

Readings Monthly

FREE | SEPTEMBER 2025

The Readings Prize 2025 shortlists

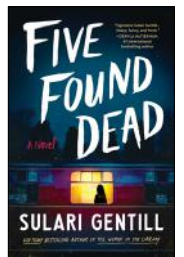
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An update on The Readings Foundation

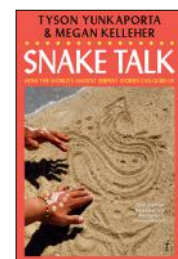
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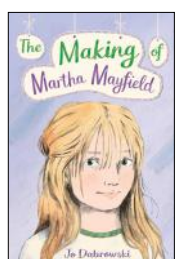
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News

The Readings Prize 2025 shortlists

The shortlists for The Readings Prize for children’s, young adult and new Australian fiction have been announced. Find out who made the lists in 2025 on pages 4 and 5.

Emerging Writers’ Festival 2025

The Emerging Writers’ Festival (EWF) is this month! Running from 11 to 18 September, EWF is turning a new page with reimagined event formats and a program bursting with cross-disciplinary projects, community connection and bold creative energy. To book your tickets, head to emergingwritersfestival.org.au

Indigenous Literacy Day

To celebrate Indigenous Literacy Day on 3 September 2025, 10% of all book sales made at Readings shops on the day will be donated to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF). Plus, all donations made in our shops, including through our gift-wrapping, will also be donated to the ILF. Can’t make it into our shops? We are holding a donation-matching campaign online. For the month of September, Readings will match all donations up to a total of \$10,000. To find out more and to donate, head to page 3.



Promos

Fireweather gift with purchase

The first 100 people to purchase a copy of Miranda Darling’s new novel, *Fireweather*, will receive a free copy of Darling’s previous novel, *Thunderhead*. This offer is available in shops (except Readings Kids) and online, while stocks last.

3 for 2 fiction favourites

Throughout September, we have a great deal on a range of fiction favourites. Purchase two titles within the range and get the third (of equal or lesser value) for free. This offer is available at all Readings shops (except Readings Kids) until 30 September 2025. Not available online. Offer valid on stickered, in-stock items only, while stocks last. Not valid with any other offer.

20% off children’s chapter books

Throughout September we are offering 20% off a great range of chapter books for children from Oxford University Press. This offer is available online and at all Readings shops (except Readings Carlton) until 30 September 2025. Offer valid on stickered, in-stock items only, while stocks last. Not valid with any other offer.

Events

with Chris Gordon



Next month, I’m going to meet one of my literary heroes, Drusilla Modjeska, and I’ve been rereading her books in preparation. Each book is a portrait of a woman lost in love, art, landscape, or hope. Have you met a literary hero at one of our

excellent events? I hope it was a fabulous experience; I hope it was like Modjeska’s writing: thoughtful, considerate, special. Let me know. And see you amongst the bookshelves.

Let’s Talk Romance
Saturday 6 September at 5.00pm
Readings Hawthorn, 687 Glenferrie Rd
Free, but bookings are essential.

We are delighted to host an evening of romance with Australian romance writers: Jodi McAlister, Steph Vizard, Katharine Pollock, and co-authors Ali Berg & Michelle Kalus.

Professor Paula Gerber talks Sex, Gender & Identity
Tuesday 16 September at 6.00pm
Readings Carlton, 309 Lygon St
Free, but bookings are essential.

We are lucky to have Professor Paula Gerber joining us at Readings Carlton to discuss her essay, *Sex, Gender & Identity: Trans Rights in Australia*.

Helen Goh in conversation
Friday 3 October, 6.00pm
Readings Chadstone, 1341 Dandenong Rd, Malvern East
Free, but bookings are essential.

Join us for a delicious discussion with Helen Goh about her debut solo cookbook, *Baking and the Meaning of Life: How to Find Joy in 100 Recipes*.

Drusilla Modjeska in conversation
Friday 3 October at 6.15pm
Church of All Nations, 180 Palmerston St, Carlton
Free, but bookings are essential.

Join us to hear Andrea Goldsmith in conversation with Drusilla Modjeska about her first book in almost a decade, *A Woman’s Eye, Her Art*.

Look for the event symbol throughout this issue to discover more upcoming events.



For our full events calendar, the latest events information and to book tickets, scan the QR code or visit readings.com.au/events

READINGS MONTHLY

The *Readings Monthly* is a free, independent newspaper published by Readings. The print edition is available in all our shops and a copy is included with every online order.

Sign up to our e-news to receive a link to a digital copy of each new edition or view them online at readings.com.au/readings-monthly

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FRONT COVER

The September *Readings Monthly* cover features artwork from our Picture Book of the Month *Once I was a Giant* by Zeno Sworder, courtesy of the publisher Thames & Hudson Australia. Book design and illustrations by Zeno Sworder. Read our review on page 22.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY
Readings acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we work. We pay respects to all First Nations people of Australia, and recognise their connection to the land. Sovereignty was never ceded.

PRICES AND AVAILABILITY
Please note that all prices and release dates in *Readings Monthly* are correct at time of publication, however, prices and release dates may change without notice. Special price offers apply only for the month in which they are featured in *Readings Monthly*.
Readings donates 10% of its profits each year to the Readings Foundation. Learn more about the foundation at readings.com.au/the-readings-foundation

SHOP INFORMATION

See shop opening hours, browse and buy online at readings.com.au. Australian orders have \$9 flat rate shipping, with free shipping on orders \$100 and over.

CARLTON	309 Lygon St	03 9347 6633
KIDS	315 Lygon St	03 9341 7730
CHADSTONE	The Market Pavilion	03 9810 0860
DONCASTER	Westfield Doncaster	03 9810 0891
EMPORIUM	Emporium Melbourne	03 9810 0850
HAWTHORN	687 Glenferrie Rd	03 9819 1917
MALVERN	185 Glenferrie Rd	03 9509 1952
ST KILDA	112 Acland St	03 9525 3852
SLV	285–321 Russell St	03 8664 7540

KEY
Your key to getting the most out of the *Readings Monthly*

- Review
- Reading review
- Events
- Special price

Dear Reader

with Alison Huber



I think I say it every year, but the month of September always signals to me the start of the serious end of the retail year (Ian McEwan! R.F. Kuang! Toni Jordan! William Boyd! Olga Tokarczuk! Etcetera!), and in our shops you'll likely see staff deep

in conversation/exasperation wondering how to fit all the new books that arrive in such quantity (sorry about that everyone). If you also feel bamboozled by the scale of the choice, our Books of the Month are a great place to start.

Omar Musa's first novel, *Here Come the Dogs*, was an acclaimed debut, resulting in longlists for the Miles Franklin and the Dublin Literary Award, as well as Musa being named a *Sydney Morning Herald* Young Novelist of the Year in 2015 (an auspicious year with an impressive cohort). Musa's second novel, *Fierceland*, arrives this month. Joe Rubbo gives it a wonderful appraisal and it's our Fiction pick for September. Our Nonfiction Book of the Month is *Snake Talk*, the third in a loose trilogy from Tyson Yunkaporta (author of bestselling books *Sand Talk* and *Right Story, Wrong Story*). This volume is co-authored with Yunkaporta's wife, Megan Kelleher, and is a timely invitation to ways of thinking our reviewer says 'we sorely need'. Meanwhile in the Crime Fiction aisles, Sulari Gentili is back this month with her new whodunnit, *Five Found Dead*, set in the most crime-worthy location one could conjure up: aboard the *Orient Express*.

Our reviewers really have been reading their hearts out this month, and we have loads more great recommendations in the pages that follow. There are books that have surprised and thrilled our staff, have led them to read outside their comfort zone, have challenged their thinking, or knocked them about emotionally: just another month in the new release stacks, then!

My colleague in the buying department Danielle Mirabella has written a smashing review of Arundhati

Roy's memoir, *Mother Mary Comes to Me*. It makes me want to read the book, even though *The God of Small Things* is still (shockingly) in my 'have not read' column, but one of Danielle's sentences sent my thinking down a particular track: '[Roy's] recollections are inspiring and reveal the making of an author before the digital age – what a gift'. A number of us at Readings, admittedly a shrinking number, have been in the book trade long enough to remember this time. The analogue past is most definitely a foreign country, hard to conjure in this internet era, but it did exist. I'm going to start conversations about that time in the coming weeks. It's not nostalgia, I'm genuinely interested in remembering how that old ecosystem worked. We may need to return to some of its practices one day.

And finally, dear Reader, I have a reading memory (this one unashamedly nostalgic) from my holiday in January: announcing to my family I would be out of action for a while, closing the door, and propping myself up on the bed to finish an advance copy of our colleague Fiona Hardy's debut book for adults, *Unbury the Dead*. I spent a lot of my immersed time marvelling at the author's control of her characters and the complicated plot while also managing to crack genuinely funny gags and paint a very vivid portrait of our city. *I always knew Fiona would write a book as good as this*, I remember thinking to myself. Fast forward to August and guess whose book has been shortlisted for a prestigious Ned Kelly Award (the awards of the Australian Crime Writers' Association) for Best Crime Fiction, but our very own Fi! Truly, I feel like I had a premonition that I'd be writing something like this about you one day, Fiona. And in further dispatches from the Department of Congratulations, our wonderful art and design specialist and acclaimed visual artist Zoë Croggon is a finalist in the 2025 William and Winifred Bowness Photography Prize, with a piece that has particular connection to work in the spaces of retail. We're so thrilled for you, Zoë!

An update on The Readings Foundation

with Angela Crocombe

Children's libraries update

The children's book libraries curated by The Readings Foundation, for Next Steps Australia, one of our grant recipients and charitable partners, have now been delivered to domestic violence shelters to help support the families that come through their doors. In total, we've set up seven libraries full of children's books in shelters around Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Kara Family Violence Service thanked The Readings Foundation and Next Steps Australia, saying:

'Providing books to children who have experienced trauma is vital because stories offer comfort, understanding, and hope. Through relatable characters and gentle narratives, books help children process emotions, build resilience, and feel less alone. They also create safe opportunities for our Family Violence Practitioners to start healing conversations, making books powerful tools for emotional recovery ... Your support makes a meaningful difference in the lives of women and children affected by family violence.'

Through The Readings Foundation grants, we are so grateful that we can make a small difference to support women and children going through some of the most challenging times of their lives.

Indigenous Literacy Day

Indigenous Literacy Day falls on Wednesday 3 September this year and, as always, Readings is keen to showcase the incredible work of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF). The ILF works directly with remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Australia to increase literacy, by providing culturally relevant books in languages of their choice, as well as providing communities with the opportunity to write and illustrate their own books through a professional publishing program.

This year, Readings is supporting the Indigenous Literacy Foundation in three ways:

- On Indigenous Literacy Day (Wednesday 3 September), 10% of all book sales made on the day at our Readings shops will be donated directly to the ILF.
- During the month of September, all donations made to The Readings Foundation in our shops, including for in-shop gift wrapping, will be given to the ILF.
- For those who can't make it into our shops, we are also running a donation-matching campaign online.



Throughout September, Readings will match donations to the ILF made through Readings online, up to a total of \$10,000. To make your donation, scan the QR code or head to readings.com.au/ilf

This is a great incentive to join Readings in supporting the ILF, which is one of our most-loved charities and a fantastic organisation that works to support positive outcomes for First Nations communities, foster access to Indigenous languages within those communities, and improve literacy outcomes for young Indigenous Australians.

2026 grant applications open

We are delighted to announce that grant submissions to The Readings Foundation for 2026 will open on Tuesday 16 September and close on Tuesday 28 October. Established by Readings chairman Mark Rubbo in 2009, The Readings Foundation assists Victorian organisations that support the development of literacy, community integration and the arts. Please head to The Readings Foundation page on our website for further information about organisations we have supported in the past and the application process for 2026 grants: readings.com.au/the-readings-foundation **R**

SCREENING FROM
SEPTEMBER 25
AT CINEMA NOVA

National
Theatre
Live

INTERALIA

a new play by Suzie Miller

A production from
National
Theatre

NOVA

380 LYGON ST, CARLTON
[CINEMANOVA.COM.AU](https://cinemanova.com.au)

The Readings Prize 2025 shortlists

We are thrilled to share the books, authors and illustrators on The Readings Prize 2025 shortlists for the best new works of Australian literature for children, young adults and adults.

Did you know there are hundreds of new novels by Australian authors published each year? Sadly, many of these books sit on the shelves of bookshops for just three months before they are then sent back to the publisher to languish in a warehouse. It is extremely difficult for an emerging Australian author to even sell a few hundred copies, let alone become a bestseller. Australian bestseller lists are still heavily dominated by international authors. As I write this, Stephen King and Taylor Jenkins Reid are at the top of the fiction charts and the children's and young adult bestseller lists are overrepresented by American authors Suzanne Collins, Peter Brown and Lauren Roberts.

Australian authors need all the help they can get to make a dent in the consciousness of readers. Word of mouth recommendations, BookTok, and (ahem!) being shortlisted for an award all boost awareness and sales enormously. Many of the authors on the following shortlists did not enjoy big sales for these books when they first came out, but with the attention and dedication of our judges, who have read them carefully, discussed their merits with one another and given them the booksellers' stamp of approval, they will now have a moment in the sun and be championed both at Readings shops and in the wider community.

These stories that we have chosen to bring to your attention reflect a wide variety of Australian voices. There are tales of long journeys across oceans, and people who feel like they don't belong, whether that is within their own family or their community. There are stories of reluctant heroes who have answered the call to adventure, of quiet battlers who are just trying to survive, and of people desperately trying to secure a better future. And there are a lot of laughs within these stories, because we all deserve to have a good laugh.

Every one of these books deserves to have more attention given to it and we look forward to sharing our passion for them with you in our shops and online. Please do read the judges' quotes about each title, which give you a taste of their enthusiasm for them. Stay tuned for the announcement of the winner in each category, as well as the winner of the Gab Williams Prize, at our own special A Day in Carlton festival in November.

Angela Crocombe, The Readings Prize and Readings Foundation coordinator, and senior children's book buyer

Shortlist Packs

The full shortlists (six titles in each category) are available at a discount in specially priced packs.

The Readings Children's Prize pack
Total RRP \$106.94, available for **\$89.99**

The Readings Young Adult Prize pack
Total RRP \$133.94, available for **\$99.99**

The Readings New Australian Fiction Prize pack
Total RRP \$207.94, available for **\$174.99**

Children's shortlist

The Readings Children's Prize shortlist for the best new contribution to Australian children's literature.

Our staff judges for 2025 are Tamuz Ellazam (chair of judges; Readings Malvern), Bernard Caleo (Readings Carlton), Kim Gruschow (Readings St Kilda), and Celeste Perry (Readings Emporium).

Big Trouble with Angry Chairs (Big Trouble, Book 1)

Lachlann Carter & Douglas Holgate (illus.)
Hardie Grant. PB. \$17.99



This wacky, highly illustrated chapter book is set in the land of Dead End, where chairs get angry and rebel, chickens think they are dinosaurs, there is a City of Lost Bubbles, and only one thing is certain – mayhem will ensue. This is a hilarious trilogy of stories for ages 6+.

'Ungovernable sisters Clare and Maddie are wholly captivating as they make trouble and save the day. Fast-paced and packed with mischief, *Big Trouble with Angry Chairs* is for those craving stories with suspense and humour in equal measure – regardless of your age, you will be left in fits of giggles.' **Celeste Perry**

The Girl Who Cried Bird (The Too-Tall Tales of Alma T. Best, Book 2)

Katherine Collette
HarperCollins. PB. \$17.99



It's Bird Day in Alma's town and her family is excited. Alma reluctantly attends with her two best friends and sees a rare, purple-bellied parrot, catapulting her to instant notoriety. This is a laugh-out-loud story of small-town politics and obsessive birders for ages 8+.

'Alma T. Best is a fabulous character: an awkward, "too-tall" middle child who often gets stuck with the worst pancake. So when she gets some fame by chance, of course she defends her title against all doubters, even when it leads her to make some wonky plans. Hilarious! Funny drawings, too!' **Bernard Caleo**

Brightest Wild

Tania Crampton-Larking
Lothian. PB. \$16.99



Alex and her mum have moved from London to Adelaide to be with her mum's new partner. Alex's new stepbrother and stepsister are teaching her Mirning First Nations knowledge. Alex must negotiate a new family, a new school, and a new home over one hot summer in this gentle coming-of-age tale for ages 9+.

'Alex's unconventional blended family makes for the perfect introduction to many complicated topics. With tenderness and warmth, this story explores cultural differences, moving away, and grief. Most of all, it highlights the value of connection to Country, regardless of who you are. *Brightest Wild* is sweet, sensitive, and deeply enchanting.' **Celeste Perry**

Hi from Outer Space

Fiona Katauskas
A&U. PB. \$17.99



Alex needs inspiration for a cartoon competition and when she meets a friendly alien at the dog park, she is sure she's found it. The alien is called 'Hi' and knows a lot about human life from a TV show called 'Earthlings Do the Wackiest Things'. So begins a beautiful friendship in this hilarious, illustrated story for readers aged 8+.

'This is the alien that we would all like to meet at our local park: friendly, funny, invisible to most people, and keen to meet the Prime Minister. Also: three eyes! This light-hearted, good-natured book is full of great cartoons by the author, plus it's informative – who knew that aliens loved shoes?' **Bernard Caleo**

How to Free a Jinn

Raidah Shah Idil
A&U. PB. \$17.99



Insyirah and her mother are moving back to Malaysia from Sydney to look after Insyirah's grandmother. Her grandmother loves to tell her about the many spirits – jinn – that reside in the jungle nearby, and soon Insyirah discovers that the women in her family have a powerful connection with jinn. This is an exciting ghost story that mystery readers aged 10+ will adore.

'Full of family, faith and big feelings, Insyirah is a fish out of water, torn between her Australian upbringing and her Malaysian heritage. We loved the humour, heart and fantasy elements within a world that is so vividly realised you can almost feel the humidity (and taste the food)! **Tamuz Ellazam**

Queen of Dogs

Joe Weatherstone
Walker. PB. \$17.99



Maddy doesn't feel she belongs in her sports-obsessed home, but she absolutely loves dogs. When her beloved pug, Gusto, disappears, it sets Maddie on a journey to discovering a hidden talent: she can understand what dogs are saying! Using her talent and friendships, both doggy and human, she must solve the mystery of why all the dogs are disappearing. For ages 8+.

'This book is such a fun caper. The dogs are wonderfully entertaining, it's well written with great pace, mystery, action and so much heart. I loved how it felt community-minded and celebrated achievements beyond academic and sporting successes. It's an exciting read that kids will love!' **Kim Gruschow**

Young Adult shortlist

The Readings Young Adult Prize shortlist for the best new contribution to Australian young adult literature.

A Good Kind of Trouble

Brooke Blurton & Melanie Saward
HarperCollins. PB. \$19.99



Jamie is footy-mad and has a crush on her best friend Loz, but she's worried Loz likes her older brother. Jamie is used to standing up for herself, but when a new girl at school walks out with her in protest against their outdated history lesson, Jamie finds a new ally. They start an inspiring project to get First Nations history taught in their school. For ages 11+.

'This delightful book will have you falling in love with Jamie, our strong and energetic protagonist. It covers some heavy topics such as racism and homophobia, but they're explored in an easy-to-digest way. It's perfect for footy lovers and kids who fight for what they believe in!' **Lucie Dess**

This Dream Will Devour Us

Emma Clancey
A&U. PB. \$24.99



When Nora miraculously wins a lottery to attend the Dream Ball hosted by the Lamours, an ultra-wealthy pharmaceutical family with two handsome brothers at the helm, she hopes her entry to their magical world will mean she can save her sick brother. However, she finds secrets and conspiracies that threaten everything. For ages 14+.

'Emma Clancey's debut, a standalone romantic fantasy, features wonderful world-building and a fully realised cast of chaotic and complex characters that make this decadent blend of magic, science, romance, mystery, and late-stage capitalism an absolute delight to read.' **Kate O'Mara**

White Noise

Raelke Grimmer
UWAP. PB. \$26.99



Emma and her dad live on Larrakia Country in Darwin and have a great relationship, although they are still grieving the death of her mother. Emma's best friend Summer is volleyball-mad, so when Emma wins a coveted place on a beach volleyball program and Summer moves to the other side of town, their close friendship is challenged. Navigating a recent autism diagnosis, grief and friendship, this is a beautiful slice-of-life story. For ages 14+.

'A deeply engaging and evocative portrayal of a girl's experience living with autism, and a heartfelt and touching exploration of family, belonging, girlhood, friendship and grief.' **Miranda La Fleur**

Our staff judges for 2025 are Fiona Hardy (chair of judges; Readings Doncaster), Lucie Dess (Readings Marketing), Miranda La Fleur (Readings St Kilda) and Kate O'Mara (Readings Hawthorn).

Aisle Nine

Ian X. Cho
HarperCollins. PB. \$19.99

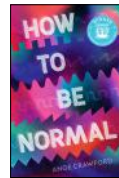


Jasper works at the Here for You discount store, where aisle nine features a portal straight to hell and demons keep devouring customers and staff. With a flatmate/best friend who's also a cute kitty-monster, Jasper's life is your usual apocalyptic disaster zone. When his crush starts working at the shop, they decide to team up to save the world. For ages 12+.

