable violence of the American West. A generational saga ranging from the villages of China to the establishment of the transcontinental railroad and the anti-Chinese movement in California, *Straw Dogs of the Universe* considers the tenacity of family ties and the courage it takes to survive in a country that rejects you, even as it relies upon your labor.

Longlisted for the Andrew Carnegie Medals of Excellence

***The Washington Post*, A Best Fiction Book of the Year; An Indie Next Selection**

“Hauntingly beautiful and exquisitely written, *Straw Dogs of the Universe* shines much-needed light on a historical period that we must not forget if we want to do better as a human race. This book is a treasure, to be read and re-read, as the best poems should be.” —**Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai**, internationally bestselling author of *The Mountains Sing* and *Dust Child*

“Set against the backdrop of the expanding American West, Chun’s haunting saga honors the resilience among 19th-century Chinese immigrants despite the horrors they faced.” —**Becky Meloon**, *The Washington Post*

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