

# Readings Monthly

FREE | APRIL 2025

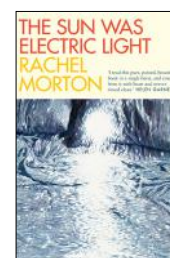
## Readings Chadstone is here!

page 5

## Q&A with Hannah Kent

page 12

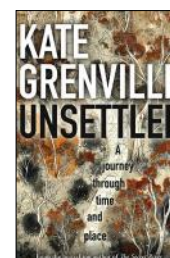
## ... and loads of Mother's Day gift ideas



RACHEL  
MORTON  
page 6



JANE CARO  
page 11



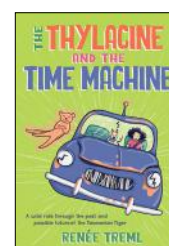
KATE  
GRENVILLE  
page 13



DEMET  
DIVAROREN  
page 19

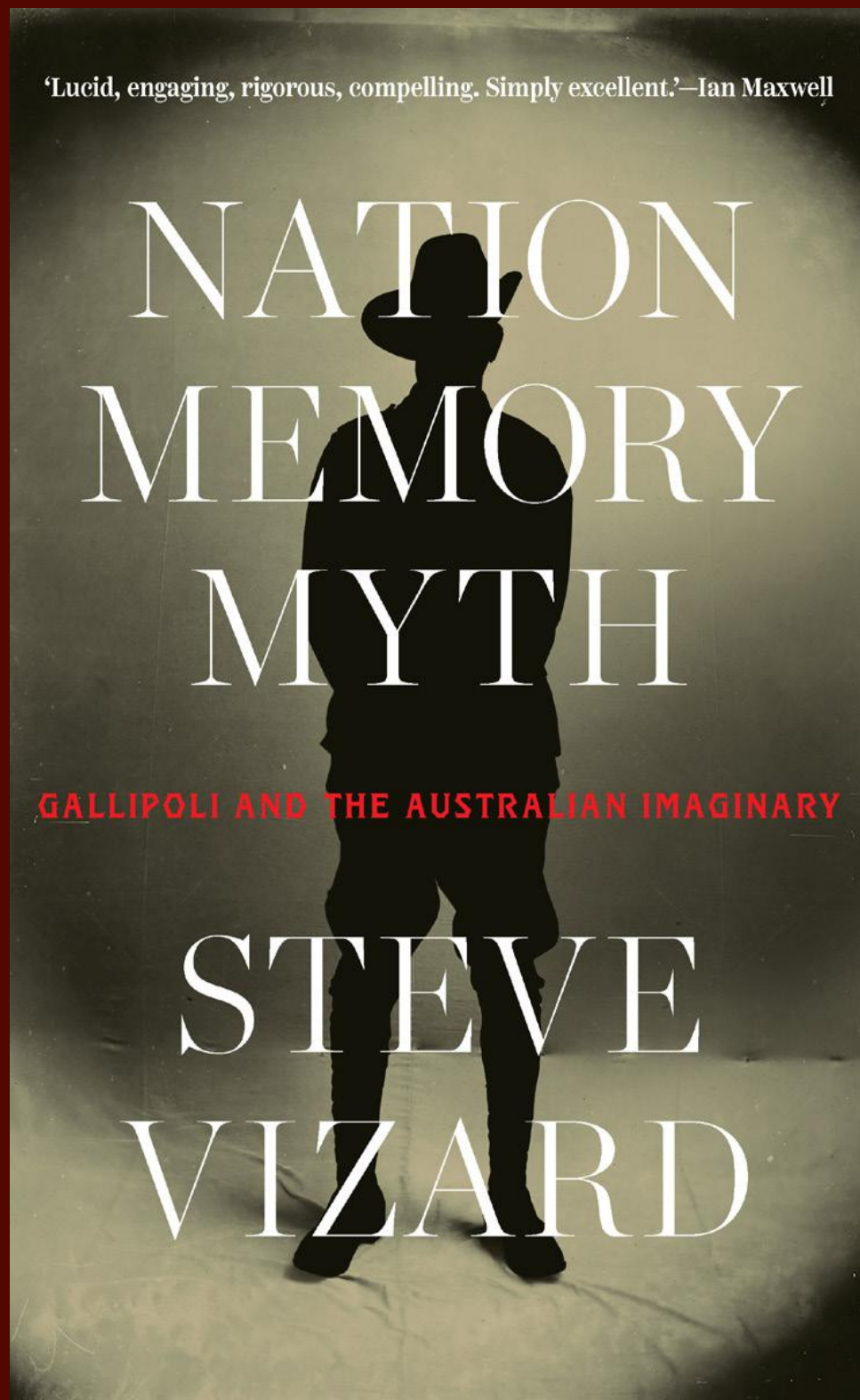


ANGIE CUI  
& EVIE  
BARROW  
page 20



RENÉE  
TREML  
page 20

# How myth creates meaning for a nation



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University  
Publishing

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# News

## Mother's Day

It's Mother's Day on Sunday 11 May. In this month's *Readings Monthly*, we've included some handy gift ideas to help you find the perfect bookish present. You'll also find plenty of ideas in our nine shops. Please note that our online shipping deadline for in-stock items is Thursday 1 May: any orders placed after this date will not be guaranteed to arrive in time for Mother's Day.

## Readings Chadstone is open

We are excited to announce Readings has a new home at Chadstone shopping centre! The beautiful space is designed by the talented team at Kerstin Thompson Architects. Find out more on page 5.

## Melbourne Writers Festival 2025

The Melbourne Writers Festival (MWF) is back for 2025, running from Thursday 8 until Sunday 11 May. MWF is where intellect, imagination and inquiry take the stage. Readings is proud to be the official bookseller for Melbourne Writers Festival. To browse the program and book tickets, head to [mwf.com.au](http://mwf.com.au)

## Record Store Day 2025

Attention vinyl lovers and music aficionados! Mark your calendars: Record Store Day is back on Saturday 12 April! Come and celebrate at Readings Carlton from 8am with live music performances and Record Store Day exclusives.