'A darkly funny dystopian horror novel, a biting satire of consumerism, and an endearing love story about a boy who just wants to get the girl and maybe even save the world – there's a lot to like about Ian X. Cho's impressive debut!' **Kate O'Mara**

How to Be Normal

Ange Crawford
Walker. PB. \$21.99

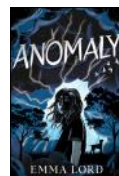


Astrid is in Year 12 and attending high school for the very first time after being home-schooled by her controlling father. She finds friends and a potential girlfriend, but must keep her thoughts and movements hidden. She will need the support of her new friends as she plans a high-risk escape for her mum and herself. For ages 12+.

'Although it explores dark themes, this emotionally charged and authentic novel is written with great understanding and care. It's about finding your freedom and discovering your true self. I adored it and I can't wait to see what Ange Crawford does next!' **Lucie Dess**

Anomaly

Emma Lord
Affirm Kids. PB. \$19.99



After a terrible virus swept through her world, Piper is living alone at her aunt's house with her dog, Griff, as her only companion. Running out of food, she makes a desperate dash to a neighbouring house for supplies and returns with another survivor. But he's being followed by Reapers – terrifying non-human killers that will stop at nothing. This is a thrilling, post-apocalyptic story that those who love dystopian fiction will devour. For ages 14+.

'Exciting and mysterious, *Anomaly* is so convincingly written that readers will feel just as unsettled as Piper herself. These characters feel completely real, as does their grief, uncertainty, and strength. Gloriously suspenseful!' **Fiona Hardy**

Fiction shortlist

The Readings New Australian Fiction Prize shortlist for the best new contribution to Australian fiction.

Translations

Jumaana Abdu
Vintage. PB. \$34.99



After the death of her father, Aliyah and her young daughter escape to country NSW to start a new life. There they begin to regenerate a run-down property with the help of a local Palestinian man. Then their lives are destabilised by bushfires and a friend from the past. This is an eloquent, stunning debut with fascinating interior landscapes of the mind.

'Palestinian-Australian identity, Indigeneity, motherhood, and the struggles faced by rural Australians collide in this gorgeous and original story. Jumaana Abdu contends with what "home" means: a haunted house of a concept located in a language, a child, a friend, a community, an identity, a Country, and, ultimately, compassion.' **Teddy Peak**

Edenhope

Louise Le Nay
Text. PB. \$34.99



Marnie has just got a job at a discount shop and a 'granny flat' rental. It's not much, but at 63 it's hard to start again. When her drug-addicted daughter arrives with a new boyfriend and her two young kids, Marnie's precarious life is upended. Marnie's daughter has already lost her eldest child, so Marnie decides to take the children away and look after them herself.

'A compelling story about a practical, quick-thinking woman going about her business, making tough decisions without a fuss and exuding both quiet strength and resilience. Here is a woman making choices about what's important with an admirable single-mindedness, serving as a poignant reminder of the power of love and the courage of humility.' **Pauline Hopkins**

The Confidence Woman

Sophie Quick
A&U. PB. \$32.99



Chrissie Swales has the perfect get-rich scheme to get enough for a deposit on a house. She masquerades as Dr Ruth Carlisle, a 'high-performance mindset coach' who charges big bucks to her gullible clients and gathers material to blackmail them. This high-stakes tactic unravels spectacularly, as the author skewers contemporary society with razor-sharp wit.

'Using the housing crisis as a backdrop, Sophie Quick's debut novel is a glorious story of a single mother's game of hustle. The novel explores online scammers, the ridiculous ideals of success and how to break through it all. Funny and heroic all at once, reading this story was a delight.' **Christine Gordon**

Our staff judges for 2025 are Teddy Peak (chair of judges; Readings Carlton), Thomas Busse (Readings Doncaster), Christine Gordon (Readings Programming) and Pauline Hopkins (Readings Hawthorn).

I Want Everything

Dominic Amerena
Summit. PB. \$34.99



A destitute young writer spies the famous, reclusive author Brenda Shales at his local pool. At her aged care home, he is mistaken for her grandson. He hopes to write her biography, solve the mystery of her disappearance and make his name. But as she tells him stories, truth and falsehood blur and lead to a hilarious and catastrophic finale.

'Scathing and hilarious, this novel examines – with relish – ego and its ramifications. Set in Melbourne, this debut novel explores the notion of a reliable narrator. You'll laugh, cringe and delight in this clever story of literary ambition.' **Christine Gordon**

Together We Fall Apart

Sophie Matthiesson
Pantera. PB. \$34.99



Clare travels back from the UK to Australia when her father is sick. She leaves her partner, Miriam, behind in London with their young child. Back in the family home, Clare relives the past and the ongoing downward spiral of her brother's drug addiction. When their father dies, Clare decides to help her mother take charge for once.

'In her moving debut, Sophie Matthiesson captures the quiet heartbreak of family and the messy fallout of addiction. Told with clarity and care, it's a story about love stretched thin, and what happens when you're pulled between people you can't stop caring about. It's a beautifully restrained, emotionally intelligent piece of fiction that feels deeply lived in.'

Thomas Busse

The Honeyeater

Jessie Tu
A&U. PB. \$34.99



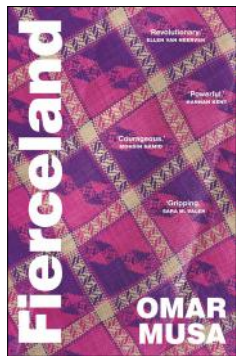
Fay is an academic and emerging translator working at a prestigious university. She takes her mother to France for a holiday, during which she discovers her ex-lover has died. When her mentor offers a trip to Taiwan during the Hungry Ghost Festival, her superstitious mother warns her of the danger. Ambition, betrayal and love are all beautifully portrayed with a singular voice.

'This is a book about language: how we translate it, manipulate it, interpret it. Jessie Tu wields this language with mastery: the characters use language as armour and weaponry to hide and reveal their own emotions, showing us how love and rage are equally deceptive, equally empowering.' **Teddy Peak R**

Fiction

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Australian Fiction



Fierceland Omar Musa

Penguin. PB. \$34.99
Available 2 September

R Omar Musa's second novel, *Fierceland*, begins with a familiar domestic scenario in Kota Kinabalu, Borneo. Two children, Rozana and Harun, desperately want their father, Yusuf, to buy them a new video game, *The Legend of Zelda*. Brother and sister are united in their fixation and agree that this is the best video game ever, even though neither of them have ever played it. This is not some pipe dream; Yusuf is a wealthy businessman – owner of Italian silk ties and sports cars – who has the means to buy his children whatever they want.

Yusuf is in the vanguard of Malaysia's economic boom and when he takes Roz and Harun on a business expedition deep into the jungles of Borneo, we begin to discover the dark side of his wealth – the destruction of ancient trees and ecosystems to make way for monolithic palm plantations. As Roz and Harun reckon with this shocking truth, their relationship begins to splinter and their lives take divergent turns, sending them to different parts of the globe. A family tragedy sends them back to Borneo and forces them to confront their complicity in the environmental destruction of their homeland.

Kaleidoscopic in narrative scope and form, Musa traverses the jungles of Borneo, elite Sydney boarding schools, the glass-making workshops of Murano and Nigerian palm oil laboratories. While the focus of the story is on Roz and Harun, the novel is told from the perspectives

of many different characters, jumping between the years, decades and centuries. While Musa propels the story forward with more straightforward narrative prose, the chapters are interwoven with poetry and verse. Musa started out as a poet and performer and there is real lyric beauty and rhythm in this writing.

This is an ambitious and important novel that interweaves Malaysian history, environmental degradation, cultural heritage, artistic endeavours and fucked-up families. And that description doesn't even scratch the surface. Highly recommended.

Joe Rubbo is the managing director of Readings

Australian Fiction

Discipline

Randa Abdel-Fattah
UQP. PB. \$34.99

Available 2 September



R With the state of the mainstream Western media, both currently and historically, it feels like a small miracle that *Discipline*, the first novel for adults from the accomplished YA author Randa Abdel-Fattah, has been published. In reality, it is due to hard work, grit and solidarity – something the author herself mentions in the book's acknowledgements.

In *Discipline*, the lives of Abdel-Fattah's two main characters deliver what she calls 'a cautionary tale about the cost of silence and cowardice'. The novel is an exploration of the systematic oppression of Palestinian and Muslim voices, and asks who gets to tell which stories and at what cost?

Set in Western Sydney, we follow Ashraf, a middle-aged academic whose ex-wife has moved to Aden to embrace her faith, taking their two children with her. Ashraf is a complex character torn between protecting himself and recognising change needs to happen. He lives alone in an apartment, and his social life seems restricted to university functions and WhatsApp calls and texts with his two daughters.

Meanwhile, Hannah is a young journalist, a new mother and the only Muslim voice at *The Chronicle*, a national

broadsheet. Hannah is enveloped by community, family and life. Her world feels overwhelming: the WhatsApp messages; the expectations; and the pull and tug as she and her husband Jamal, who is one of Ashraf's PhD students, navigate their daily lives.

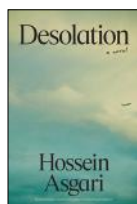
Abdel-Fattah's use of internal monologue for both Ashraf and Hannah throws into sharp relief the disparity between what we might think and what it feels possible to say, offering a poignant reminder of the burden of continual self-censorship. All the characters are touched, if not consumed, by the ongoing genocide, trauma both old and new, racism, and the repercussions of speaking out – or not speaking out.

Discipline is an important book, and a reminder that we all need to read between the lines: dig deeper to get the story; stray from our algorithms; ask questions; speak up; support and give space to diverse and oppressed voices; and turn towards hard truths, not look away.

Rosalind McClintock is the head of marketing

Desolation Hossein Asgari

Ultimo. PB. \$34.99
Available now



R A story within a story, *Desolation* raises questions about karma, innocence, love and choice. It asks, is the road through grief paved with devotion to vengeance or to simply live?

In modern-day Adelaide, a 37-year-old writer working in a café notices a man

staring at him. This seems innocuous enough, until the man finally approaches and demands that the writer listen to his story, offering nothing but a three-digit number as enticement. The story of our mysterious, pseudonymous protagonist 'Amin' traces the ripples left in the wake of the tragic downing of Iran Air Flight 655 – not just three digits, but the pivot point upon which his life revolves. What follows is a life story: from the dawn of innocence through first love, loss, and the unravelling of hope in the face of trauma.

Building on his Miles Franklin-shortlisted debut *Only Sound Remains*, Hossein Asgari takes us through a reflection on the power of storytelling (both to others and oneself) in shaping how we see the world and how we make choices that shape it. As the writer character shares his subject's story, we cannot help but wonder how much is embellished by the re-teller, or by the subject himself. We also question the extent to which the stories we tell ourselves about our own lives – to make sense of things we cannot process without some kind of meaning behind them – are re-formed around the kernel of our own motivations, consciously or otherwise.

Asgari considers how the human desire for meaning shapes our actions in reaction to the choices of others – who are, of course, themselves reactive. Without passing judgment on the behaviour of his characters, Asgari presents the aftermath of history as its own tragedy – the invisible scars left behind, and the lives and futures cut short or irreparably derailed by those in power: governmentally, culturally and institutionally.

Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

Hollow Air Verity Borthwick

Ultimo. PB. \$34.99
Available now



R A tale of mining, commitment and memory, *Hollow Air* comes to life with parallel tales against a vivid backdrop of shimmering mirages and twisting shadows. Out there, nobody is telling the whole story – their secrets are buried deep in the ground. As well as considering the human and environmental costs of mining, Verity Borthwick's tale delves into the hidden pathways in the earth and in ourselves – and their very real risk of collapse.

Sarah is a geologist, more comfortable by herself than she is back home with her fiancé, or surrounded by the blokey energy of her FIFO colleagues. But these days the company isn't doing very well, and Sarah is at the site alone under immense pressure to find signs of hidden value. Her comfortable solitude is interrupted by a new team: Ian, the green field assistant and son of one of the board members; Norm, a craggy older geologist; Joe, the local troublemaker who holds a shameful secret over Sarah; and Cole, the fascinating, cave-diving risk-taker, who sleeps barely a wall away and hides something mysterious behind much thicker defences.

It's 1910, and Samuel has already lost so much. He's had to sell the mine, though no price could buy back what has been taken from him. Returning to the mine is possibly the biggest mistake of his life,

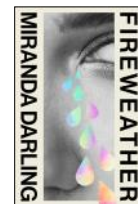
but perhaps just one lucky find could change his family's fortunes, and those of Thomas, his eager young assistant.

These two protagonists, separated by time but not geography, both feel the immense pressure of reality pressing down on them, but in the rugged outback, there's a sense of peace, and, maybe, hope. But will desperation push them to take risks, trust people and do things they shouldn't?

Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

Fireweather Miranda Darling

Scribe HB. \$29.99
Available 2 September



R Miranda Darling's highly praised novel

Thunderhead (2024) was described at the time as a bleak suburban comedy, a story set in the course of a single day in the life of a

woman on the edge of things, trapped in domestic life and motherhood, with nods to Plath and Woolf, and a healthy dose of humour that left our reviewer, '[unable to] contain ... snorts of laughter and sighs of solidarity'. The follow-up is this month's *Fireweather*, the continuation of Winona's story.

Winona is not well. Her children are no longer with her, the word 'divorce' is triggering her thinking, her mental health has put her over that edge she skirted in *Thunderhead*, sending her to appointments with professionals. Or is she the most sane person there is, with a clarity of mind that others can't grasp? Meanwhile, the weather outside is troubling: firestorms run along the east coast, ash is in the air, the light is orange. Her internal dialogue is explored expertly on the page, as her ruminations include interventions from a number of voices (The Poet, The Nanny, The Archer) as well as non-human animals and plant life. Coupled with thought excursions into poetry, fiction, history, aphorisms, pop psychology and beyond, Darling explores the life of a mind, rendering the experience of being inside the head of another – the self in the world – in a way that is both familiar and unfamiliar. This is at times not an easy read – nor should it be, given the depths of psychological revelation the author is portraying here, but Darling's vision and affection for Winona's journey and her attention to the way words settle on the page makes it a rewarding one. While it's not essential to have read the earlier book to appreciate this new work, it seems like a perfect time to revisit *Thunderhead* if you missed it to enhance the experience of reading *Fireweather*. Early purchasers will receive a complimentary copy of *Thunderhead* to help with this endeavour (while stocks last).

Alison Huber is the head book buyer

A Catalogue of Love Erin Hortle

S&S/Summit. PB. \$34.99
Available now



R *A Catalogue of Love* is a gentle coming-of-age novel. It's the story of Neika, whose mother died when she was two, as she navigates childhood and family life. The tale is set against the stunning

background of Bruny Island, with all its ocean swells and wild, pristine beauty.

The novel contemplates what it is to be a woman growing up in today's culture. It celebrates the messiness of families and relationships, the identity crisis of being a young adult moving through life without a mother to light the way, and the discovery of values and what's important while navigating parties, first crushes, consent, expectations, and pregnancy.

It is also very much a love letter to surfing and the natural beauty of Bruny Island. The descriptions of the surf and cycles of water are lyrical and filled with so much knowledge and passion that I was reminded of *Breath* by Tim Winton.

The characters of Neika and her father, in particular, are easy to relate to. The fraught parent-child relationships are emotive and believable. Anyone who loves a good coming-of-age novel, nature or surfing should enjoy *A Catalogue of Love* immensely.

Melanie Barton is from Readings Carlton

Honeyeater

Kathleen Jennings

Picador. PB. \$34.99

Available 16 September



R Charlie Wren has spent his life in Bellworth, where he lives in the shadow of his well-known family name, his older sister's success and the unsolved disappearances of several friends and acquaintances. Now that his Aunt Ida has passed away, Charlie is determined to leave the small town – for good. He'll help his sister pack up Ida's old house and then escape from the suspicious gaze of the police.

But it seems that something within Bellworth has other plans – a mysterious woman appears in the backyard, covered in creek mud and with flowers growing under her skin. She has no memories, but she knows she's looking for the Wrens.

Charlie's plan to leave is derailed as he's drawn into the mystery of who this woman is, what she has to do with his family, and whether she can survive the flowers choking her from the inside. As the creek water rises and old powers shift beneath the town, what other mysteries might find their way out of the mud?

This is an atmospheric and perfectly tense novel that will have you questioning what's real and what's metaphor, until the shocking truth comes crashing down in the grand finale. *Honeyeater* is true Australian gothic, exploring the secrets buried in the oldest houses built during colonisation, with vivid imagery that's beautiful yet unsettling. The interstitial passages, sharing urban legends told from neighbour to neighbour, are particularly effective at reinforcing the chilling atmosphere and leaving the reader trying to discern (fantastical) fact from fiction.

It should be no surprise that Kathleen Jennings has made such an accomplished contribution to the canon of Australian Gothic, given she has a master's degree on that very topic, but it is exciting to see an emerging author already so skilled at her craft – employing the conventions of genre with a deft hand, and to such original effect. I'll be keeping a keen eye out for her next book!

Bella Mackey is the digital content lead

Tenderfoot

Toni Jordan

Hachette. PB. \$32.99

Available now



R *Tenderfoot* is a poignant portrayal of Andie, a young girl growing up in Queensland in the 1970s. Based on Toni Jordan's own childhood, it's more personal than her previous books. It reads much like a memoir, with older Andie dipping in occasionally to speak directly to the reader with a life update on whether this dream or that piece of advice ever came to pass.

Andie is a beautifully drawn character shaped by true complexity from a young age. Her world is small – mapped out exclusively between her home, school and the dog track, which is her happy place. She loves her greyhounds with a passion and wants to live in their world and at the track forever. With no such thing as gentle parenting in her world, Andie tries to cope with the way she is parented – or not parented. Meanwhile, the greyhounds always take priority over her.

My heart was with Andie from the first page. Jordan's depictions of her inner thoughts, the all-important school friendships and her incredibly strong will to battle through life's harsh realities are very authentic. After her parents separate, Andie's behaviour becomes more rebellious. As she tries to reunite them, we see her maturing: 'I was an earnest girl looking for a trial to prove myself worthy.'

Tenderfoot is a gorgeous portrayal of a 1970s childhood in Queensland and an Australian childhood that will offer familiar glimpses into the past for every adult. Do we all find it hard to look back at ourselves and our actions as children? Do we all ask, *Was that really me? Am I the same person now?*

I devoured this book in a weekend. It reminded me that I, too, was a child of the '70s with all the usual childhood preoccupations: I loved my Holly Hobbie bedspread and playing elastics in the school playground.

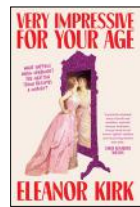
Nicki Levy is from Readings Carlton

Very Impressive for Your Age

Eleanor Kirk

A&U. PB. \$34.99

Available 2 September



R Evelyn is on the brink of becoming a star. After years of opera singing and acceptance into the Royal Institute of Music in London, she has won the lead role in a production of *The Magic Flute*. But one night, mid-performance, Evelyn unexpectedly loses her singing voice. As quickly as her fame started, it is taken away. She is immediately replaced and so returns to her parents' home in Sydney – to find all her friends are getting married or embarking on exciting new careers, and to her ex-boyfriend who moved on more quickly than she would have liked. Now, voiceless and alone, Evelyn must confront what she truly wants in life, and what on Earth she is going to do next.

Although I know nothing about singing and the performing arts, this novel was still extremely relatable. I've recently graduated from university with a Bachelor of Arts, and so I have

experienced many times the painful existential dread whenever someone asks, 'What are you going to do with your degree?' or 'What jobs can you do with a [insert unemployable discipline/subject area here] major?'. Like Evelyn, I've never been extremely fuelled by ambition for a super high-achieving career and I also believe there are more important things in life, such as family, friends, and travelling, etc. And yet, that specific shame hits like a brick when society, especially the people around you, expect something from you – something bigger, something more.

One of Evelyn's friends repeatedly states that they believe ambition to be a capitalist ploy to enslave people into the workforce. While that may be true, Eleanor Kirk reassures us that, despite a competitive profession, environment, or entire society, there is nothing shameful about not being sure of what comes next. Kirk's hilarious and candid debut is ultimately about chasing your dreams, whatever they may look like, and not caring about anyone's opinion but your own.

Aurelia Orr is from Readings Kids

The Farm

Jessica Mansour-Nahra

Hachette. PB. \$32.99

Available now



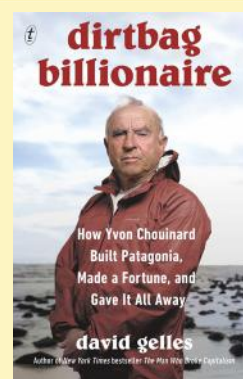
R Eerie, evocative and thrumming with tension, *The Farm* is abundant with conversations about family, fertility, age, tradition and truth. This finely crafted debut is a dusty road you'll take at speed, full of twists and turns, eager to reach the inevitable, looming conclusion.

Leila and James come from totally different worlds. She's a city girl, the only child of an angry and unpredictable single mother who died when Leila was just approaching adulthood. He's an attentive but traditional psychologist from a small, close country family who can trace their roots in O'Connell dating back to 1840. They've both found what they've been searching for, but an unexpected diagnosis could get in the way of all their plans – moving to The Farm for a year offers the reset they both need. There, Leila plans to write, heal and process, but the reality isn't at all what she expected. Despite people skills honed negotiating her mother's moods and, later, deftly managing shareholders, Leila struggles to make connections – these are James's people. Isolated with only the dog for company, she drifts in a fog of pain, loneliness and the unpredictability of an unfamiliar landscape.

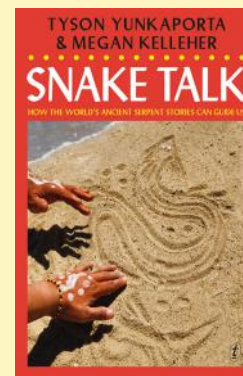
Jessica Mansour-Nahra's language is deeply physical – the smells, textures, temperature and patterns of light coalesce into a living, breathing place. Alone except for Rusty the dog, the environment itself becomes another character with which Leila struggles to connect. Vivid, unpredictable and pernicious, the landscape exerts as much external pressure as Leila's internal anguish. Her isolation matches the loneliness of her childhood, and, like the feelings she refuses to reckon with, there is something rotten at The Farm that she cannot pinpoint. It teems with the casual violence of survival – the choices we make when we believe we have no choice, the ways we process pain, or the methods we use to numb it to get through to the next day.

Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

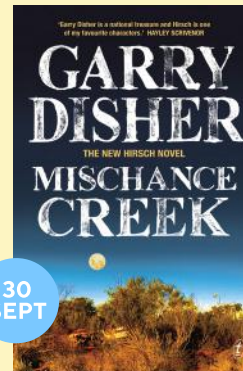
DIG DEEPER: TRUE LIVES, OLD WORLDS AND NEW THRILLS



The extraordinary biography of the billionaire who gave his fortune away.



Indigenous thinking viewed through the serpent, a symbol found around the world.



The much-awaited fifth book in Garry Disher's bestselling Hirsch crime series.

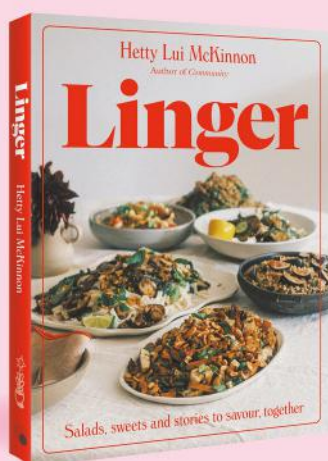
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and stories
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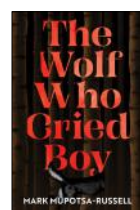


The Wolf Who Cried Boy

Mark Mupotsa-Russell

Affirm Press. PB. \$34.99

Available now



R *The Wolf Who Cried Boy* is gut-wrenching; beautiful and vivid, but utterly gut-wrenching. Six-year-old Henry has superpowers. Or, rather, he wishes he had superpowers. If he did, he could help his mum and protect them both from the evil 'Wolf King', aka his father, from whom they've been running for five years, all across Australia. When they learn that Henry's grandmother is ill, they risk travelling back to Brisbane, where the Wolf King lives, to see her again. Along the way, they meet both friend and foe, and Henry begins to question his reality – are his mum's stories about who they are true, or not?

Mark Mupotsa-Russell handles serious discussions about domestic violence, homelessness, abuse of power, corruption within the police force, and more, all from a child's perspective, with such care and virtuosity it is incredible. As the reader, you experience so much as you witness these characters try to survive – one minute you're screaming at Henry not to do or say anything and the next instant you want to give him a big hug. Or to comfort and reassure Henry's mum as the white lies she's told to protect her son begin to fall apart.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading and reviewing Mupotsa-Russell's debut last year, but this novel highlighted to me how nuanced and diverse his skills as a writer are. His stories on motherhood are a powerful and moving testament to the many ways mothers protect and sacrifice themselves for their children, carrying on the burden for their loved ones, even at the expense of not receiving gratitude or acknowledgement, even being prepared to be seen as the bad guy. He also perfectly conveys the vulnerability, wonder and curiosity of a child as Henry is put through many extreme situations, always trying to do what is right whilst simultaneously figuring out how complex that concept truly is. This book is tattooed on my mind as one of the best releases of the year for me.

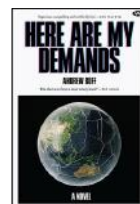
Aurelia Orr is from Readings Kids

Here are My Demands

Andrew Roff

Wakefield. PB. \$34.95

Available now



R In a society where automatons have left millions around Australia destitute, policy advisor Maggie Garewal finally has the opportunity to enact real, lasting change as the so-called OzProgs (Australian Progressives) have finally been voted in after 19 years of conservative rule that has irreversibly changed Australia – for better, or worse. Despite her best intentions, however, her universal basic income policy is bound to be scrutinised, criticised and probed by all. Whether it can withstand such pressure depends on her ability to finesse both the public and politicians to her side.

Andrew Roff's debut novel, *Here are My Demands*, provides an interesting look into a potential future for Australia – and while seemingly dystopian, there are

frighteningly scary similarities between our present day and 2058, the setting for the novel. While I was first drawn in by the prospect of a work of fiction centred in Australian politics, what I was most impressed by was how seamlessly Roff integrated all the world-building without it being overcrowded or interrupting the pace of the story. It is clear that Roff had a specific vision for what 2058 Australia would look like and he presents it to us in a way that keeps the reader fully immersed in the narrative the whole time. I also enjoyed the interactions and relationships Maggie had with people over the course of the story – they feel natural and we come to understand the exact type of person she is.

Whether you take interest in Australian politics or simply want a new Australian fiction read, *Here are My Demands* is certainly a novel to keep your attention – and make you wonder what our future actually entails.

Anson Cheng is from Readings Doncaster

Starry Eyed

Katharine Pollock

Wakefield. PB. \$32.95

Available now



Wallflower Addilyn Acker is obsessed with cult feminist sci-fi film *Scarlett Fever* and runs a fan site dedicated to its handsome director, Josh 'Jolly' Courtney. When she's invited to interview him live on stage at New York City's Cosmic Con, it seems almost too good to be true. In NYC, she befriends British backpacker Sally and meets sweet comic-bookshop owner Anthony. When Josh asks to meet Addilyn one-on-one, it feels like her dreams are coming true – but Josh might not be who she thought he was.

Australian Graphic Narrative

Stray Cats and Bad Fish: Silence of the Eels

Rachel Coad

Upswell. PB. \$34.99

Available 2 September



Holborn tube station, 1977: a fish called 'Creasy' lives in the cistern of the men's room. He's a key player in London's underworld. His nemesis – Ratty from Spitalfields – is gaining power. When Ratty's money launderer disappears, all animal appendages point to Creasy. It's war on the Thames. Punk has arrived, and punkfish rule the waterways of London while eels get coked-up, a lion finds his purpose, and a fish improves his art collection.

Cannon

Lee Lai

Giramondo. HB. \$39.95

Available 1 September



R This graphic novel, the much-anticipated follow-up to the award-winning *Stone Fruit* (2021) sees Lee Lai further develop her comics voice into

the portrayal of both the domestic and imaginative lives of her characters. Lai pushes the comics medium to make visual statements which have a mysterious and even contradictory relationship to the verbal and rational world, contributing a poetic heft to the text: umm, just how real ARE those black-and-white birds that flap around Cannon at her moments of emotional intensity? And – what do they mean?

Cannon and her friend Trish both grew up in the country ('the townships'). Back in Lennoxville, they were one another's lifeline, the only gay Asian kids they knew. Now living in big-city Montreal, Cannon has worked for years as a kitchen hand in a restaurant with a pretty crappy owner, and the flustered, high-stakes, volatile-chef scenes in the book are intense. Also deftly handled is the arc of Trish's writing career, which is starting to take off, although, wait a moment, is she just being valorised as a token 'voice'? And, oh no, is the friendship, the core of their lives for so long, beginning to unravel? The book begins with a bang: an explosion of frenetic destruction shown right at the start becomes retrospectively more and more satisfying as more and more of what led up to it is revealed.

The visual and verbal depiction of these women's work worlds, family dynamics, new sexual relationships and most of all their comfortable/uncomfortable friendship are carefully woven together by Lai, an Australian now living in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal. *Cannon* also sees the welcome return of Sydney-based literary fiction publisher Giramondo to the world of graphic novels: huzzah! With this book, you'll read the pictures as intently as the words, and do remember: pay particular attention to the birds.

Bernard Caleo is from Readings Carlton

International Fiction

Roadkill

Amil & Archana Madhavan (trans.)

Harvill Secker. PB. \$34.99

Available now



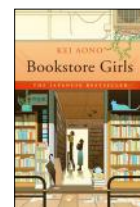
In a near future where women are an endangered minority, two young friends try to break free from a facility designed for those few who can still give birth. Every year in a secluded seaside village, a maiden is sacrificed. The last female shaman of an Indigenous tribe tells her stories to a visiting research team. The women in these South Korean speculative short stories find themselves trapped – by circumstance, society or tradition – as they fight for a means of escape. This exhilarating collection celebrates their strength and their courage.

Bookstore Girls

Kei Aono & Haydn Trowell (trans.)

MacLehose. PB. \$32.99

Available 9 September



In this Japanese bestseller, Riko Nishioka is assistant manager of the flagship Pegasus bookshop in Kichijoji. After working her way up from a part-time position, she is now, aged 40, a respected figure in

the Japanese publishing industry. Aki Kitamura, 27, has waltzed in as a full-time employee thanks to her family connections – and she’s anything but a team player. But when Riko is given notice the shop will be closing in six months, can they put their petty enmities aside to save their livelihoods?

We Love You, Bunny

Mona Awad

Scribner. PB. \$34.99

Available 24 September



R Everyone’s favourite literary mean girls are back in Mona Awad’s sequel to the hit sensation *Bunny*. Samantha Mackey is travelling throughout the United States on her book tour for her instant bestseller debut, *Bunny*. But when the tour lands her back in her alma mater, Warren University, New England, Sam never makes it to the book event. The Bunnies have kidnapped her, upset with how they have been depicted in Sam’s book. And so Sam – gagged, tied up, held at axe-point in the Smut Salon – learns the true stories of the Bunnies, the beginning of their friendship, and their initiation into creation and destruction.

Awad’s sequel (which is also a prequel) strips bare the mystery and surrealism of *Bunny*. Beneath their bubblegum-pink, rotting, sickeningly sweet allure, there is a vulnerability inside these characters. There is a yearning for approval, a desire to pour their souls out into their work and to have someone see and understand. The writing process is made explicit in the Bunnies’ search for perfection, dissecting the raw and individualistic process of what it means to be a writer, from the excitement of worldbuilding to the pain of killing your favourite character. Creative writing is a deeply personal journey that becomes terrifying upon sharing. The author dives into the rabbit hole of academia and explores the pressure from one’s peers and teachers.

Alongside their stories, you also read from Aerijs’s perspective – the very first bunny that the girls exploded and transformed into a human. His story is one of murderous, tragic naivety as he embarks on a journey to discover who he is, what he was created for, and where he belongs in a world intent on killing him.

Frankenstein meets *Heathers* in this darkly funny, gory fairytale of friendship, self-exploration, creation, and the horrifying yet wonderful power of imagination.

Aurelia Orr is from Readings Kids

The Stepdaughter

Caroline Blackwood

Virago. PB. \$22.99

Available 9 September



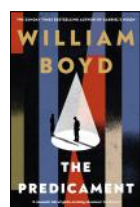
J’s husband has fled their lavish Upper West Side apartment to Paris with his latest flame, leaving J with not only their own four-year-old daughter, but also the sulky, cake-mix addicted, 13-year-old Renata, a ‘leftover’ from his previous marriage. Writing letters in her head to imaginary friends, J delights in dwelling on the hapless Renata, who ‘invites a kind of cruelty’. Like so many stepmothers before her, she will find that wickedness, once indulged, is a difficult habit to kick.

The Predicament

William Boyd

Viking. PB. \$34.99

Available 9 September



R *The Predicament* is William Boyd’s second book in a trilogy featuring the writer and reluctant spy Gabriel Dax; you don’t need to have read the first, *Gabriel’s Moon*, to enjoy the second.

Chances are though that after reading *The Predicament* you’ll want to try the first – it’s that good!

Set in the 1960s, Gabriel is quietly finishing off his book on rivers of the world and nursing his apparently unrequited passion for his enigmatic MI6 handler, Faith Green. He’s also got a Russian handler because Faith has turned him into a double agent and handler for a British spy who has ostensibly defected. When the CIA ask MI6 for a favour with a spot of business in Guatemala, Faith decides that Gabriel is the man. Reluctantly, Gabriel agrees to take the assignment – at least there is a river in Guatemala that he could pop in his book. While there, Gabriel meets some shady characters and the leader of a group hoping to overthrow the dictator. Returning to London via New York and another river, Gabriel is attacked by a man with a knife who is seriously injured after Gabriel rams his notebook up the assailant’s nose. How these and other incidents are all connected is slowly revealed.

William Boyd is a master storyteller, and I felt a profound disappointment when this book came to an end. Sadly, having finished this second instalment, I must now wait for the third – but great pleasure still awaits you.

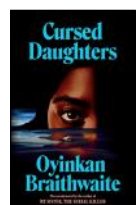
Mark Rubbo is chairman of Readings

Cursed Daughters

Oyinkan Braithwaite

Atlantic. PB. \$34.99

Available 23 September



‘No man will call your house his home. And if they try, they will not have peace.’ So goes the family curse. Eniyyi has always lived with this curse and her uncanny resemblance to her dead aunt, and she is

used to her family’s strange beliefs. But when she falls in love with the boy she saves from drowning, she can no longer run from her family’s history. Is she destined to live out the habitual story of love and heartbreak, or can she escape the family curse and the mysterious fate that befell her aunt?

Hot Desk

Laura Dickerman

Michael Joseph. PB. \$34.99

Available 9 September



Rebecca Blume knows two things about Ben Heath: He’s a new editor at a rival publishing division, and he has terrible desk-sharing skills. What starts as a battle of passive-aggressive Post-it notes escalates after the death of literary titan Edward David Adams, AKA The Lion, when Rebecca and Ben are thrown into a fierce competition to land his estate. But when secrets about the Lion emerge, they

are forced to ask – what role do they want to play in his legacy, and is their Post-it war actually flirting?

Dinner at the Night Library

Hika Harada &

Philip Gabriel (trans.)

Scribner. PB. \$29.99

Available 16 September



All Otaha wants to do is work with books. When she is on the verge of quitting her exhausting job at a chain bookstore, she receives a message inviting her to apply for a position at a library mysteriously referred to as ‘The Night Library’. After passing the interview, Otaha arrives to find a treasure trove of books and a group of likeminded literary misfits including a chef who cooks evening meals for them. Together they embark on a series of bookish adventures, but when the library closes temporarily, Otaha and her friends fear it may not reopen.

No Friend to This House

Natalie Haynes

Mantle. PB. \$34.99

Available 16 September



Jason and his Argonauts set sail to find the Golden Fleece. The journey is filled with danger. But if he ever reaches the distant land he seeks, he faces almost certain death. Medea has the power to

save the life of a stranger. Will she betray her family and her home, and what will she demand in return? Medea and Jason seize their one chance of a life together, as the gods intend. But their love is steeped in vengeance from the beginning, and no one – not even those closest to them – will be safe.

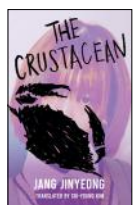
The Crustacean

Jang Jinyeong &

Chi-Young Kim (trans.)

Brazen. PB. \$29.99

Available 9 September



Chichirim is an ordinary, misunderstood, lonely 13-year-old girl with a terrible secret. Her parents forget her birthday, her sister wishes they were dead, and even school doesn’t seem to care. When an older man picks her up on the side of the road, he tells her she is pretty. Underneath her hard outer shell, her softness is being exploited and destroyed by the people she trusts and loves the most. An intricately crafted novella about memory, exploitation, and the lasting effects of adult abuse and betrayal.

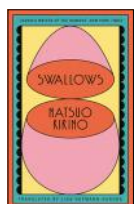
Swallows

Natsuo Kirino &

Lisa Hofmann-Kuroda (trans.)

Canongate. PB. \$34.99

Available 2 September



R *Swallows*, Natsuo Kirino’s fifth novel to be translated into English, takes us into the world of surrogacy in modern-day Japan, and the psychological, physiological and societal challenges that the quest for parenthood brings with it. Riki is sick of struggling to

make ends meet every month. Unable to get a permanent job since she arrived in Tokyo, she eats end-of-day discounted food from the supermarket and buys second-hand clothing as she accounts for each yen she spends. When she learns about the money she can make by becoming a surrogate mother, she jumps at the opportunity to have her living expenses covered, the time to reconsider her employment future and to simply live a more comfortable life.

A match is made with Motoi, a retired ballet dancer, and his wife Yuko, who have been unsuccessful in their attempts to conceive. While Yuko is coming to terms with their childlessness, Motoi is becoming more and more obsessed with having a child to pass his elite genes on to. They eventually decide to enter into an arrangement with Riki in which she will not only be a surrogate for them, but also their egg donor. Initially intended to be a straightforward business transaction, the impact of this decision starts to put a strain on all parties as the pregnancy progresses. What follows from there is an utterly compelling story about whether a price can (or should) be put on the human body, and how one can hold on to one’s dignity if a price is agreed.

I was absolutely captivated by this book. Until the very end, I wasn’t sure how this story would play out for each character, just as in reality we don’t know the impact of our own decisions on our future lives. Kirino has an incredible talent for translating that uncertain reality into her stories, and we are all the better for it.

Megan Wood is from Readings Emporium

Katabasis

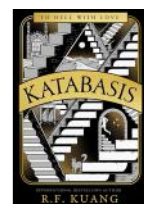
R.F. Kuang

Voyager. PB. Was \$34.99

\$29.99

HB special edition also available. \$55

Available now



R While R.F. Kuang’s book *Yellowface* was taking the world by storm in 2023, the author was simultaneously working on her doctoral degree at Yale, and writing her genre-defying new novel,

Katabasis. Described as *Dante’s Inferno* meets Susanna Clarke’s *Piranesi*, *Katabasis* is the story of Alice Law, a Cambridge University student who must undertake a journey into the Underworld to recover the soul of her advisor, Jacob Grimes. To do so, she must sacrifice half of her remaining lifespan, but it seems a small price to pay to graduate, and besides, his untimely death may or may not have been her fault. (It was.) Coming along for the ride is the university’s golden boy and Alice’s academic rival, Peter Murdoch, who is as blithely unaware of his privilege as a white and well-connected man as he is of the barriers Alice has had to face as a non-white, non-well-connected woman in the same rarefied academic environs.

A natural successor to *Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell*, *Katabasis* is so grounded in practical theory and backed up with real-world bibliographical references that it seems almost plausible that readers can follow the protagonists on their journey into hell, should they want to. Drawing delightfully on existing texts like Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, the *Aeneid*, *Dante’s Inferno*, and T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, *Katabasis* blurs the

line between reality and fantasy, then dishes it up with a satisfying serve of Kuang's signature wit and sly humour. Woven into the adventure is a razor-sharp critique of the world of academia, with all the intellectual snobbery, power imbalances and abuses that take place within its walls.

This book ticks many of my boxes: witty banter, a formidably competent female protagonist, enough real-world references to send me on pleasurable literary side-quests to Wikipedia, and an excellent cat. It's funny, it's deliciously clever, and it's wildly readable. I'm recommending it to everyone.

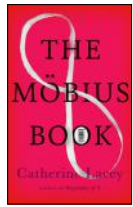
Lian Hingee is the digital marketing manager

The Möbius Book

Catherine Lacey

Granta. HB. \$36.99

Available 16 September



After a painful breakup in winter 2021, Catherine Lacey began writing fiction that blurred truth and imagination. Her grief rekindled memories of losing faith as a teen, marked by physical and emotional emptiness. Through her characters, she explores gnostic visions, male rage, platonic love, and the healing power of storytelling. A hybrid work that is both nonfiction and fiction, *The Möbius Book* troubles the line between memory and imagination with an open-hearted defence of faith's inherent danger.

Break Room

Miye Lee &

Sandy Joosun Lee (trans.)

Wildfire. PB. \$32.99

Available now



Eight unsuspecting people receive an invitation to participate in a mysterious reality show called Break Room. But what starts as an opportunity to find fame is quickly revealed to be something far more unsettling when they learn they were voted in by their own co-workers as the people they'd least like to share a break room with. Among them is an imposter – a mole planted by the show's producers and the only way to win the prize money is to uncover the saboteur before time runs out.

What We Can Know

Ian McEwan

Jonathan Cape. PB. Was \$34.99

\$29.99

Available 16 September



One of the best things about reviewing for this august journal is discovering new books and authors while also finishing books that you may not have otherwise stuck with. I was initially reluctant to read this novel as I have little interest in stories set in the future. In spite of opening with a 2119 start date, this novel engages quickly and you soon get past the premise. In this future, the world has survived a limited nuclear engagement, the rising of the oceans (the Inundation) due to the Great Derangement (ignoring climate change) and multiple ecological disasters. Over half of the world's population is dead and

the survivors live in a very bleak and different world from ours.

Tom Metcalfe is a scholar researching and lecturing at the shabby University of the South Downs in one of Britain's remaining archipelagos. His course is called 'The Literature and History Joint Programme in Postgraduate Studies, 1990 to 2030'. He becomes obsessed with finding a legendary poem that was written on calf skin and read only once, by the great poet Francis Blundy, in honour of his wife Vivien at a now-famous dinner. The poem was never printed and the only copy disappeared soon after the dinner.