# Promos

## 20% off a great range of cookbooks

This month we have an exciting offer for all the beginner cooks, devoted foodies and aspirational master chefs: take 20% off a range of incredible cookbooks! See page 17 for more information. This offer is available in shops (except Readings Kids) and online until Sunday 11 May 2025. Offer valid on stickered, in-stock items only, while stocks last. Not valid with any other offer.

## 20% off Scribble picture books

Throughout April, we have an exciting offer on picture books from wonderful Melbourne publisher Scribble: take 20% off a range of gorgeous children's books. This offer is available in shops (except Readings Carlton) and online until Wednesday 30 April 2025. Offer valid on stickered, in-stock items only, while stocks last. Not valid with any other offer.

## About this issue

You'll notice Beci Orpin's beautiful illustrations dotted throughout this issue. You'll see more of these on our shop windows leading up to Mother's Day.



# Events

with Chris Gordon



It is a cracker of a month for public holidays; a time, surely, to head to your local Readings shop and fill your basket with goodies. Go on, say it after me: this month, there is time to read. Our events program is now in full swing and there are excellent

opportunities for anyone to attend the celebration of a new book, listen to an author talk about their flights of fancy and collect a signed first edition of their work. The pure wonderment of it all: the creation of a unique story. There for the joy of it all. There to be shared. See you amongst the bookshelves.

For our full events calendar, visit [readings.com.au/events](http://readings.com.au/events)

## Calling all (junior) scientists!

Monday 7 April at 4.30pm  
Readings Hawthorn, 687 Glenferrie Rd  
*Free, but bookings are essential.*

Calling all scientists aged under 13 years old! Have you ever wondered about atoms, wormholes, and antimatter? Join us for an introduction to quantum physics from astrophysicist Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith and her guinea pig guide, Biscuit. One lucky scientist will win a copy of her book, *Quarks, Sparks and Quantum Mysteries*.