Tom and his wife, Rose, think they have deciphered a clue as to its whereabouts, so they undertake a perilous trip across the flooded lowlands in search of this prize, which will secure them fame and tenure.

I won't disclose the result, but the second half of this novel is informed by this essay.

Ian McEwan's familiar themes appear: infidelity, betrayal, obsessive lust and destructive anger. But with the two timelines, there is a sadness in the first part of the book at all humanity has destroyed and discarded in this era.

Pierre Sutcliffe is from Readings St Kilda

A Family Matter

Claire Lynch

C&W. PB. \$34.99

Available now



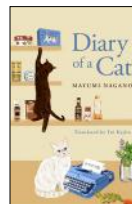
In 2022 Heron, an old man of quiet habits, has had a life-changing diagnosis. Sharing it with his daughter Maggie seems impossible, especially after years of protecting her from other things for so long. In 1982 Dawn, a young wife and mother, meets Hazel and their connection is irresistible. Dawn's world suddenly becomes more joyful but complicated. Dawn has responsibilities and commitments – she has Maggie. A tender debut exploring love, duty, and healing, asking how we confront the past and what we carry forward.

Diary of a Cat

Mayumi Nagano & Yui Kajita (trans.)

MacLehose. PB. \$32.99

Available 9 September



Two lost kittens Chimaki and Norimaki are sniffing out cat-lovers in Tokyo who might be kind enough to give them a ride or place to sleep for the night. Soon they find a new home with the large eccentric Horai family who are utterly obsessed with food. Inspired by the magazine column written by Madam Horai, Chimaki decides to keep his own diary, inviting us in to share the family's meals and activities, his younger brother's comical scrapes, and the movements of a mysterious stranger around the house.

Thirst Trap

Gráinne O'Hare

Picador. PB. \$34.99

Available 16 September



Harley, Róise, and Maggie have been friends since primary school. Now approaching their thirties, they are still together, living in a share house in Belfast and spending their nights

dancing in grungy pubs. Each woman is trying to navigate the world and they are all grieving the loss of their friend Lydia, who died in a car crash one year ago. The four women were fighting right before the accident, and now Harley, Róise, and Maggie are left grappling with their own unspoken and unresolved emotions.

Much like their wavering friendship, the house the women share is crumbling around them. There's black mould in the bathroom and the stairs are threatening to collapse. But they refuse to acknowledge the issues of the house or the issues in their friendship. Lydia's empty bedroom door remains firmly closed, as do the conversations about her.

Switching points of view between Harley, Róise, and Maggie, we see each woman's struggles – Harley is trying to learn the piano while self-sabotaging her romantic life, Róise has picked up running and is literally and figuratively chasing a woman she's in a situationship with and Maggie is still grieving her breakup while simultaneously crushing on her boss. Through each woman, we are drip-fed details about Lydia, which slowly build up to reveal why they had been fighting before Lydia's tragic death.

Gráinne O'Hare's debut is a portrait of women leaving their twenties behind: messy, exhausting, exhilarating and mundane. *Thirst Trap* is a story about grief and learning when to let go, but it's also full of humour, wit and highly relatable characters who show it's okay not to have everything figured out. Perfect for anyone fast approaching their thirties, fans of *Fleabag* and anyone who wishes Sally Rooney's books were a little more realistic.

Lucie Dess is the marketing and events coordinator

Life, and Death, and Giants

Ron Rindo

Picador. PB. \$34.99

Available now



Gabriel Fisher is exceptional from the moment he is born, weighing 18 pounds. He walks at eight months, possesses extraordinary athletic abilities and a gentleness that draws people and animals to him. Taken in by his devout grandparents, Gabriel lives quietly in the Amish community. But it's hard to hide when you're nearly eight feet tall and at 17, he is spotted labouring in a hay field by the local football coach. What happens next transforms not only Gabriel's life but the lives of everyone he meets.

Hot Wax

M.L. Rio

Wildfire. PB. \$32.99

Available 9 September



Summer, 1989: 10-year-old Suzanne is drawn to the world of electric guitars and joins her father's band concert tour after her mother remarries. As the band blazes up the charts a desperate act of violence, witnessed by Suzanne, shatters their dreams. Suzanne spends the next 29 years trying to disappear, living a quiet suburban life with her husband. But when her father's sudden death resurrects the troubled

past, she hits the road in search of answers. *Hot Wax* is a raucous, breakneck ride to hell and back.

Good and Evil and Other Stories

Samanta Schweblin

Picador. PB. \$29.99

Available now



'Welcome to the Club', the first story of Samanta Schweblin's newest collection, opens with a woman trying to drown. Despite her resolve, some involuntary part of her resists oblivion and

she emerges from the lake she had chosen as her grave. She returns home, she showers, and for the rest of the story she reckons with the guilt she feels for the apocalypse she nearly subjected her family to. It's a brilliant, haunting tale and the perfect emblem of the collection as a whole: a book of little tragedies and private griefs. In each of the six lengthy stories, Schweblin unravels one such tragedy with an incredibly delicate touch, revealing the regrets and resentments that lie beneath. As in her earliest work, there are touches of the surreal and fantastic – a horse dead, as if it fell from the sky; a lifetime of silent phone calls from the past – but they are consistently in service of the human dramas, punctuating the inherent horror of a family shattered beyond recognition.

Within this already excellent crop of tales, 'An Eye in the Throat' stands out as something patently exceptional – Schweblin takes her time establishing a father-son relationship that slowly falls apart after a heartbreaking series of mistakes and accidents, before totally devastating the reader in its final moments with a single, simple revelation. Schweblin's debut story collection *Mouthful of Birds* – a seamless procession of nightmares and bad dreams – is one of my favourite books and a perfect demonstration of the short story's ability to create horror. By contrast, this newer collection proves the form's equal gift for tragedy, as any closure Schweblin offers barely fits within the confines of the page. After the troubled darkness of her earlier works, it feels as if dawn is finally breaking and yet I am no less haunted by Schweblin's beautiful prose.

Joe Murray is from Readings Kids

Among the Burning Flowers

Samantha Shannon

Bloomsbury Archer. PB. \$32.99

Available 16 September



We return once again to Samantha Shannon's world of Priory, and what a joy it is to be back. *Among the Burning Flowers* is a short and beautiful prequel to *The Priory of the Orange*

Tree – perfect whether you want a more accessible way to enter this immense world, or if you're like me and are returning as a long-time fan.

Set two years before the events of *The Priory of the Orange Tree*, the novella transports us to Yscalin, where danger simmers as the great wrym Fýredel stirs, heralding the return of the Draconic Army that once nearly wiped out humankind. Against this rising threat, we follow three distinct perspectives: that of Marosa Vetaldi, a

princess imprisoned by her tyrannical father; her betrothed, Aubrecht Lievelyn, effectively ruling Mentendon in all but name; and Estina Melaugo, a skilled dragon-hunter weary from a life spent battling ancient beasts. The heart of the story, for me, lies in Marosa. In Priory, she's a character I adored, and in this new novel, Shannon gives her more space, agency, and the emotional depth she deserves. The setting also offers lush imagery, while Shannon balances the characters' personal struggles, the rising political tensions, and the looming threat of dragons with her immersive prose.

Though brief, *Among the Burning Flowers* captures the scale and richness of Shannon's larger works, while being far more accessible for those intimidated by the epic length of *Priory*. It's a taut, tragic, and beautifully written tale of resilience in the face of catastrophe. Whether you're stepping into Shannon's universe for the first time or returning for another taste of her lyrical, sweeping fantasy, this novella is a perfect entry point. I finished it and immediately wanted to revisit her other works. For long-time, eager fans, this novella should keep you satisfied while Shannon works on her upcoming projects.

Nicole Vasilev is from Readings State Library Victoria

The Original Nell Stevens

Scribner. HB. \$35
Available 16 September



R A good copy is invisible; a better copy swallows its original whole. Few are more keenly aware of this sleight of hand than Grace Inderwick, caught on the precipice of her aunt and uncle's

reluctant charity after the institutionalisation of her parents. As a panacea to her isolation on the family's crumbling Oxfordshire estate, Grace develops a knack for forgery, cloaking herself in others' art like a second skin. Her expertise – and her Achilles heel, face-blindness – is brought to the fore when a letter arrives from Saint Helena claiming that her cousin Charles, long thought to have perished at sea, is alive and ready to take the mantle as heir to the Inderwick fortune. The man who arrives looks like Charles, acts like Charles, and is warmly embraced by her aunt as though he were Charles. Yet the question remains: is this truly Grace's cousin, or someone entirely new?

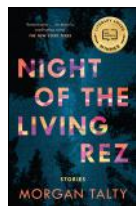
In a triumphant return to form by Dylan Thomas Prize-longlisted author Nell Stevens, *The Original* is an exquisitely plotted puzzle-box of a novel, by turns coy and uncannily sharp as the story circles around this central question, inciting doubt. As in her debut, *Briefly, A Delicious Life*, Stevens demonstrates a deft command of narrative structure, layering dramatic beats chapter on chapter towards a polyrhythmic climax. Clearer still is her proficiency for coaxing vivid, intimate imagery out of the smallest details: a brushstroke, a handshake, or a fistful of cash. Where dialogue alone may buckle, Stevens' rich prose gives dimension to a portrait of some of history's marginalia, illuminating a far more complex relationship between authenticity and deception than anticipated. Rather than cleave real from fake, *The Original* invites us to do something altogether more

unusual and ask who benefits from telling them apart?

Gene Pinter is from Readings Chadstone

Night of the Living Rez: Stories Morgan Talty

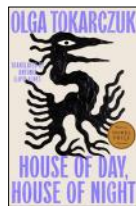
Scribe. PB. \$32.99
Available 2 September



Set in a Native community in Maine, Morgan Talty's riveting debut collection explores what defines being Penobscot in the 21st century and what it means to live, to survive, and to persevere after tragedy. With searing humour, abiding compassion and deep insight these 12 stories breathe life into tales of family and a community as they struggle with a painful past and an uncertain future. It is an unforgettable portrayal of an Indigenous community and marks the arrival of a standout talent.

House of Day, House of Night Olga Tokarczuk & Antonia Lloyd-Jones (trans.)

Text. PB. \$34.99
Available 16 September



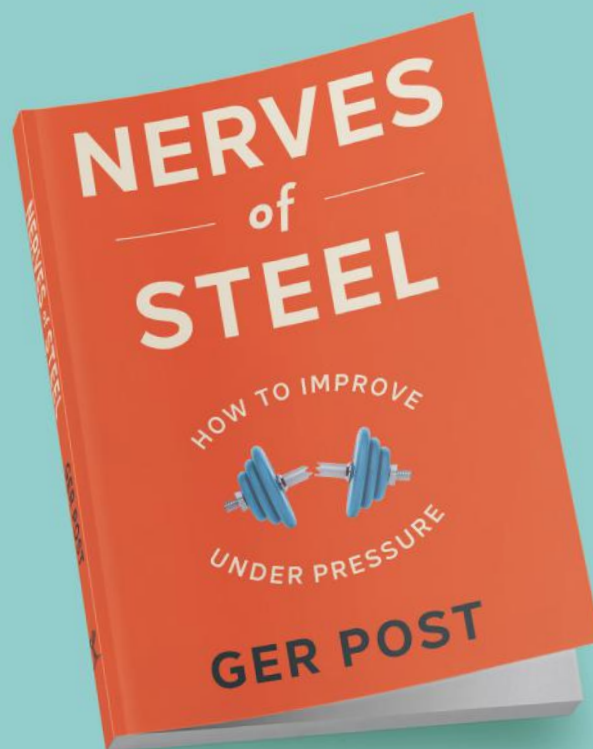
R *House of Day, House of Night* is many things. Olga Tokarczuk describes this work as a constellation novel: a cluster of stories creating a dazzling whole. It's a series of stories about the people who are connected to a remote Polish town near the Czech border. These stories tie together loosely through the narrator, a person who has recently moved close to this town. But the stories also stretch beyond the narrator, inhabiting the minds of other residents, becoming various forms of historical text and essays. The novel delves into the history of place, the life of a saint, and to a monk who wrote about her. It explores fluidity: of consciousness, of storytelling, of the self and of gender. The narrative stretches dreamily through a web of collective consciousness.

Reading this novel is a singular experience. Despite its shifts between different characters, it never felt jarring, and I never lost interest. Each story contributes to the overall arc of the narrative; the motifs and ideas recur in different minds and in different forms. The novel is also invested in historical representation, and the shifting borders after the Second World War, which saw entire populations of people moved from their homes as the lines between countries were redrawn.

House of Day, House of Night was first published in 1998 in Poland. It was translated into English by Antonia Lloyd-Jones and first released in the UK in 2002. The novel is now being re-released in English with a gorgeous cover from Australian artist Minna Leunig. Some kind of magic occurred in Lloyd-Jones's translation of Tokarczuk. The language in this novel is incredible. I found myself frequently putting the book down for a moment just to think about a particular word or phrase. This is my first Tokarczuk novel and I am thrilled to discover a writing style I love so much. I am going to read all Tokarczuk's work that I can get my hands on.

Stephanie King is from Readings Emporium **R**

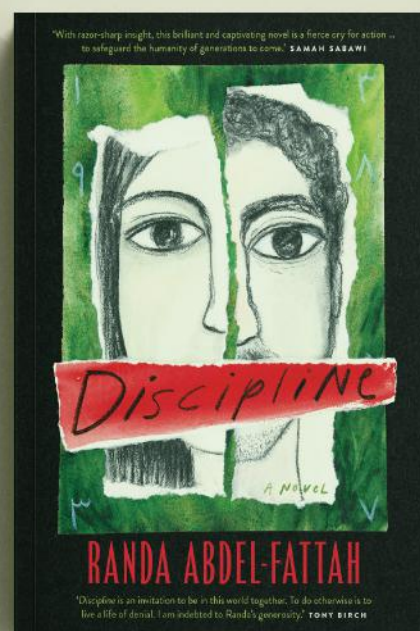
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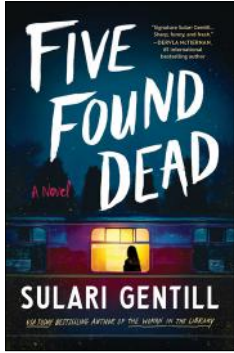
UOP

2025 Australian
Small Publisher
of the Year

Crime

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Crime



Five Found Dead
Sulari Gentill
Ultimo. PB. \$34.99
Available now

R My fellow crime fiction enthusiasts here at Readings and I are big, big fans of Sulari Gentill, and we all get very excited whenever she has a new book out. *Five Found Dead* is a standalone novel and marks a bolder departure from her most recent works, *The Mystery Writer* and *The Woman in the Library*, both of which had me guessing and guessing again. I say bolder because the setting for this book is none other than the legendary *Orient Express*.

Sulari Gentill is a master storyteller, and she's thrown a lot into this book to make it into the suspenseful yet wholly fun whodunnit

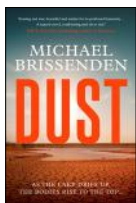
Ever since Agatha Christie's masterwork *Murder on the Orient Express*, this train has had a special pull for writers and readers alike. Gentill resurrects this famed rail service with wonderful aplomb – its final journey was in 2009 – for a thoroughly entertaining mystery.

What should be a celebratory journey for Australian twins Joe and Meredith Penvalle – Joe having recently recovered from a long bout of cancer and himself an increasingly famous mystery writer – soon turns into a ride from hell when a cabin is found strewn with blood, but there's no body to be found. The tension, and isolation of their setting, is enhanced by a COVID outbreak in the end carriages. True to form, more bodies pile up, prompting a sweeping investigation into a truly bizarre ensemble.

Sulari Gentill is a master storyteller, and she's thrown a lot into this book to make it into the suspenseful yet wholly fun whodunnit that kept me guessing right up to the clinch point.

Julia Jackson is from Readings Carlton

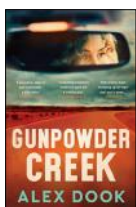
Dust
Michael Brissenden
Affirm Press. PB. \$34.99
Available now



Lake Herrod, a once-thriving community, now lies in the shadow of a nearly dry lake. The town and its residents are left clinging to what little remains. When Aaron Love

discovers a fresh corpse near the cracked lakebed – along with evidence his missing father is alive and linked to a web of organised crime – he is thrust into a world of deception, injustice and betrayal. Aaron and haunted detective, Martyn Kravets, team up to uncover a web of conspiracy that reaches far beyond the community.

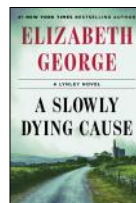
Gunpowder Creek
Alex Dook
Echo. PB. \$32.99
Available 2 September



Friday, 1.30 pm. Emily Barnes is finishing work for the week when she receives a panicked voicemail from her son Zach, punctuated by a gunshot. By 4 pm, she's driving a stolen car out of

Perth, with explicit instructions from Zach's captors – in three days, deliver the car to Gunpowder Creek, a ghost town deep in the Western Australian outback. Miss the deadline and Zach dies. And don't open the boot. The job should be simple. But there's someone dangerous roaming those lonely highways.

A Slowly Dying Cause
Elizabeth George
Pan Mac. PB. \$34.99
Available 16 September



Amid the beauty of Cornwall's coastline, the body of Michael Lobb is found in his family's tin and pewter workshop. His violent death sparks an investigation led by Detective Inspector

Beatrice Hannaford. It emerges that Lobb had resisted selling land to a mining company but as the case develops it reveals a family full of secrets, cryptic alibis and shifting motives. This intrigue soon draws in her colleagues Thomas Lynley and Barbara Havers, who must search for a killer in a community that has very little trust in outsiders.

Clown Town (Slough House Thriller, Book 9)
Mick Herron
Baskerville. PB. \$32.99
Available 9 September

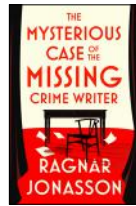


Spies lie. They betray. It's what they do. Slow horse River Cartwright is waiting to be passed fit for work and decides to kill time by investigating the secrets of his legendary late grandfather's library. First

Desk Diana Taverner doesn't appreciate threats, so turns blackmail into opportunity. At Slough House, Jackson Lamb wants everyone at their desks – Taverner is plotting mischief and that means people are going to get hurt. If they ignore his instructions and any harm

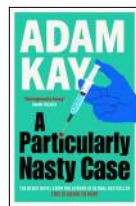
befalls them, it is hardly his fault – but if they don't all come home, there'll be a reckoning.

The Mysterious Case of the Missing Crime Writer
Ragnar Jónasson & Victoria Cribb (trans.)
Michael Joseph. PB. \$34.99
Available now



One winter evening, bestselling crime author Elín S. Jónsdóttir goes missing. There are no clues to her disappearance and it is up to young detective, Helgi, to crack the case before it's leaked to the press. As he interviews the people closest to her – a publisher, an accountant, a retired judge – he realises that Elín's life wasn't what it seemed. In fact, her past is even stranger than her stories. As the investigation becomes more mysterious by the hour, Helgi must uncover the secrets of a very unexpected life.

A Particularly Nasty Case
Adam Kay
Orion. PB. \$32.99
Available now



When a toxic hospital consultant dies of a heart attack, fellow doctor Eitan Rose smells foul play. Nobody else does though, including some crucial players like the police and the coroner. But Eitan just

won't let it drop, and his friends and colleagues become increasingly concerned about him as his chaotic investigation and equally chaotic life spiral out of control. Is he making a career-ending mistake, or could there genuinely be a killer stalking the wards? A deathly funny mix of mystery, murder and medicine.

Suspicion
Seichō Matsumoto & Jesse Kirkwood (trans.)
Penguin Classics. PB. \$28.99
Available now



Onizuka Kumako is a fierce, beautiful woman with Yakuza ties who seduces customers and commits petty crime in Tokyo bars. When she marries rich widower Shirakawa Fukutaro their newlywed

bliss is cut short when their car mysteriously plunges into the harbour and Fukutaro is killed. Under suspicion of murder, Kumako repeatedly proclaims her innocence. As pressure from journalists mounts, public opinion rises against her. But when a scrupulous defence lawyer takes on her case, doubt begins to creep in.

The Stolen
Vikki Petraitis
A&U. PB. \$34.99
Available 2 September



R Like every good crime novel, *The Stolen* is more than a story of misfortune and greed. In this novel, true-crime reporter, podcaster and author Vikki Petraitis examines the rise of the men's rights movement here in Australia and the impact this has

on how women are considered in the media and at home. A particular concern of the men's rights movement of late has been the issue of fathers' rights. This novel works hard to portray the true (and, at times, heartbreaking) ramifications for women of the incautious application of this sentiment.

Luckily for readers of this book, the narrator, Detective Antigone Pollard, is a feminist, and her pragmatic approach to detective work highlights the double standards of those on the men's rights movement bandwagon. A baby has been taken by its father and is missing. The father then dies in a (tragic) car accident. The media goes wild for the story and the baby's mother is blamed for the death. Yet the baby is still lost and the search for the baby and the kidnapper is uncovering more than Antigone bargained for. And, of course, she has her own family mystery to solve.

This easy read is thought-provoking and an evocative portrait of society. Set in Deception Bay, a seaside town filled with tourists and only one excellent café, the problems of misogyny and secrecy are apparent – both now and in the town's past. I was particularly enamoured by the stories from talkback radio: distressing and yet quite funny. Readers of Jane Caro's crime novels will be pleased here with the social commentary and the twisting plot. Those who have not previously encountered Vikki Petraitis's fiction work will be delighted. This author is doing more than spinning a story – she is aiming to change opinions.

Chris Gordon is Readings programming and community engagement manager

The Girl with Ice in Her Veins
Karin Smirnoff & Sarah Death (trans.)
MacLehose. PB. \$32.99
Available 2 September



Spring returns to Sweden's far north, but darkness lies in the small town of Gasskas. Multinationals are exploiting the region's natural resources, opposed by Lisbeth

Salander's niece Svala and a group of environmental activists. When a young journalist is found murdered, Mikael Blomkvist, now working at the local newspaper, starts the investigation, unravelling a possible explosive scandal. Meanwhile Plague, Salander's hacker friend, is missing and when both she and Svala appear on a hit list Salander decides to go to war.

The Hollow Girl
Lyn Yeowart
Penguin. PB. \$34.99
Available 2 September



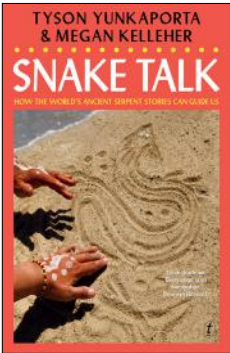
R It's 1973 and Detective Sergeant Eleanor Smith is finally assigned her first homicide case. A woman's body has been discovered at Harrowford Hall, a home for unmarried

mothers deep in the Victorian countryside, which has for decades sold itself as a refuge for 'girls in crisis'. When Detective Smith arrives at the once-grand Gothic mansion, she finds it all but deserted. What's more, the home's overgrown graveyard suggests the apparent poisoning of Nurse Chapman is not Harrowford's first suspicious death. **R**

Nonfiction

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Australian Studies



Snake Talk: How the World's Ancient Serpent Stories Can Guide Us
Tyson Yunkaporta & Megan Kelleher
Text. PB. \$36.99
Available 2 September

Over the course of his first two books, *Sand Talk* and *Right Story, Wrong Story*, Tyson Yunkaporta has carved out a highly distinct intellectual niche. A member of the Apalech clan from Far North Queensland and founder of the Indigenous Knowledges Systems Lab at Deakin, Yunkaporta applies Indigenous wisdom to contemporary problems with brilliant insight. In this new book, *Snake Talk*, Yunkaporta has co-authored the text with his wife, Megan Kelleher, a Barada and Gabalbara woman with a background researching blockchain technology and Indigenous knowledge. The book explores the snakes, serpents and dragons that feature prominently in so many of the world's myths, from Nepal, Central America, Ireland, India and China. Kelleher and Yunkaporta approach these stories by meeting, breaking bread and engaging in solemn ritual with representatives of each culture, bringing them into dialogue with Indigenous Lore. The tone is inclusive and invitational, too – oral culture transmuted into written form. I would be remiss if I failed to mention the book's humour. *Snake Talk* opens with a cheeky anecdote about the confusion of European naturalists encountering the echidna, a mammal with two vaginas. This follows on from *Right Story, Wrong Story*, which opens with a fact about the male echidna's four-headed penis. I am personally eager to know whether all their future books will include echidna genitalia as a recurring literary motif. Rich and layered, *Snake Talk* is partly a response to the crises of rising authoritarianism and environmental collapse we currently face. It calls for rebalancing our relationships with the Earth and each other through shared narrative, 'gathering a world of stories around one fire'. At a time when our world feels fragile, we sorely need the kind of fresh thinking found in this expansive and visionary book.

James Marples is from Readings Chadstone

Australian Studies

Playtime: A History of Australian Childhood
Emily Gallagher
La Trobe University Press. PB. \$36.99
Available 16 September



This groundbreaking book, centred around six imaginative worlds, is a history of the childhood imagination in Australia between 1890 and the outbreak of the Second World War. It is a story about the generations that grew up at a time when nation and empire were being reimagined amid the globalising currents of war, technology and trade. *Playtime* brings their worlds and voices to life, exploring an incredible array of children's artefacts and seeing the social history of Australia through a new lens.

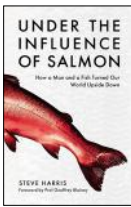
Sex, Gender & Identity: Trans Rights in Australia (In the National Interest)
Paula Gerber
Monash University Publishing. PB. \$19.95
Available 1 September



Media stories of the trans community, especially trans women, are often sensationalist, ill-informed and vilifying. What tends not to be reported is the daily abuse, assaults, bullying and online hate trans people experience. Much of this seems to be fuelled by a deep-seated intolerance of trans people in

our society. *Sex, Gender & Identity: Trans Rights in Australia* explores why trans people are so hated and asks how we change this and move to respect, protection and inclusion, and increase understanding.

Under the Influence of Salmon: How a Man and a Fish Turned the World Upside Down
Steve Harris
Melbourne Books. PB. \$39.99
Available 9 September



James Youl wanted to turn the world upside down by transplanting salmon, and trout, into the Southern Hemisphere for the first time. His mission was dismissed as madness, but it became the most audacious wildlife feat the world has ever seen. His quest rewrote the laws of natural history and reshaped global fish farming and fishing culture in Australia and New Zealand. Blending scientific and social commentary Steve Harris explores the history of salmon, and the enduring colonial obsession with mastery over nature.

Beyond Suburbia
Warren Kirk & Don Watson (intro.)
Scribe. HB. \$49.99
Available 2 September



In the margins between the city and the bush, Warren Kirk uncovers the quiet poetry of Victoria's hinterlands. These richly textured

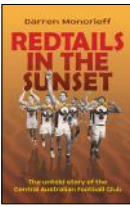
photographs capture the overlooked buildings, people, and landscapes of rural and semi-rural Australia. Rendered with enormous sensitivity, this collection is more than a photographic journey – it's an elegiac meditation on place, people, and memory. Kirk continues his remarkable project of preserving vanishing Australian scenes, inviting viewers to witness the extraordinary within the seemingly mundane.

Snow's and the Golden Age of Australian Department Stores
Elizabeth Lane, Stuart Kells, Louise Lane & Fiona Kells
Hardie Grant. HB. \$59.99
Available 16 September



In Australia, Snow's department store was a household name. Ballarat-born Sydney Snow, the eponymous founder of Snow's, headed a retail and commercial dynasty that extended throughout Australia and maintained strong trade connections with Britain and continental Europe. They were pioneers not just in retailing but in politics and other spheres. This proud tribute to Snow's is evocatively told and is lavishly illustrated with photographs from family and public archives.

Redtails in the Sunset: The Untold Story of the Central Australian Football Club
Darren Moncrieff
Aboriginal Studies Press. PB. \$39.95
Available 22 September



This is the tale of a four-year effort to unite a group of part-time Aussie Rules footy players and community Countrymen from Central Australia to play against their semi-professional city counterparts in the Premier League in Darwin. Encountering flight delays, the rising bloc of South Asian nations and a Red Centre 'jewel', local rep football has never been so thrilling. Wadjarri and Yingaarda-Thargarri journalist Darren Moncrieff brings humour and passion to tell the Redtails inspiring story. Their legacy lives on through the Redtails Pinktails Right Tracks Foundation, mentoring youth across Central Australia into employment and leadership.

Fault Lines: Australia's Unequal Past
Seumas Spark & Christina Twomey (eds)
Monash University Publishing. PB. \$36.99
Available 1 September



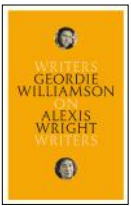
Australians love to talk about a 'fair go'. Yet inequality has been part of this sunburnt country since colonisation. From Australia's treatment of its First Nations peoples to its refugees, from the prejudice suffered by the LGBTIQIA+ community to the lack of support for returned soldiers, our country has not always treated its citizens with compassion and care. We have undervalued the land, causing damage to soil and waterways. What can this unenviable history teach us? A timely essay collection on injustice in Australia.

Quarterly Essay 99: Woodside vs the Planet – How a Company Captured a Country
Marian Wilkinson
Black Inc. PB. \$29.99
Available 1 September



How does one company capture a country? This is a story of power and influence, pollution and protest. The world may have committed at Paris to hold back dangerous climate change and curb fossil-fuel use in the 2030s, but Australia's fossil-fuel giant Woodside is doubling down. It has plans for increased production into the 2070s. Support from the major parties is locked in. In this engrossing essay, Marian Wilkinson reveals the ways of corporate power and investigates the new face of resistance and disruption. The stakes could not be higher.

On Alexis Wright: Writers on Writers
Geordie Williamson
Black Inc. HB. \$22.99
Available 15 September



Winner of the Miles Franklin Literary Award in 2007 and 2024 and the Stella Prize in 2018 and 2024, Alexis Wright is the most eminent and influential Indigenous creative writer of recent times. In this insightful and eloquent essay, noted critic Geordie Williamson reflects with deep insight on Wright's powerful work.

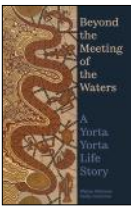
Biography

Babylon, Albion: A Personal History of Myth and Migration
Dalia Al-Dujaili
Saqi. HB. \$29.99
Available 1 September



In this striking exploration of identity and place, Dalia Al-Dujaili considers what it means to belong in your land. Tracing the rich heritage of both the oak and the date palm, Iraqi marshes and Loch Ness monsters, Al-Dujaili marries Arab and Islamic mythology with the British and Christian pastoral. She draws from a rich array of sources to consider in a new light the communal lush, wild – and at times, dark – places we share. A love song to Britain, Iraq and the body of earth we hold in common.

Beyond the Meeting of the Waters: A Yorta Yorta Life Story
Wayne Atkinson & Cathy Guinness
MUP. HB. \$49.99
Available 16 September

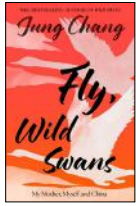


Yorta Yorta Elder Wayne Atkinson's storyline begins on the banks of a river and led him to a lifetime of activism and education. Influenced by his great grandfather and Elders he studied at university and became a teacher of Indigenous Studies at the University of Melbourne, pioneering On Country Learning. An essential voice of his generation, Atkinson has been at the

forefront of Aboriginal cultural renaissance in Victoria since the 1980s and contributed to human rights reform, the Yorta Yorta Native Title claim, and the Yoorrook Justice Commission.

**Fly, Wild Swans:
My Mother, Myself and China**
Jung Chang

HarperCollins. PB. \$37.99
Available 16 September



Fly, Wild Swans is the follow-up to *Wild Swans* and brings the story of Jung Chang's family – along with that of China – up to date. The book is in many ways Jung's love letter to her

mother. It is also about her grandmother and father both of whom died tragically in the Cultural Revolution, but they are often recalled in this book. In fact, the past is never far away in Chang's subsequent life. It has shaped her, and moulded the present China, and what's more, it promises to herald the future. This is family history at its best.

**White Male Stand-Up:
An Autobiography**
Alan Davies

Monoray. PB. \$34.99
Available 9 September



White Male Stand-Up is Alan Davies' candid follow-up to *Just Ignore Him*, chronicling his journey from a traumatic childhood into the chaotic world of stand-up comedy and a television career, which included the life-changing fame as TV's Jonathan Creek. Funny and honest, Davies reflects on the uplifting highs and painful lows, of success and excess, and the dangers of both. With a cast of well-known people from comedy and TV, this memoir is a raw, funny, and moving account of survival and self-discovery.

Homework: A Memoir
Geoff Dyer

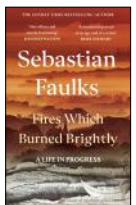
Canongate. HB. \$39.99
Available 2 September



Born and raised in a working-class area of Cheltenham in the late 1950s, in a country shaped by the aftermath of the Second World War, Geoff Dyer and his mates found joy recreating battles with their Tommy guns and collecting anything and everything they could find. When Geoff passes his eleven-plus exams he gets into Cheltenham Grammar School, a school which drastically changes the trajectory of his life. *Homework* is a reflection on Dyer's childhood and what it means to come of age in England in the '60s and '70s.

**Fires Which Burned Brightly:
A Life in Progress**
Sebastian Faulks

Hutchinson Heinemann. HB. \$45
Available 2 September



Sebastian Faulks offers readers a series of detailed snapshots from a life in progress. They include a post-war rural childhood, the booze-sodden heyday of Fleet Street, and a career as one of the country's

most acclaimed novelists. Driven by a desire 'to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time', the book ends with a tribute to Faulks's parents, and a sense of how his own generation was shaped by the disruptive power of war and its aftermath. A work of subtle yet profound intelligence and warmth.

**The Eye of the Dragonfly: My Life
Seeing the World Through Sport**
Tracey Lee Holmes

S&S. PB. \$36.99
Available now

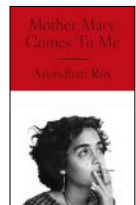


For over four decades, journalist Tracey Lee Holmes has taken us beyond the scores and stats to the real stories of sport. In both her life and work, Holmes has consistently broken

barriers. As the first female presenter of ABC's *Grandstand*, she has pioneered coverage of and by women in sport. From the Olympics to FIFA World Cups, Holmes has brought us closer to athletes from all walks of life and spotlighted stories of money, power and discrimination. Her memoir offers insight into a rich personal history and a remarkable life in sport.

Mother Mary Comes To Me
Arundhati Roy

Hamish Hamilton. PB. \$36.99
Available 9 September



R The instant you see Arundhati Roy's *Mother Mary Comes To Me*, you will want to pick it up for the striking black-and-white photographs on the jacket alone. On the front: a youthful, hopeful

Roy – contemplative, with a bid in hand. On the back: an older, dare I say, wiser, Roy with a wry smile, perhaps observing her younger self – peaceful, knowledgeable and content.

This is a memoir of epic proportions and fans of Roy's fiction will not be disappointed. It's a memoir of two parts: a searingly beautiful and honest account of Roy's complex relationship with her mother, Mary, and Roy's own life story, particularly her journey in writing her epic Booker Prize-winning novel, *The God of Small Things*. Roy is a truly gifted storyteller and I believe if there were a prize awarded for the "Booker of all Bookers" then *The God of Small Things* would surely be the winner.

Mary Roy ('Mrs Roy' to her children) was a force of nature. A single mother, it seems she did not have time for the trivialities of raising children. She was, however, a fiercely intelligent and progressive woman and educator. Mrs Roy established a school in Kerala in 1967 that still flourishes today, and she continues to be revered as a feminist and visionary. However, her children, particularly Arundhati, bore the brunt of a cruelty that clearly contradicts the accolades. Roy's memories of her mother are captured with striking clarity and are often disturbing; as a reader, you wonder how she put up with it all.

There is a period of seven years where Roy doesn't have contact with Mrs Roy, and it is during this time that we learn of Roy's other life – a life of her own creation involving struggles with making it on her own, poverty, studies, loves, political activism, successful careers in

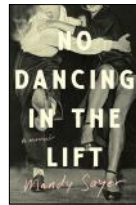
architecture and filmmaking – and with the call of writing a constant throughout. Roy looks back at how *The God of Small Things*, her debut novel, catapulted her into the upper echelons of the literary world. These recollections are inspiring and reveal the making of an author before the digital age – what a gift.

When mother and daughter do make contact again, Roy is older and credits her mother with allowing her freedom: to think, to write, to be. *Mother Mary Comes To Me* is a memoir to devour, equal parts rage and heartache: two women, two very different paths and ultimately two legacies shaped by each other.

Danielle Mirabella is a senior buyer

No Dancing in the Lift: A Memoir
Mandy Sayer

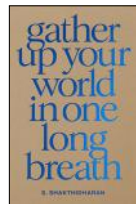
Transit Lounge. PB. \$32.99
Available 1 September



When Mandy Sayer learns of her father Gerry's terminal cancer, she faces a reckoning with past and future as she learns to navigate a precarious present. This is the joyous and nuanced account of her father's later life, his illness and the beautiful moments, music and memories of earlier times they share, yet it is also an exploration of inescapable grief. And an unfurling story of new love. Sayer's funny, uplifting and heartbreaking memoir is an unforgettable love letter to her father and her husband.

**Gather Up Your World in
One Long Breath**
S. Shakthidharan

Powerhouse. HB. \$34.99
Available 9 September



R S. Shakthidharan is an award-winning playwright whose credits include the internationally acclaimed multilingual work *Counting and Cracking* and *The Wrong Gods*, which is included in the Melbourne Theatre Company's 2025 season. With *Gather Up Your World in One Long Breath*, Shakthidharan has made a seamless translation into the memoir genre.

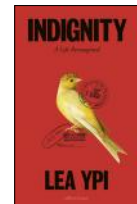
Shakthidharan, who is of Sri Lankan heritage and Tamil ancestry, describes himself in both the book and in his work elsewhere as a storyteller. In the prologue of *Gather Up Your World in One Long Breath* he is asked for a chronological retelling of his life and he answers that lives are not remembered like that, but rather in 'bits and pieces'. What follows is an engaging narrative where Shakthidharan one by one addresses family members (with one special addition) to share his memories with them (and us). This provides coherence as the stories intersect through time, people and places, as well as thematically. The subjects are diverse: from the horror of the Sri Lankan Civil War to moving houses (literally), falling in love to a gifted dancer's career being cut short, and arguing over household finances to reuniting with an estranged father. Shakthidharan writes with both honesty and empathy, especially in relation to his mother. She is one of several key female figures who provide insight into why he is so adept at writing female characters in his plays.

I haven't read a memoir in a while, and this was such a satisfying return to the genre from both an emotional and stylistic standpoint. Already highly praised by writers such as Alice Pung, Shankari Chandran and Omar Musa, *Gather Up Your World in One Long Breath* has been commissioned to inspire a program of events at the Powerhouse Parramatta in 2026. So, once again, like his plays, Shakthidharan's words (and stories) will have life beyond the page.

Amanda Rayner is from Readings Carlton

Indignity: A Life Reimagined
Lea Ypi

Allen Lane. PB. \$36.99
Available 16 September

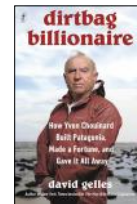


When Lea Ypi discovers a photo of her grandmother, Leman, honeymooning in the Alps in 1941 she is faced with unsettling questions. Having been told records of Leman's youth were destroyed in the early days of communism in Albania, Ypi begins to investigate the truth about her family. From aristocracy and war to politics and family secrets, *Indignity* explores what it means to survive in an age of extremes. It reveals the fragility of truth, both personal and political, and the cost of decisions made against the tide of history.

Business

**Dirtbag Billionaire:
How Yvon Chouinard Built
Patagonia, Made a Fortune, and
Gave It All Away**
David Gelles

Text. PB. \$36.99
Available 2 September



Dirtbag Billionaire is the story of legendary rock climber Yvon Chouinard and Patagonia, the billion-dollar brand he founded in 1973. Known for its outdoor gear, Patagonia has been a beacon for social change and corporate activism and has paved the way for a new era of environmental responsibility, with Chouinard renouncing his wealth and committing the company's profits to fight climate change. David Gelles describes the key moments that shaped the company and its leader, creating a new model for corporate life and ethics.

Cinema

**A Fine Line between Stupid and
Clever: The Story of Spinal Tap**
Rob Reiner with Christopher Guest,
Michael McKean & Harry Shearer

S&S. PB. \$36.99
Available 16 September



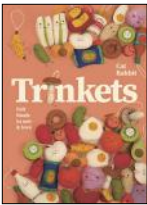
Since its original release in 1984, *This Is Spinal Tap* has evolved from a beloved cult film into a cinematic landmark: an all-time comedy classic that pioneered an entire genre: the mockumentary.

Now, director Rob Reiner and his

co-writers and co-stars Christopher Guest, Michael McKean and Harry Shearer, tell the complete story of the movie and its fictitious band – how they met, how Spinal Tap came to be, and how their low-budget indie film took on a life of its own. *A Fine Line Between Stupid and Clever* also comes with a memoir by Reiner’s directorial alter ego, Marty DiBergi, in which he interviews Tap band members Nigel Tufnel, David St. Hubbins and Derek Smalls.

Craft

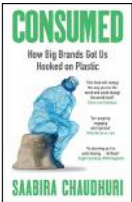
Trinkets: Felt Foods to Sew and Love
Cat Rabbit
Smith Street. HB. \$29.99
Available 2 September



Trinkets invites you into a whimsical world of felt creations. With Cat Rabbit’s adorable, playful designs and step-by-step instructions, you’ll learn to make an assortment of charming felt food friends, from the fruit bowl to eggs three ways. Perfect for beginners and experienced crafters alike, this book makes sewing accessible, fun, and extraordinarily delightful, and will have you making friendly trinkets for everyone you know.

Environmental Studies

Consumed: How Big Brands Got Us Hooked on Plastic
Saabira Chaudhuri
Blink. PB. \$34.99
Available 9 September



Over the past 70 years companies like Coca-Cola and Unilever have harnessed single-use plastics to turbocharge their profits. They’ve poured billions of dollars into changing our daily habits with bottled water, disposable nappies and so much more. We once shaped plastics, now they shape us, and the consequences are dire: damaging our climate and biodiversity, and human health. In investigating how we got here, *Consumed* arms us to make better decisions and to demand better from the brands that made us hooked on plastic.