## Jane Caro in conversation

Tuesday 8 April at 6.00pm  
Readings Carlton, 309 Lygon St  
*Free, but bookings are essential.*

Join us to hear Jane Caro in conversation about her new crime novel, *Lyrebird*. When a lyrebird mimics a dying woman, ornithology student Jessica Weston and newly minted detective Megan Blaxand try to find her. Twenty years later, a body is found and the two reunite to solve the case.

## Amie McNee in conversation

Tuesday 15 April, 6.00pm  
Readings Emporium, 287 Lonsdale St, Melbourne  
*Free, but bookings are essential.*

Calling all creatives! Join us to hear novelist and creative coach Amie McNee in conversation about her book, *We Need Your Art*. McNee demonstrates how you can make your own art happen, starting with a two-week reset plan to help you kick-start your creative habit.

## Dervla McTiernan in conversation

Monday 28 April, 6.30pm  
Church of All Nations, 180 Palmerston Street, Carlton  
*Bookings are essential. Tickets are \$35 per person and each includes a signed copy of The Unquiet Grave.*

Come along to hear Dervla McTiernan in conversation with Josh Pomare about her new Cormac Reilly crime novel, *The Unquiet Grave*. When a corpse is found in a bog in Galway, Cormac assumes the find is historical. But closer examination reveals the dead man is a school principal who disappeared two years earlier.



"Or, have you thought of getting her just one book from all of you?"

## 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](http://readings.com.au/readings-monthly)

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## FRONT COVER

The April *Readings Monthly* cover features artwork from the cover of *Human/Nature* by Jane Rawson, courtesy of the publisher, NewSouth. Cover design by Regine Abos. Read our review on page 14.

## 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](http://readings.com.au/the-readings-foundation)

## SHOP INFORMATION

See shop opening hours, browse and buy online at [readings.com.au](http://readings.com.au). Australian online, mail and phone 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

Events

Special price

★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
THE TELEGRAPH

★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
THE GUARDIAN

"CILLIAN MURPHY'S PERFORMANCE COULD MOVE MOUNTAINS"  
THE TELEGRAPH

**SMALL THINGS LIKE THESE** 74th International Book Competition

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## Foreword

with Joe Rubbo



As I write this, we are one week away from opening our newest Readings shop, in Chadstone. I've been thinking a lot about the process of opening a bookshop and what makes a bookshop special. People might disagree with me, but

I think the look and feel of a bookshop is very important. For Chadstone, we asked local architecture firm Kerstin Thompson Architects to design the space. As well as designing beautiful spaces, they like to champion local and sustainable. The shop will feature local, reclaimed bluestone and furniture designed and built here in Melbourne. The shop will also feature a 20-metre-long lantern by local artist Edward Linacre, which is made from books that were misprinted and destined to be pulped. Now, they will find a permanent home in our new bookshop.

As well as having the right look and feel, the space must be functional. We spend a lot of time thinking about how people will move through the shop and where we will place different book categories. Should the Health section sit next to the Parenting section? Where do we put Mythology? And the question we can never seem to work out a definitive answer to: where exactly should we put True Crime? One thing we always do, though, is put Australian Fiction and Australian Studies towards the front of the shop, so they are impossible to miss.

We spend a lot of time curating the range of books, which is a long, involved and illuminating process. We never know which categories are going to work in a new shop, but we like to make sure every category is well stocked and has a chance to be successful. Part of the fun of opening a bookshop in a new area is seeing what books the customers want to buy and adapting the range to suit. When we opened our shop in Emporium, we never imagined how well translated works of fiction would sell there. One Japanese novel, *Before the Coffee Gets Cold*, has sold over 4,500 copies there to date.