Nature’s Last Dance: Tales of Wonder in an Age of Extinction
Natalie Kyriacou
Affirm Press. PB. \$36.99
Available now



Set against the backdrop of a rapidly unfolding mass extinction event, *Nature’s Last Dance* is a story of survival and extinction, of life and death, of curiosity and perversion, of joy and sorrow. It takes readers across hunting grounds, through jungles and oceans, inside communities, through courtrooms,

and into the heart of battles to survive against all odds. Natalie Kyriacou confronts the extinction crisis with courage and curiosity, charting a new course for nature and showing us why it is so worth fighting for.

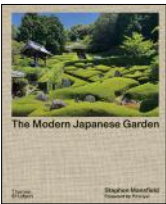
Clearing the Air: A Hopeful Guide to Solving Climate Change – in 50 Questions and Answers
Hannah Ritchie
C&W. PB. \$36.99
Available 16 September



In her new book, bestselling environmental expert Hannah Ritchie answers 50 key climate questions so that we can get on and fix things. We’re at a critical moment for our planet, and using data to sort fact from fiction is step one. Even more crucial is feeling hopeful about what we can do next. The third piece of good news? We already have many of the solutions we need to create a more sustainable planet for future generations. An essential guide for whenever you’re feeling lost or overwhelmed about climate change.

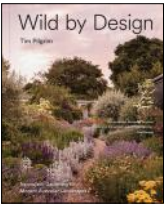
Gardening

The Modern Japanese Garden
Stephen Mansfield & Pico Iyer (foreword)
T&H. HB. \$110
Available 2 September



The first ever survey of the evolution of the Japanese garden, dating from 1900 to the present day, *The Modern Japanese Garden* is set to become the definitive book on the subject. Featuring gardens from Tokyo, Kyoto and Fujisawa to Osaka, Okayama, Fukuoka and beyond, this impressive overview includes major analysis of key works of interest, insights into some of the most renowned Japanese garden designers across history, and a thoughtful exploration of the essential themes and developments in Japanese garden design.


Wild by Design: Naturalistic Gardening for Modern Australian Landscapes
Tim Pilgrim
Murdoch. HB. \$59.99
Available 2 September



In *Wild by Design*, Tim Pilgrim shares the joys of naturalistic gardening – an approach inspired by the dynamic beauty of untamed plants, the garden as wildlife habitat, the rhythm of the seasons, our future climate, and the visual rewards of relaxing our need for control. With stunning photography by Martina Gemmola, Pilgrim presents the creative inspiration, information and tools you’ll need to create your own biodiverse, plant-driven, naturalistic garden, whether you’re a home gardener or professional landscape designer, or starting with an existing garden or a blank slate.

QUARTERLY
ESSAY

ISSUE 19 2025
ASSOCIATED NEXT ISSUE:
SEAN KELLY ON SUBJECT IN POLITICS



WOODSIDE
VS
THE PLANET

HOW A COMPANY CAPTURED
A COUNTRY

MARIAN
WILKINSON

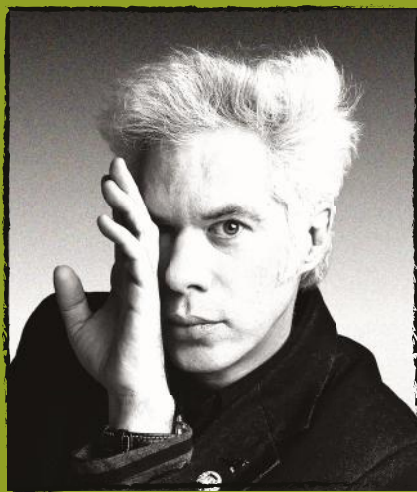
Correspondence

'HARD NEW WORLD' Lachlan Harris, Emma Shortis,
Ali Wyne, James Curran, Susannah Patton, Mark Edele,
Brendan Taylor, Clive Edwards, Hugh White

The world may have committed at Paris to hold back dangerous climate change, but Australia’s fossil-fuel giant Woodside is doubling down.

In this engrossing essay, Marian Wilkinson reveals the ways of corporate power and investigates the new face of resistance and disruption. The stakes could not be higher.

JIM LESS IS MORE JARMUSCH



**A COMPLETE RETROSPECTIVE
THURSDAY NIGHTS AT 7PM**

**25 SEPTEMBER TO
18 DECEMBER**

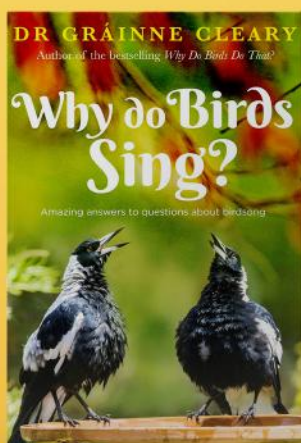
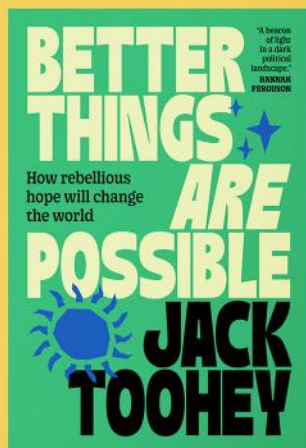


LIDO

**A TIMELY MANIFESTO FOR
POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL
PROGRESS, CHALLENGING SYSTEMS
AND REIMAGINING A JUST FUTURE.**

'Jack Toohey is a refreshing
and trusted voice with a
positive mission, this book
exemplifies that.'

HANNAH FERGUSON
author of *Bite Back*



**AN ABSORBING AND INFORMATIVE BOOK
FILLED WITH ANSWERS TO MANY OF THE
COMMON AND UNCOMMON QUESTIONS
WE ASK ABOUT BIRDSONG.**

'This book is a bible for bird
lovers. And if you're not a bird
lover... you will be after
reading this!'

BEN FORDHAM,
Walkley award-winning
journalist and radio host

ALLEN&UNWIN

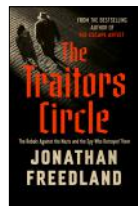
AUSTRALIAN. INDEPENDENT. FOR READERS.

History

**The Traitors Circle:
The Rebels Against the Nazis and
the Spy Who Betrayed Them**

Jonathan Freedland
John Murray. PB. \$34.99

Available 9 September

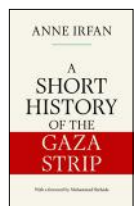


Berlin, 1943. A group of high-society anti-Nazi dissenters meet for a tea party one late summer afternoon. They do not know that, sitting around the table, is someone poised to betray them all to the Gestapo. They form a circle of unlikely rebels, drawn from the German elite. What unites them is a shared loathing of the Nazis, a refusal to bow to Hitler and the courage to perform perilous acts of resistance. How did a group of brave, principled rebels, come to fall into such a lethal trap?

A Short History of the Gaza Strip
Anne Irfan

S&S. PB. \$29.99

Available now



The Gaza Strip is one of the most widely-reported on regions in the world – yet misinformation about its history and its people abounds. In this vital book, historian Anne Irfan explains Gaza's outsized

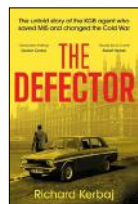
political significance through six pivotal moments in its modern history. Drawing on a decade of research, and written with clarity and compassion, Irfan weaves in the voices of everyday Palestinians. *A Short History of the Gaza Strip* is an indispensable read for anyone seeking to understand Palestine today.

The Defector

Richard Kerbaj

Blink. PB. \$36.99

Available 9 September



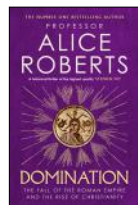
Drawing on newly declassified intelligence documents and interviews with spymasters, *The Defector* tells a startling story of a Soviet mission to plant fake Kremlin agents within British and

American intelligence services. It tells of the paranoia that ensued and how the actions of a genuine turncoat, the former KGB officer Oleg Lyalin, who defected in 1971, and the secrets he revealed resulted in one of the most dramatic and pivotal moments in the Cold War and rescued M15 after a series of intelligence failures.

Domination: The Fall of the Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity
Professor Alice Roberts

S&S. PB. \$36.99

Available now



In *Domination*, Professor Alice Roberts examines how and why Christianity spread as the Roman Empire fell. She travels from south Wales to Brittany; from the heart of the Roman Empire to Corinth; from Alexandria in the fourth century to Constantinople unearthing archaeological clues and challenging

long-established histories. As the Roman Empire crumbled in Western Europe, a shadow of power remained, and with it a new force emerged. A page-turning exploration of power, its survival and the secrets hidden in plain sight.

Interior Design

The Architect's House: Inside the Homes of 20 Architects from Around the World

Stephen Crafti

Quadrille. HB. \$65

Available now



The Architect's House features 20 homes designed by architects from around the world for themselves and free from client constraints. Diverse in styles and settings, these timeless

properties have been perfectly created to suit the way each architect chooses to live, both in the present and future. This book will inspire those contemplating building a new home or renovating an older style of residence to take on the adventurous spirit and not simply chase a trend or a home with only resale value in mind.

City, Coast & Country: Australian Interiors by Adelaide Bragg

Adelaide Bragg, Robyn Lea & Lisa Cohen

T&H. HB. \$90

Available 2 September



City, Coast & Country: Australian Interiors by Adelaide Bragg invites readers into a private world of elegant homes shaped by a distinctly Australian aesthetic.

This curated collection of Bragg's 'classic contemporary' style interiors from coastal retreats, rural homesteads, and city residences reflect her sensitivity to colour, texture and light which are inspired by her rural upbringing. Organised by colour, the book's six chapters reveal the raw materials and creative influences that continue to guide Bragg's work.

Music

Looking for the Perfect Beat: Remixing and Reshaping Hip-Hop, Rock and Rhythms

Arthur Baker

Faber Music. HB. \$55

Available 9 September



Arthur Baker has been quietly influencing the sound of popular music for over 50 years. From his beginnings as a club DJ and disco producer in the early '70s to producing one of the genre-defining early hip-hop tracks 'Planet Rock' by Afrika Bambaataa and Soulsonic Force, his illustrious career has seen him work with artists such as Bruce Springsteen, Diana Ross, Quincy Jones, New Order and Damon Albarn. This is Baker's own inspiring story and features unheard stories about some of music's most successful figures.

Prince: A Sign o’ the Times

John McKie

Nine Eight. PB. \$36.99

Available 23 September



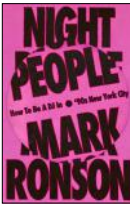
There are pop stars, and then there is Prince. This new, definitive biography examines the remarkable life and career of one of the most mysterious figures in music through the prism of the record most widely considered his masterpiece, 1987’s *Sign o’ the Times*. With the help of many of the people who knew Prince best, John McKie draws on more than 200 exclusive interviews with friends, ex-girlfriends, bandmates, recording engineers, bodyguards, personal assistants, wardrobe designers and hairdressers.

Night People: How to Be a DJ in ’90s New York City

Mark Ronson

Century. PB. \$36.99

Available 23 September



Lady Gaga, Adele, Amy Winehouse, Dua Lipa, Bruno Mars, Miley Cyrus, the *Barbie* soundtrack. Behind some of the biggest musical moments in the past two decades is one man: Mark Ronson.

Now, his memoir *Night People* captures the music, characters, escapades and energy of his formative DJ days in ’90s New York. It evokes a time and place where fashionistas and rappers danced alongside club kids and nine-to-fivers, inviting us into the tribe of creatives and partiers who came alive when the sun went down.

Natural History

Why Do Birds Sing?

Dr Gráinne Cleary

A&U. PB. \$34.99

Available 2 September



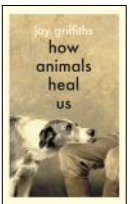
Throughout our history, birdsong has influenced art, poetry and music. It can elevate our mood and bring our backyards to life. We often hear birds singing as we go about our lives, but have you ever wondered who they are singing to and what they are singing about? *Why Do Birds Sing?* provides an insight into the world of bird communication that will surprise and delight you. It’s an absorbing and informative book filled with answers to many of the common and often uncommon questions we ask about birdsong.

How Animals Heal Us

Jay Griffiths

Hamish Hamilton. HB. \$45

Available 9 September



Pet-owners and animal-lovers instinctively know that animals heal. Drawing on scientific discoveries, history, and Indigenous knowledge, Jay Griffiths explores how animals can have a role in every level of healing, from the individual to the

collective, guiding us in how we might create societies that are healthier, fairer and kinder. Wolves may be teachers of ethics; monkeys and dogs can object to unfairness, animals can be natural therapists or directly medicinal – they are an irresistible medicine for a healthy culture.

Parenting

Generation Connected

Dr Joanne Orlando PhD

Penguin. PB. \$36.99

Available 2 September



Few issues make parents feel more anxious and unprepared than navigating their children’s relationship with technology, knowing it will have a profound impact on their lives, relationships and mental health. But, with the right information and guidance, it can also be an opportunity for greater trust and connection. Dr Orlando provides a clear, practical roadmap to guiding children through the digital landscape, from those first taps on a screen to navigating the complexities of social media in the teen years and beyond.

Personal Development

Powerfully Likeable: A Woman’s Guide to Effective Communication

Kate Mason PhD

Penguin. PB. \$36.99

Available 9 September



Women the world over struggle to find a comfortable way to communicate with authority yet still be liked. In this new roadmap for female success, Australian business coach and communication expert Kate Mason explains that being influential and well-liked is not an either/or proposition. Instead, the key is to choose communication tools that amplify what makes you unique and wield your power from a place of authenticity. A paradigm-shifting guide to dismantling and thinking beyond communication stereotypes.

Politics

Slow Down or Die: The Economics of Degrowth

Timothée Parrique & Claire Benoit (trans.)

Profile. PB. \$36.99

Available 2 September



In *Slow Down or Die*, French economist Timothée Parrique challenges the myth that perpetual economic growth is the solution to society’s problems. He demonstrates that more



From the bestselling author of *Babel* and *Yellowface*, comes the most unexpected love story of 2025



The long-awaited sequel to *Wild Swans*, the multi-million copy international bestselling sensation



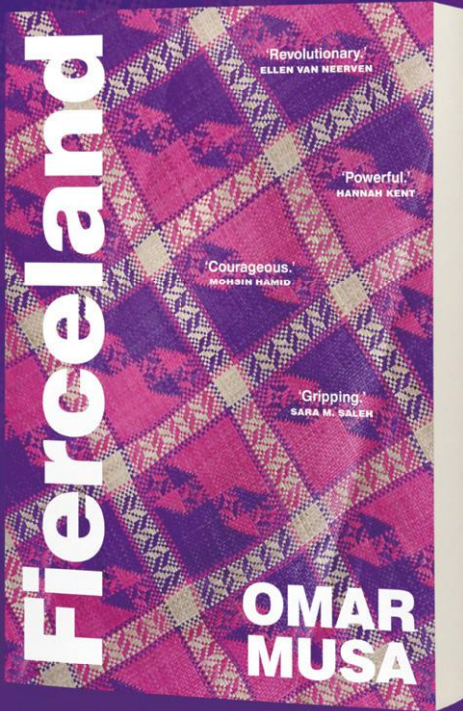
Justin Calverley, author of the bestselling *The Urban Farmer*, reveals the secrets of our woodlands and how their low-maintenance model can revolutionise our outdoor spaces



How a mother's wisdom and grace helped one family come to terms with her dementia

OUT NOW





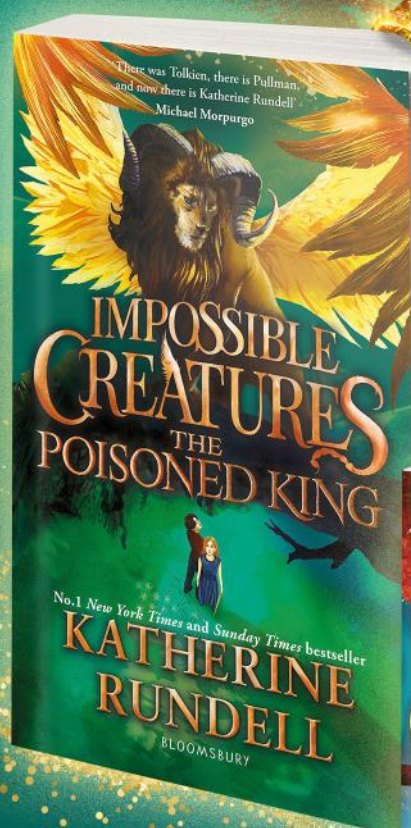
Revolutionary. ELLEN VAN NEERVEN
Powerful. HANNAH KENT
Courageous. MOMIN HAMID
Gripping. SARA M. SALEM

Fierceland

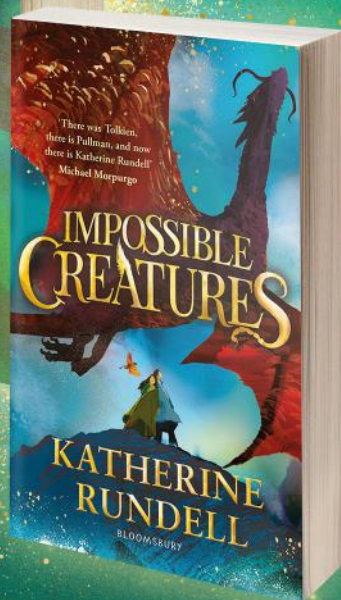
OMAR MUSA

HOW DO YOU MOURN YOUR FATHER WHEN YOU KNOW HIS SECRETS?

Return to a world beyond your WILDEST IMAGINATION



Author video



‘There was Tolkien,
there is Pullman
and now there is
Katherine Rundell’
Michael Morpurgo

BLOOMSBURY

growth will accelerate social and ecological collapse rather than solve climate change, poverty or inequality. Instead Parrique proposes a ‘post-growth’ economy measured through how well we provide for each other. An inspiring radical call to embracing a future of shared prosperity, where slowing down is the key to a better sustainable future.

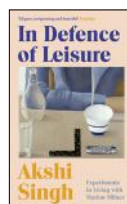
Psychology

In Defence of Leisure: Experiments in Living with Marion Milner

Akshi Singh

Jonathan Cape. PB. \$36.99

Available 23 September



Marion Milner lived during the 20th century and by the age of 98 had written nine books revealing how free time and creativity are vital for a fulfilled life. Akshi Singh was born 90 years later, in Rajasthan.

When Singh found herself standing at a crossroads in her life and grieving personal loss, she realised the questions and preoccupations Milner was exploring were her own. *In Defence of Leisure* presents Marion Milner as a writer for our times and asks the question: how do I want to spend my free time?

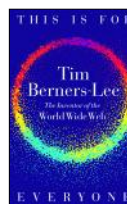
Science

This is For Everyone: The Inventor of the World Wide Web

Tim Berners-Lee

Pan Mac. PB. \$36.99

Available 16 September



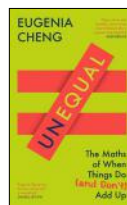
Sir Tim Berners-Lee is a different kind of visionary. Born in the same year as Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, Berners-Lee famously distributed his invention, the World Wide Web, for no commercial reward. In this intimate memoir, Berners-Lee tells the story of his iconic invention, exploring how it launched a new era of creativity and collaboration, while unleashing a commercial race that today imperils democracies and polarises public debate. Filled with his characteristic optimism, technical insight and wry humour, this is a book about the power of technology – both to fuel our worst instincts and to profoundly shape our lives for the better.

Unequal: The Maths of When Things Do (and Don't) Add Up

Eugenia Cheng

Profile. HB. \$39.99

Available 2 September



At first glance, the concept of equality in maths seems unambiguous. Denoted by two parallel lines, the equals sign looks elegant, simple and entirely black and white. But between those two lines lies a world of flexibility, creativity and innovation. And once you see this nuance, you quickly realise that sameness and difference, equality and inequality, are

not nearly as immutable as they may seem. In *Unequal*, Eugenia Cheng explores the world of the interplay between sameness and difference, from numbers to manifolds to category theory and beyond.

Science Under Siege: How to Fight the Five Most Powerful Forces that Threaten Our World

Michael Mann & Peter Hotez

Scribe. PB. \$36.99

Available 9 September



Michael Mann and Peter Hotez have spent the last 20 years on the front lines of the battle to convey accurate, reliable, and trustworthy information about science in the face of determined and nihilistic opposition. In this manifesto, they reveal the five main forces threatening science: plutocrats, pros, petrostates, phonies, and the press. It is a call to arms and a road map for dismantling the forces of anti-science. Armed with the information in this book we can fight back with scientific truths, and ultimately avert disaster.

Travel Writing

Moonlight Express: Around the World by Night Train

Monisha Rajesh

Bloomsbury. PB. \$34.99

Available 2 September



From Austria's *Nightjet* to the *Caledonian Sleeper* and the *Santa Claus Express*, Monisha Rajesh (author of the bestselling *Around the World in 80 Trains*) invites us on an adventure filled with moonlit landscapes, cosy compartments and quirky companions, aboard the world's most wondrous night trains. As people search for more environmentally friendly ways to travel, night trains are in the midst of a renaissance. By turns romantic and hilarious, *Moonlight Express* brings us along for the ride – and drops us back at the platform before sunrise.

True Crime

The Devil Takes Bitcoin: Cryptocurrency Crimes and the Japanese Connection

Jake Adelstein

Scribe. PB. \$35

Available 2 September

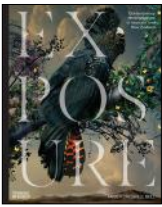


Cryptocurrency was supposed to do for money what the internet did for information, but it didn't work out that way. When Mt Gox, once the world's largest bitcoin exchange, collapsed in Tokyo, nearly half a billion dollars' worth of bitcoin went missing. Was it a heist or something else entirely? Delving inside the world of hackers, libertarians, drug dealers and absent-minded CEOs, this fascinating tale traces bitcoin's trajectory from humble-to-hot commodity and global scandal.

Visual Arts

Exposure: Contemporary Photographers in Australia and New Zealand

Amber Creswell Bell
T&H. HB. \$79.99
Available 2 September



In her latest collection, Amber Creswell Bell explores the work of 40 contemporary photographers from Australia and New Zealand, such as Leila Jeffreys, Bill Henson and Kara Rosenlund. Each artist shares insights into their practice, ranging from the whimsical to the wild, addressing subjects as diverse as the environment, motherhood and identity. *Exposure* captures the essence of modern photography, showcasing bold perspectives, striking landscapes and intimate portraits that reflect the region’s cultural richness and natural beauty.

Artists by Artists: What Happens When Two Creative Minds Meet

Michelle Grey & Susan Armstrong
T&H. HB. \$79.99
Available 16 September



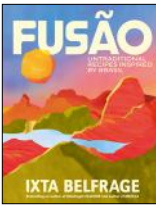
Artists by Artists is a dynamic and intimate exploration of Australia’s most engaging artists capturing each other in portraiture. Fifty artists are paired, offering a glimpse into their artistic processes and personal connections. Through imagery and candid conversations, readers are invited into the shared creative space where each brushstroke, pencil line or camera click reveals not just a physical likeness, but the inspirations, histories and artistic philosophies that bind these visionaries together.

At Home

with Chris Gordon

FUSÃO: Untraditional Recipes Inspired by Brasil

Ixta Belfrage
Ebury. HB. \$65
Available 2 September



This is not Ixta Belfrage’s first dance with cooking and cookbooks. She began her career at Ottolenghi’s NOPI restaurant, before moving to the Ottolenghi Test Kitchen where she worked for the man himself. In fact, Belfrage was Ottolenghi’s co-author on the bestselling *Flavour* before she published her first solo cookbook, *Mezcla*. Her cooking draws inspiration from three countries she loves: Brazil (where her mum is from), Italy (where Belfrage lived as a child) and Mexico (where her grandad lived). This cookbook, while using Brazilian food as a starting point is a celebration of tropical delights and will inspire you to be creative in your kitchen. Summer is just round the corner and honestly, we could use more fruit in our cooking. And the fish burger recipe is to die for!

Secret Sauce: Recipes for Crazy-delicious Condiments & Easy Meals to Bring Them to Life

Rosheen Kaul
Murdoch. HB. \$39.99
Available 2 September



Any Single Sauce Any Single Time: that is what I would call this excellent journal of recipes for condiments and yes, sauces, rubs, and dishes. But it is the sauce recipes that sing to me. Divided by colour, ‘Genesis’ first details the saucy secret to adding something bold and generous to your meals. Sections include: Red (vibrant sambals), Green (herb-centric), White & Beige (rich mayos and cream-based sauces), Black & Brown (flavourful soy-based wonders), and Yellow & Orange (flavour-packed butters, including the masala butter of your dreams). You will already know Rosheen Kaul as the former head chef of Melbourne’s Etta, the author of the cookbook *Chinese-ish*, and as a ‘Good Food’ recipe columnist in *The Age*. Now you can get this book to get into her thinking!

Linger: Salads, Sweets and Stories to Savour, Together

Hetty Lui McKinnon
Plum. PB. Was \$44.99
\$39.99

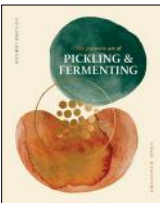
Available now



When considering what to write about Hetty Lui McKinnon’s latest collection of family-friendly, gorgeously considered recipes, I asked myself – *does this book even need a review?* Do I know a single foodie that is not in love with Hetty and her generous, no-fuss food? I do not. So, let me introduce her as if this were not her fourth cookbook celebrating everything veggie-based. Hetty started making salads for people in Sydney offices before moving to New York. Australia cried when she left because her meals are innovative and ethically conscious while also being tangible options for the whole family to enjoy. There is something about Hetty that just opens everyone’s heart. This new book is filled with more innovative ideas that will continue the love story between Australia and Hetty.

The Japanese Art of Pickling & Fermenting: Preserving Vegetables and Family Traditions

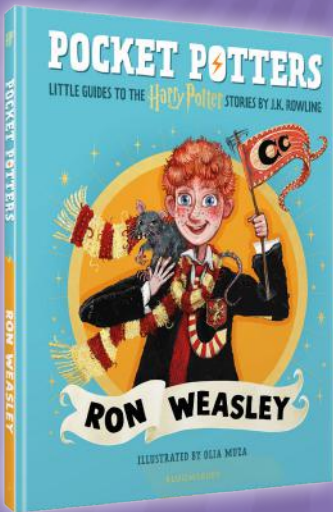
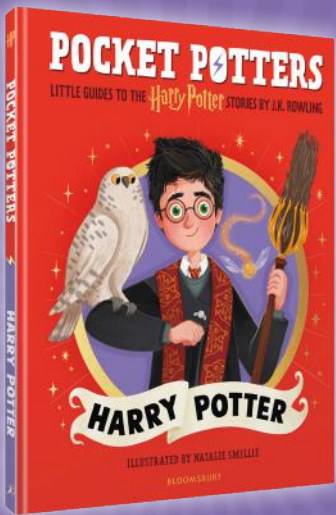
Yoko Nakazawa
Smith Street. HB. \$49.99
Available 2 September



Yoko Nakazawa learnt to ferment and pickle as a child in rural Japan. Her parents used age-old techniques that were passed down to them. Readers and culinary lovers will be delighted to have the opportunity to learn the difference between pickling and preserving, the (exacting) salt rations needed, and the chopping techniques used to enhance flavour. This is the type of book that honours the past and celebrates family traditions. Nakazawa shares stories and excellent images to ensure that a vegetable will not be wasted ever again. She will also show you how to make the absolute best miso paste: turns out, it’s remarkably simple indeed. **R**

POCKET POTTERS

LITTLE GUIDES TO THE *Harry Potter* STORIES BY J.K. ROWLING



Out
now

A brand-new collectable series introducing all of your favourite characters and creatures from the wizarding world!



Illustrations by Natalie Smillie, Olia Maza and Laura Proietti © J.K. Rowling 1997–2025. HARRY POTTER TM & © WBEL



Bargains

Neeson Murcutt Neille: Setting Architecture

Anna Johnson & Richard Black
HB. Was \$59.99 **Now \$19.99**



Neeson Murcutt Neille demonstrate a deeply empathetic approach to making architecture, one that is integrally connected to landscape, history, identity, culture and place.

Along with personal reflections, drawings, models and images, this book draws on residential, civic and education projects alike to celebrate the practice's long commitment to creating spaces that contribute to private and public life.

A Promised Land Barack Obama

HB. Was \$65 **Now \$13.99**

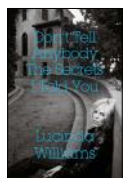


In the compelling first volume of his presidential memoirs, Barack Obama tells the story of his improbable odyssey from young man searching for his identity to leader of the free world, describing in strikingly personal detail both his political education and the landmark moments of the first term of his historic presidency – a time of dramatic transformation and turmoil.

Don't Tell Anybody the Secrets I Told You

Lucinda Williams

HB. Was \$63.99 **Now \$24.99**



Lucinda Williams is one of the greatest and most influential songwriters of our time, but her rise to fame was anything but easy. *Don't Tell Anybody the Secrets I Told You* is a reflection on an extraordinary woman's life journey from her traumatic childhood in the Deep South, her years of being overlooked in the music industry, and the stories that inspired Williams' enduring songs.

Flavour

Sabrina Ghayour

HB. Was \$45 **Now \$16.99**



Flavour is a collection of over 100 flavourful recipes with a Middle Eastern twist from Sabrina Ghayour, the bestselling author of *Persiana* and *Persiana Everyday*. The simple, delicious recipes in *Flavour* are perfect for every occasion, with chapters on salads; little bites and savoury treats; vegetables and pulses; pasta, noodles and grains; and sweets.

Cucina Povera Giulia Scarpalessia

HB. Was \$59.99 **Now \$29.99**



Cucina povera, or peasant cooking, is the 'art of making do with what you've got'. This centuries-old approach to both ingredients and techniques reveals the soul of Italian food at its best. Tuscan native and home cook Giulia Scarpalessia celebrates this tradition with recipes that

are soul-satisfying, super-healthy, budget-friendly, and easy to make – exactly how many of us want to eat today.

Talking Cure

Paula Marantz Cohen

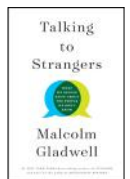
PB. Was \$29.99 **Now \$13.99**



Talking Cure is a timely and enticing excursion into the art of good conversation. Teacher and critic Paula Marantz Cohen draws on her lifelong immersion in literature and culture to reveal how conversation connects us in ways that social media never can and explains why simply talking to each other freely and without guile may be the first step to curing what ails our troubled society.

Talking to Strangers Malcolm Gladwell

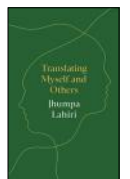
HB. Was \$66 **Now \$24.99**



Journeying through history, psychology, and scandals taken straight from the news, Malcolm Gladwell examines our interactions with strangers – and why they often go wrong. He argues that something is amiss with the tools and strategies we use to make sense of people we don't know, inviting conflict and misunderstanding which has a profound effect on our lives and our world.

Translating Myself and Others Jhumpa Lahiri

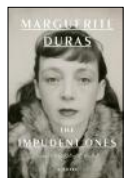
HB. Was \$29.99 **Now \$13.99**



Translating Myself and Others is a collection of candid and disarmingly personal essays by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jhumpa Lahiri. Featuring essays originally written in Italian and now published in English, as well as essays written in English, it brings together Lahiri's most lyrical and eloquently observed meditations on the translator's art as an act of both linguistic and personal metamorphosis.

The Impudent Ones Marguerite Duras & Kelsey L. Haskett (trans.)

HB. Was \$49.99 **Now \$19.99**



Dive into the intense and mournful saga of the Taneran family, where familial conflict, illicit romance, and scandal simmer beneath the surface of postwar France's sleepy suburbs. With her signature blend of memoir and fiction, and prose that balances beauty and brutality, Marguerite Duras's debut novel unveils the searing consequences of seduction and disrepute on a young French girl's soul.

10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World

Elif Shafak

HB. Was \$39.99 **Now \$19.99**



In the pulsating moments after she has been murdered and left in a dumpster outside Istanbul, Tequila Leila enters a state of heightened awareness. Her heart has stopped beating but her brain is still active – for 10 minutes and 38 seconds. While the Turkish sun rises and her friends sleep

soundly nearby, she remembers her life – and the lives of others, outcasts like her.

Long Island

Colm Tóibín

HB. Was \$55 **Now \$19.99**

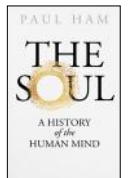


Spring 1976, Long Island. Eilis Lacey, an Irish immigrant in her forties, lives with her husband Tony and their teenage children. One day an Irishman comes to their door, claiming his wife is pregnant with Tony's child and, once the baby is born, he will leave it with Eilis to raise. Eilis's response to this shattering news makes this one of Tóibín's most riveting and emotional novels to date.

The Soul

Paul Ham

HB. Was \$49.99 **Now \$29.99**

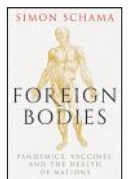


Historian Paul Ham embarks on a journey that has never been attempted: to restore the idea of the soul to the human story and to show how belief in, and beliefs arising from, the soul/mind have animated and driven the history of humankind. *The Soul* is much more than a mesmerising narrative and uniquely accessible way of explaining our story. It transforms our understanding of how history works.

Foreign Bodies

Simon Schama

HB. Was \$79 **Now \$24.99**

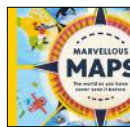


Foreign Bodies crosses borders between East and West, Asia and Europe, the worlds of rich and poor, politics and science in this epic history of humanity's battle with contagion. At its heart is Waldemar Haffkine, a pioneering microbiologist who revolutionised vaccine production in India. This is a story of the interconnectedness of humanity and nature, of the powerful and the people, and the fight against disease.

Marvellous Maps

Simon Kuestenmacher & Margarida Esteves (illus.)

HB. Was \$45 **Now \$16.99**



Prepare to explore our world as you've never seen it before! This collection of astounding, fun and beautiful maps explains everything about planet Earth (and some other places!), including everything from the travels of Marco Polo to a map of the world's most disgusting food. It's a treasure trove of quirky and essential data, presented in fun, fascinating map form.

In an Artist's Garden

Claire Orrell

HB. Was \$24.99 **Now \$12.99**

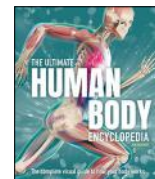


In an Artist's Garden takes young readers on a journey over desert plains, along windswept coastlines and into the jungle, telling the stories of celebrated artists from around the world and their gardens. There are seaside gardens, kitchen gardens and sculpture gardens to explore with all manner of creatures and objects to delight in this enchanting seek-and-find picture book.

The Ultimate Human Body Encyclopedia

Jon Richards

HB. Was \$45 **Now \$16.99**

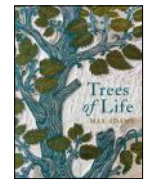


This inclusive, brand-new visual encyclopedia takes young readers on a fantastic voyage around every aspect of the human body. Featuring amazing CG illustrations, stunning photography and cutting-edge information, it explains every aspect of how our bodies work, from cells, the heart and bones to why we laugh, cry and hiccup.

Trees of Life

Max Adams

HB. Was \$69.99 **Now \$29.99**



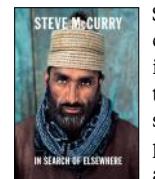
In a sequence of informative and beautifully illustrated portraits, Max Adams investigates the remarkable trees that human cultures have

found most useful across the world and ages. From the apple to the oak, the logwood to the breadfruit, and the paper mulberry to the Dahurian larch, these are trees that offer not merely shelter, timber, and fuel, but also drugs, foods, and fibres.

In Search of Elsewhere

Steve McCurry

HB. Was \$115 **Now \$49.99**



Steve McCurry is known for creating some of the most iconic images of recent times. In this collection, he shares previously unseen photographs from his rich archive. *In Search of Elsewhere* takes us across the globe and reveals the diversity of human life and the depth of his work. McCurry offers a new perspective on many locations – from India, Myanmar and Cuba to Togo and Tibet.

The Art of Grahame King

Sasha Grishin, R. Butler, Libby Bright & Caroline Field

HB. Was \$99 **Now \$12.99**

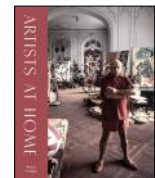


Grahame King began his artistic life as a photolithographic colour etcher in 1930s Melbourne and studied painting under George Bell. After war service and travels abroad, he returned with his wife, the sculptor Inge King. From the early 1960s, King focused on lithography and promoted this and printmaking through the Print Council of Australia. This lavishly illustrated book examines his seven-decade career.

Artists At Home

Susie Hodge

HB. Was \$65 **Now \$24.99**



From William Morris and Pablo Picasso to Georgia O'Keeffe and Frida Kahlo, *Artists at Home* showcases the quiet retreats, creative hubs, lifelong homes and holiday escapes of key artistic figures. Susie Hodge introduces readers to each artist's life and work, placing the significance of the home at the heart of their practice before exploring how each location both reflected and inspired their creative output. **R**

Young Adult

BOOK OF THE MONTH Young Adult



Black River
(Black River, Book 1)
Ruby Jean Cottle
Atria. PB. \$29.99
Available now

R There is something very unsettling yet utterly compelling about this debut Australian novel set in a remote town in the US. Dusty and her sister Opi live with their father on a mountain that overlooks Black River. Their mother mysteriously left a few years earlier and they are still processing her absence from their lives. One day, Dusty wakes up with dirt on her feet and she doesn't know how it got there. Nor does she know why she has incredible energy but doesn't feel like eating, or why she now sees colours around people. And then there is her newfound desire for blood.

For those who love their stories with a bit of magic, a smouldering romance, and oodles of tension, this debut is a winner

Dusty begins a friendship with a boy, Will, in her class, but her new needs are very distracting. At a party, when sitting with Will, Dusty suddenly realises another boy who also lives on the mountain – whom she has hated forever – has the same desire for blood as her. She grabs him before he does something stupid and they disappear into the woods for two days, causing her family to panic.

What have they become? And what is happening on the mountain? These are the questions that keep the reader turning the pages long into the night and make for an exciting, spine-tingling thriller. For those who love their stories with a bit of magic, a smouldering romance, and oodles of tension, this debut is a winner for ages 14+.

Angela Crocombe is a senior children's buyer

A Guide to Falling Off the Map
Zanni L. Arnot
Lothian. PB. \$19.99
Available now



R *A Guide to Falling off the Map* is classic YA. A coming-of-age romance, this story follows childhood friends Vinnie and Roo as they try to navigate the turmoil of teenagehood and their own feelings. Vinnie is coping with the loss of her mother to multiple sclerosis and suicide, while trying to deny the same symptoms developing within herself. At school, she's contending with her dreams to become a professional actor and the reality that dreaming doesn't necessarily equal reality. Roo, on the other hand, dropped out of high school to help his mother financially. In his desperation he finds himself in increasingly unsafe situations and is balancing a delicate web of lies to keep her from finding out. After a disastrous day, Vinnie decides to sweep Roo away on an epic road trip visiting all the places of their favourite childhood memories. What follows is a journey of self-discovery, healing and a strong dash of romance.

This book tackles a variety of problems teens could face, both big and small. Plagued by friendship problems, problematic boys and terrible bosses, Vinnie and Roo both make some very bad decisions, but this book does a really good job of exploring the emotions behind those choices, and how they manage to grow from the experience.

I would recommend this for fans of contemporary romances like *It Sounded Better in My Head* and *Dancing Barefoot*.

Perfect for readers 12+. Content notes include the loss of a parent and suicide.

Alicia Guiney is from Readings Kids

The Wycherleys
(The Wycherleys, Book 1)
Annaliese Avery
S&S. PB. \$22.99
Available now



Seventeen-year-old Aurelia Wycherley is entering her debutante season as a witch. She must find the perfect match to tether her magic to but it's cursed and is not the kind that her peers want to match with. When Aurelia learns that enigmatic, aloof Jules, a member of arch enemy family the Nightlys, is searching for a way that a witch can keep their magic without tethering, she realises he may be her only hope.

Oxford Blood
Rachael Davis-Featherstone
Walker. PB. \$22.99
Available 1 September



Eva has one dream: to study English at Oxford University. But when Eva and her best friend George are invited to Interview Week, they find themselves part of a kill-or-be-killed competition on an anonymous student forum, Oxford Slays. When Eva finds George dead on the steps of a statue in the college, all eyes are now on her. Can she clear her name, catch the true killer and win her place at Beecham College?

This Season's Draft
Jason Gent
A&U. PB. \$19.99
Available 2 September



As the AFL footy season starts, the dreams of six teenagers play out on and off the field. Elias: team player; running keeps him calm. Zac and Fletcher: best mates – top five draft picks? Mason: perfect practice with Dad makes perfect play. Dane: great footballer, terrible boyfriend. Beth: it's always been 'Dane and Beth' – what does 'just Beth' look like? Plans unravel and life bounces in unexpected directions.

Wish You Were Her
Elle McNicoll
First Ink. PB. \$22.99
Available 16 September



Everyone wants a piece of actress Allegra Brooks. In need of escape, she heads for the remote town of Lake Pristine and its summertime book festival but immediately clashes with annoying (and annoyingly handsome) bookseller Jonah Thorne. Their rivalry becomes the talk of the town. Before long, Allegra's main escape is the increasingly flirtatious email relationship she's sharing with an anonymous charming bookseller that she's sure can't possibly be Jonah.

When We Were Monsters
Jennifer Niven
Penguin. PB. \$19.99
Available 2 September



Effy is piecing together a story about the tragic betrayal that led to her mother's death. Arlo hopes to publish a novel – but he's also trying to start a new chapter with Effy after ghosting her three years earlier. Their mentor is the enigmatic writer, Meredith Graffam but she is not all she seems, and her students gradually realise they are fighting for something much more primal than academic advantage.

Kill Creatures
Rory Power
Scholastic. PB. \$19.99
Available 1 September



R Original, wickedly fun, and creepy, *Kill Creatures* is a story of survival, but not of victim over would-be murderer, instead, it's a tale of a murderer trying to survive their victims. It's been a year since Nan's three best friends – Jane, Edie, and Luce – suddenly disappeared at Saltcedar Canyon. Now presumed dead, and with no luck finding them, the girls' families and the community hold a memorial, finally ready to say goodbye. But before they can begin, Luce is found – alive.