Of course, one of the most crucial elements of the bookshop is the bookseller. Without good booksellers, the shop will have no soul. We have, I think, a terrific team of booksellers at Chadstone. Some are new to Readings, and some have moved across from our other shops. And, finally, the most important element is the customer. We need customers not only to keep us in business, but also for the life and vitality they bring to the shop, which helps to form its identity.



'Our Helen' Garner with 'Our Mark' Rubbo. Photo | Lucie Dess

## Dear Reader

with Alison Huber



I could have sworn I just hit send on my March mega-column, but here we are already in April, with a new round of releases with which to contend. How does this work? The physical experience of time can seem to me like it stands still or

repeats itself, stretches or compresses, sometimes in unpredictable ways, hence my strong feeling that I've just written to you. I've been thinking about time more than usual (which is already quite often) since reading *On the Calculation of Volume: Book I* by my new favourite Danish author Solvej Balle. I've been completely obsessed with this book since I finished it, and you can read my longer impression/rant on page 8. Incidentally, I've randomly read three books on this year's longlist for the International Booker Prize (this is one, the other two are also great: *Perfection* by Vincenzo Latronico and *Eurotrash* by Christian Kracht), and it's already clear to me that it's going to be a great year for that excellent prize. I sincerely wish I could reproduce some more hours in my reading week and get to the whole longlist this year.

Our Fiction Book of the Month is the hugely impressive *The Sun Was Electric Light* by my new favourite local debut author, Rachel Morton. This book was discovered in the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards of 2024, winning the coveted unpublished manuscript award. I know I'm repeating myself because I say each year that this prize uncovers some amazing talent, but I keep saying it because it's true: this book is genuinely original and very finely written. It's hard to believe it's the author's first published novel. I wonder who the new writer is that this year's prize will turn up (announced a few days from my time of writing).

Kate Grenville's *Unsettled: A Journey Through Time and Place* is our Nonfiction Book of the Month. This is a major work from one of our best-known writers, and is an important book for non-Indigenous Australians to read right now: all of us whose lives on this land have been enabled by the violent dispossession of its first inhabitants. This is the truth of modern Australia's foundations and the circumstances that made it possible for us to be here in 2025 doing whatever it is that we do (me, sitting at my computer upstairs in Lygon Street in a building that used to be a bank but is now the bookshop where I work, on Wurundjeri Country), and in this book, Grenville asks what is to be done with this knowledge, and in the wake of the failed referendum for the Indigenous Voice to Parliament. For her thinking, Grenville revisits the places and stories of her own family whose lives inspired her bestselling 2005 book, *The Secret River*, and this thoughtful and seeking book might inspire a lot of productive reflection.

On another topic, though speaking of another of our legendary literary greats, have you been following the northern hemisphere's burgeoning love for Helen Garner? It has been building for some years now, growing steadily since she was awarded the prestigious Windham Campbell Prize in 2016, but she's in the reviews pages again because her collected diaries have recently been published in one volume in the UK (here, they are still published by Text Publishing in three parts: *Yellow Notebook*, *One Day I'll Remember This*, and *How to End a Story*). A recent piece in *The Guardian* called them 'the greatest journals since Virginia Woolf'. I'm not sure how I feel about this description because on the one hand Our Helen doesn't need to be compared to anyone for us to know how good she is – but on the other it's very gratifying to see her brilliance being appreciated across the globe in such a glorious way.

And finally, dear Reader, I love cookbooks. Really, I do. If I had another kind of living space, one that had any more room than our modest (tiny!) flat whose bookshelves reached capacity before we even moved in, I'd have a lot more of them (but don't worry, family, I promise I'm not bringing any more home right now). This is the month for you to build your collection on my behalf: for the month of April through until Mother's Day we are offering 20% off a selection of some of our favourite bestsellers at all of our shops, including at our fabulous new shop, Readings Chadstone. **R**

# Introducing Readings Chadstone!

Readings head of marketing Rosalind McClintock chats with our managing director Joe Rubbo and Readings Chadstone manager Belle Katavatis about our new shop.