Nan is teeming with questions. She must figure out where Jane and Edie are, what happened to Luce over the past year, and, most importantly, how she is going to get away with this, given that she's the one who killed her three friends. But when

an unidentified skeleton is found in the canyon near where the girls went missing, Nan must solve the mystery of whether she killed another person she doesn't even remember killing last summer, or if there's another murderer in town.

Kill Creatures is a bone-chilling psychological thriller that grips you by the throat from beginning to end. Nan is a complex and beguiling protagonist whose true motivations and perspective on the world increasingly unravel until she is someone completely unfamiliar. Perfect for fans of *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* or the film *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, Rory Power's newest novel is a macabre book about female friendship, secrets, jealousy, and revenge.

With an unreliable narrator, a creepy small-town setting, and a touch of sapphic romance, *Kill Creatures* is the YA crime book of the year for me. For ages 15+.

Aurelia Orr is from Readings Kids

Fearful
Lauren Roberts
S&S. PB. \$22.99
Available 16 September



Mara never intended to set foot in Ilya again. But when the king makes a life-altering decision, her interest is piqued, and Death is determined to understand Kitt Azer's mind if he is destined to join her in the Mors. Spending time with the king while observing the castle's inhabitants reminds Mara that there is more to life than just death. But fate will have its way with all of them.

Maisy Hayes is Not for Sale
Allayne L. Webster
Text. PB. \$22.99
Available 2 September



Maisy Hayes is doing it tough. There's never enough money, her sister is seriously ill and her mum is overwhelmed. But then her dad, who has a fancy life in a different city with his new wife and kids, insists she stay with him. He lavishes her with gifts and spending money. It's everything she always wanted. So why doesn't it feel right? Maisy is forced to question what she really wants...

Graphic Narrative

This Place Kills Me
Mariko Tamaki & Nicole Goux (illus.)
Abrams Fanfare. PB. \$29.99
Available now



When Elizabeth Woodward, school it-girl and star of the elite Wilberton Theatrical Society's performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, is found dead the morning after opening night, the whole of Wilberton Academy is thrown into chaos. Her death is declared a suicide, but transfer student Abby Kita isn't convinced. As she gets tangled in prep school intrigues, Abby quickly realises that Elizabeth was keeping secrets. Was one of those secrets worth killing for? **R**

Kids

PICTURE BOOK OF THE MONTH

Picture Book



Once I was a Giant
Zeno Sworder

T&H. HB. Was \$29.99

 **\$24.99**

Available 2 September



  This stunning book is an ode to trees and their relationship with humans, written from the perspective of a tree itself. The story begins immediately in the front endpapers with a picture-book maker who can't think of an idea. That is, until his pencil starts talking to him! The pencil tells the story of its life as a tree living in the forest. The tree is befriended by a wanderer – a forest sprite – who tells stories of his adventures in the world. When the machines come, the wanderer gives the tree and the forest creatures advance warning.

You'll never look at a pencil in the same way again!

With incredible drawings and a graphic style illustrating the natural world in all its glory, this powerful story reminds us of humanity's connection to nature. Portraying the life of a tree from a little seed through to a giant forest elder, *Once I was a Giant* explores the theme of the cyclical nature of all life, with examples such as eggs in a nest hatching into hungry chicks. By the award-winning author of *My Strange Shrinking Parents*, this picture book is truly a work of art to pore over again and again, each time discovering new wonders. You'll never look at a pencil in the same way again! For ages 5+.

Angela Crocombe is a senior children's buyer

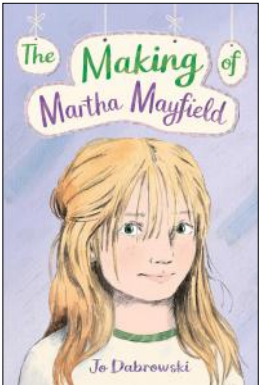
KIDS BOOK OF THE MONTH



Middle Grade

The Making of Martha Mayfield
Jo Dabrowski

Affirm Kids. PB. \$17.99

Available now



  A heartwarming and wholesome story about learning to find your voice, *The Making of Martha Mayfield* is a strong follow-up novel from author Jo Dabrowski, whose first book, *Get Your Act Together*, Doris Kozlowski was shortlisted for The Readings Children's Prize last year. The qualities which made that book stand out shine even brighter here.

The story follows Martha, a young girl who struggles to speak with anyone. When her mother, who is similarly shy, loses her job in favour of a less talented but more open co-worker, Martha decides she must learn to speak up and share her ideas. What follows is a super-fun story of school captain elections, group projects, and how these scary opportunities can help us learn and grow. Alongside Martha, we get to know her family. Her sister, Iris, is constantly changing herself to appeal to different boys, and her mother, Eleanor, is struggling to find her way after losing her job.

This book is all about overcoming internal challenges to find a truer and happier version of yourself. It's not about becoming the loudest in the class, but rather finding a way to share your voice nonetheless. Perfect for ages 9+.

Alicia Guiney is from Readings Kids

over and over again for many years to come. Just look at that cover, and already you know it will be everyone's favourite book – the one most requested at bedtime, the one that needs to be started over again as soon as you get to the end, and the one on everyone's Christmas list this year. For ages 2+.

Kate McIntosh is the manager of Readings Emporium

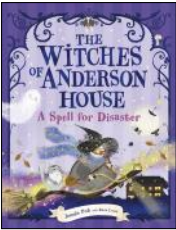
Junior Grade

A Spell for Disaster
(The Witches of Anderson House, Book 1)

Jennie Poh with Dave Lowe

Dorling Kindersley. PB. \$16.99

Available 2 September



Strange characters such as Myrtle Stormwhisper live in Anderson House, a retirement home for witches. Myrtle has given up magic for good, but when a knock at the door calls for her to pick up her wand again, she doesn't know if she can. Join Myrtle as she learns how to find her magic again – all with the help of her witchy friends, of course.

Too Big to Be a Fairy (A Little Bit Lola, Book 1)
Kiah Thomas & Bec Kitson (illus.)

HG. PB. \$12.99

Available 16 September



Everyone in Lola's family has wheels, except Lola. So, when she spots the perfect pair of roller skates, she has to have them! There's just one problem: Lola doesn't have any money. But the tooth fairy does ... Can Lola figure out how to shrink down to the size of a fairy so she can be rich too? You can keep reading this series with *Too Small to be a Giant* (A Little Bit Lola, Book 2) also out this month.


Middle Grade

Song of a Thousand Seas
Zana Fraillon

UQP. PB. \$14.99

Available 2 September

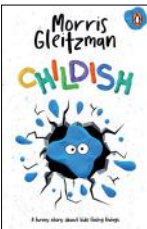



 Houdini the octopus lives in an aquarium, but it's a dull existence for a creature with nine brains and she misses her home in the wild sea. But then she meets someone different from the other visitors. Juno's busy brain buzzes with so many questions and thoughts that Houdini's skin tingles with wonder. Can Houdini make Juno understand what she needs before it's too late?

Childish
Morris Gleitzman

Penguin. PB. \$16.99

Available now



 At first there was just a pothole. Then there was a crashed bike and a pothole filled with delicious dumplings. Then there was a broken leg, a whole bunch more potholes, scary meetings with angry, grumpy managers, even more dumplings, and maybe even some change for the better. But it all started with a pothole, and with Dot who got hurt by it, and with Arkie who decided to help do something about it.

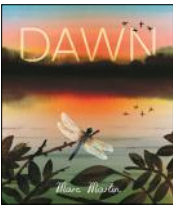
I think Morris Gleitzman might have made a mistake naming his new book *Childish* because this story is anything but! Sure, it does make municipal bureaucracy exciting, it is full to the brim with mouth-watering descriptions of food (you can't eat the pages, I tried), it is about two funny and endearing kids you'll immediately

Picture Books

Dawn
Marc Martin

Walker. HB. \$27.99

Available 1 September



 Contrary to its name, *Dawn* is the book you'll reach for at bedtime, with an engaging, rhythmic pace that will soothe even the most restless. From the first peek of a watercolour sunrise, go on a gently rhyming journey through nature as sunlight illuminates the morning routines of the forest-dwelling animal kingdom. With precise language, Marc Martin's stunning watercolour illustrations come alive with vibrant motion, from the animation-style blossoming of flowers or the balletic leap of a frog to breathtaking full-page natural vistas.

Teaching little ones about bugs, birds, fish and other forest creatures, *Dawn* is also a wonderful early reading title, with a maximum of four words per page and some

great opportunities for vocabulary extension. So here's to your new favourite book, which will ensure the little ones won't be awake 'til dawn, but will instead be lulled into peaceful dreams, and be keen to explore nature in the morning. For ages 3+.


Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

Oh Dear, Look What I Got!
Michael Rosen & Helen Oxenbury (illus.)

Walker. HB. \$24.99

Available 1 September



 From the instantly recognisable duo who gave us *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* comes a brand-new delight. When you go to the shop to buy a carrot, the last thing you want instead is a parrot. When you buy a coat, did you really want a goat? No, you did not! What about when you ask for a cake, and they give you a snake?

Reminiscent of other classics such as *Don't Forget the Bacon* and *Dear Zoo*, this is one that will be read over and

want to cheer on, and it does have a great message about bravery and persistence, but childish? I’m not so sure, Mr Gleitzman. Perfect for ages 8+.

Joe Murray is from Readings Kids

Stories for the Kid Next Door
Emma Holland & Chris Kennett (illus.)
Penguin. PB. \$16.99
Available 2 September



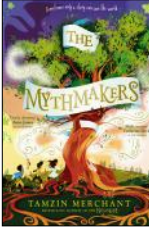
Dive into a hilariously unpredictable world where every page is packed with laughter, mischief and the absurd. Is it a unicorn causing chaos in a suburban home? The story about a backyard Museum of Weird Things is pretty good. You could even flick to the back and find out what happens when twins take their competitiveness to the next level! These stories and poems will have you in stitches from start to finish.

Gloam
Jack Mackay
Oneworld. PB. \$16.99
Available 2 September



After their mum died, Gwen and her younger siblings have moved to their late grandmother’s house on Gloam Island. Their new babysitter, Esme Laverne, seems sweet and kind, but Gwen isn’t fooled. Determined to protect her family, Gwen will have to fight off terrifying creatures and nightmares come to life. But as Esme’s power grows, Gwen must embrace her fears before she can defeat the monster in her home ... for good.

The Mythmakers
Tamzin Merchant
Puffin. PB. \$27.99
Available 16 September



Gwyn prefers fighting with her wooden sword to acting like a lady. When her father takes her to join the royal court at Tintagel, Gwyn meets Merlin: a wild young boy with unique powers who is in desperate need of her help. They flee Tintagel together, and before long, the young prince, Arthur, joins them. So begins an epic journey across ancient Britain, involving giants, mermaids, unicorns and witches – and their discovery of a truly monstrous plan.

The Poisoned King (Impossible Creatures, Book 2)
Katherine Rundell
Bloomsbury. PB. \$18.99
Available 16 September



R All of Katherine Rundell’s books for young readers are excellent, but she is doing something truly special with *Impossible Creatures*. *The Poisoned King* is the second book in what is set to be a five-part series. In Book 2, Christopher returns to the Archipelago, a hidden place of islands filled with creatures drawn from mythology. The dragons are dying for unknown reasons, and a princess needs help after the suspicious poisoning of her grandfather and threats to her life.

The Poisoned King addresses the hoarding of wealth as a malignant pursuit and extinction is the big theme of the series. Rundell understands that the natural world is at risk, and so too is our great history of ideas and knowledge. The action is immediate, and intrigue stabs each page. Rundell pays great attention to the senses and writes fantasy that feels close enough to taste. With magnificent sophistication she has again packed so much into a slim, graspable book.

I recently read *Super-Infinite*, Rundell’s Baille-Gifford Prize-winning biography of John Donne. I found in her enthusiasm for the poet a perfect description of something I understood while reading *Impossible Creatures* and *The Poisoned King*: ‘He remained steadfast

in his belief that we humans are at once a catastrophe and a miracle’. For ages 9+.

Kim Gruschow is the manager of Readings St Kilda

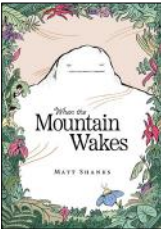
Promises and Other Lies
Sue Whiting
Walker. PB. \$17.99
Available 1 September



One year on from a devastating bushfire, Wangaroo Bay is still reeling. Fletch’s family lost their home, and his best friend Immie lost her beloved dad, a volunteer firefighter. Immie’s grandparents want the Bay fire investigation to be reopened, but Fletch’s family want to put the past behind them. And when a local, one of their own, is charged with arson, emotions flare, sides are taken, and promises – and secrets – are at stake.

Kids Graphic Narrative

When the Mountain Wakes
Matt Shanks
Affirm Kids. HB. \$29.99
Available now



R *When the Mountain Wakes* by Matt Shanks offers a blend of picture book and graphic novel. Almost like a wordless picture book, the story follows a mountain who has been asleep for many years, only to wake to the sound of silence. The mountain ventures out to find a song to lull it back to a peaceful slumber.

After stumbling across a plant, the mountain finds the song it was looking for, returning it to sleep. The book’s comic form allows it to tell a story that spans a great expanse of time, making for a reflective and calming story. The illustrations, with a muted colour scheme and simplistic yet evocative style, add to the calming message. This picture book explores the popular theme of nature and rewinding the environment as a way to offer hope and healing. For ages 6+.

Lili Reus-Smit is from Readings Kids

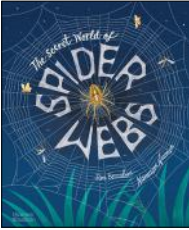
Kids Nonfiction

One Koala, One Hundred Trees
Leesa Allinson, Heather Potter & Mark Jackson (illus.)
Wild Dog. HB. \$24.99
Available now



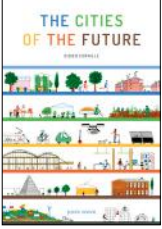
One Koala, One Hundred Trees is a heartwarming tale about one family’s determination to create a safer environment for the koalas living on their property. The story is interspersed with facts about koalas and practical guides for readers wanting to build their own ‘koala corridor’ to help protect one of Australia’s most precious animals. A percentage of the proceeds from the sale of this book will go to the Australian Koala Foundation.

The Secret World of Spider Webs
Jan Beccaloni & Namasri Niumim (illus.)
T&H. HB. \$32.99
Available 9 September



Despite their familiarity, spider webs are drastically under-appreciated, and yet without them, the world as we know it would be overrun by insects. Because spider webs are so successfully hidden, very little is known about these beautiful but deadly traps. From classic orb webs to spectacular tent webs, *The Secret World of Spider Webs* reveals the incredibly diverse ways spiders catch their prey.

The Cities of the Future
Didier Cornille & Charis Ainslie (trans.)
Post Wave. HB. \$26.99
Available now



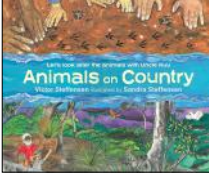
This inspiring book takes readers on a journey around the world to visit pioneering cities like Curitiba in Brazil and London in the UK which are being transformed into greener, more innovative, and people-friendly spaces even as they continue to develop. Meet the architects, residents and leaders driving these changes and learn how children and adults can make our own cities more liveable.

The Stuff that Stuff is Made of: Things We Make With Plants
Jonathan Drori, Maniquiz Raxenne & Jiatong Liu (illus.)
T&H. HB. \$34.99
Available 9 September



Did you know that there’s seaweed in ice cream, cork in spacecraft and dandelion in truck tyres? Have you wondered how paper or thread are made, or why the mandrake is so mysterious? Meticulously researched and beautifully illustrated, this book of wonder gives a young reader the knowledge of how the things we use every day are born from natural materials, and the surprising stories behind their creation.

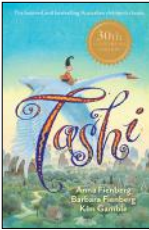
Animals on Country: Let’s Look After the Animals with Uncle Kuu
Victor Steffensen & Sandra Steffensen (illus.)
A&U. HB. \$24.99
Available 2 September



For thousands of years, Aboriginal people looked after the land to keep it healthy, so there was plenty of food for the animals to eat. But today, the animals are wondering what has happened to the people. Trees have been cut down, land has been cleared and rivers have been polluted. Join Uncle Kuu as he takes children out on Country to learn about the First Peoples’ traditions of caring for animals, and, in turn, caring for Country.

Kids Classic of the Month

Tashi (30th anniversary edition)
Anna Fienberg, Barbara Fienberg & Kim Gamble (illus.)
A&U. HB. \$19.99
Available now



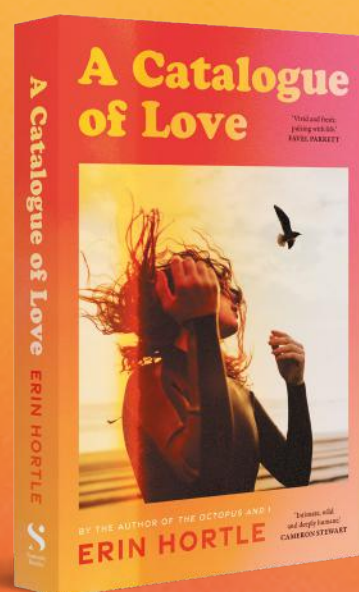
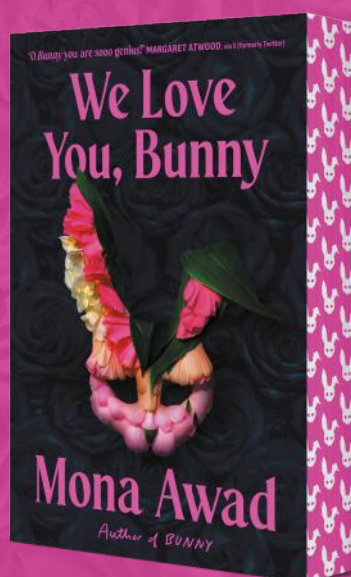
R Growing up, *Tashi* was an absolute favourite, not only for my sister and me, but also for our parents. We even named our dog Tashi! What a joy it was to return to the world of Tashi for his 30th birthday. And I’m happy to say I was just as enthralled by the adventures of Tashi as I was as a child.

Jack has made a new friend at school named Tashi, an elfin boy who’s come from a land far away. Tashi tells Jack the most incredible stories of his adventures back home: how he was sold to a warlord and escaped on the back of a giant swan; how he tricked the very last dragon; and how he escaped a burning home and saved an orchard from thieves. Although Tashi’s stories are often dark and a little scary, there are also many humorous moments. In *Tashi*, good always triumphs over evil. *Tashi* is about being courageous and standing up against injustice, but it’s also about friendship, love and opening yourself up to people who are different from you.

Including the original *Tashi* story and two bonus short stories, alongside Kim Gamble’s gorgeous illustrations, this hardcover edition of an enchanting classic is a beautiful keepsake to pass down through generations. For ages 6+.

Lucie Dess is the marketing and events coordinator **R**

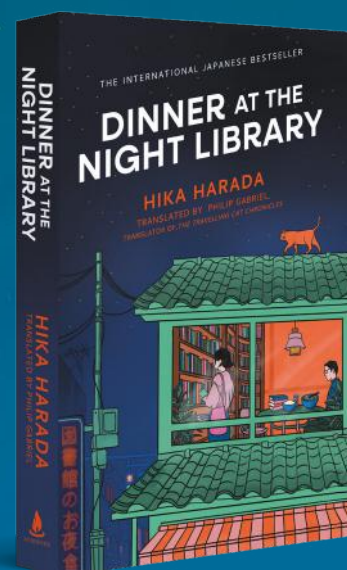
A dazzling
and intoxicating
fever-dream from
the author of cult
classic *Bunny*



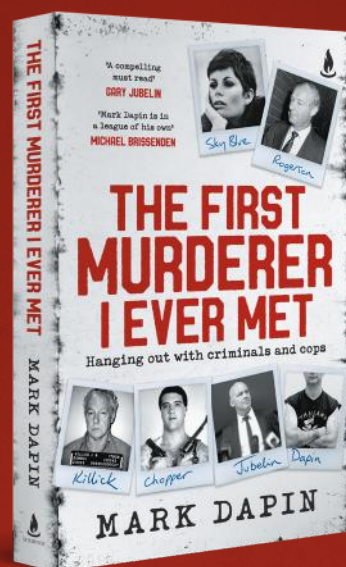
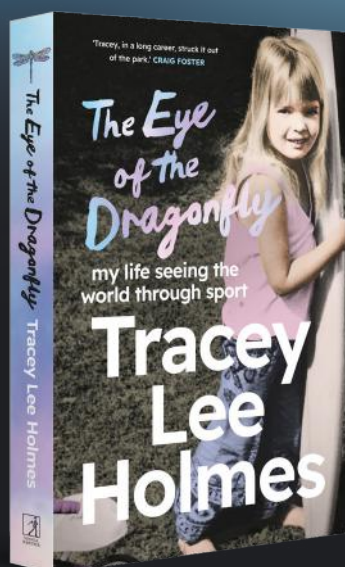
‘Vivid and fresh;
pulsing with life.
I could not put this
book down.’

FAVEL PARRETT

A whimsical,
charming novel
about a mysterious
library in Tokyo
that opens
after dark



A 360-degree
view of a remarkable
life in sport from
journalist
Tracey Lee Holmes



Underbelly meets
Louis Theroux in
this gripping book
about Australia's
most famous
felons

This is the
story of the fall
of an Empire –
and the rise
of another