This April we are celebrating the opening of the newest Readings shop. Located in Chadstone shopping centre's bustling new quarter, The Market Pavilion, you'll find it among all the other shops you'd hope to find on a high street including a butcher, a baker, and cheese and chocolate makers.

Readings first opened on Lygon Street, Carlton in 1969 – just nine years after Chadstone. This is a fact not lost on Readings managing director Joe Rubbo, who points out, 'These Melbourne institutions are both children of the '60s! Throughout our long history, Readings has always been very active in the community and the bookselling industry. We understand our customers and we genuinely love good books. We're excited to share all we have to offer in a new corner of our city.'

While Rubbo insists that there isn't any formula for creating a good bookshop, as all bookshops have their own identity, he feels that, 'If you have knowledgeable, friendly booksellers, a carefully curated range, and a welcoming environment, then I think there's a high chance you're going to attract an active and engaged customer.' These are all qualities Readings prides itself on. And he feels very confident that Chadstone's inaugural manager, Belle Katavatis, and her team will bring all this and more to Chadstone.

Katavatis, previously co-manager of Readings St Kilda, says, 'I was drawn to the exciting opportunity to lead Readings into a new area and all the potential that brings. I'm looking forward to meeting our new customers and engaging with the community through events in our beautiful new space.'



Readings Chadstone manager Belle Katavatis. Photo | Lian Hingee

We're excited to share all we have to offer in a new corner of our city.

Readings managing director Joe Rubbo

## Readings Chadstone fast facts!

Opened 27 March

In the new section of Chadstone Shopping Centre, The Market Pavilion

Readings' ninth bricks-and-mortar bookshop

Manager: Belle Katavatis

Over 300 misprinted books used to craft the lantern

Lantern dimensions: 20 m x 4 m

Floor made of reclaimed bluestone

Nearly 38,000 individual ISBNs



To create a welcoming environment beyond the brilliant staff, Rubbo enlisted Kerstin Thompson Architects (KTA), the same firm that designed Readings Emporium and Hawthorn. He felt confident putting the project in their hands and kept the brief simple: to create a sanctuary for booklovers.

It was also important that the layout functioned effectively, enticing customers in with room for the displays of new and interesting titles at the front, and drawing them in further to discover a world of books. 'Good bookshops are equal parts commercial entity and cultural institution,' Rubbo explains. 'We have a discrete events area towards the back of the shop, which will be a lovely, intimate space for author talks and book launches. And tucked into the back right corner is a large kids' section, with soft carpet and lots of seating, a place for children to read and engage with books before they buy.'

KTA has delivered a beautiful, functional and inviting space with a subtle nod to the shops' market surroundings. Almost as large as the Carlton shop at 370 m<sup>2</sup>, it has plenty of room for a large range of titles, which Katavatis, an extremely experienced buyer, is looking forward to curating, along with Readings head book buyers. There'll be a broad selection of titles, so a customer can come in and find a bestseller but also find a hidden gem.

'The personal curation of books in all Readings shops is what sets us apart. We've filled the shelves of our Chadstone shop with a wide variety of titles, from unknown classics to contemporary books that have gone under the radar. Nothing can replicate the joy of wandering around a book-filled space, chatting with like-minded readers and discovering new titles and authors,' Katavatis reflects.

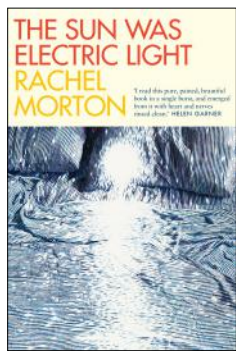
While books and people undoubtedly form the heart of any good bookshop, a stunning lantern designed by local artist Edward Linacre runs the length of the shop, which Rubbo is particularly excited about, 'It is very special,' he enthuses, 'We were able to obtain books that were misprinted and headed for pulping, which Ed has turned into a 20-metre-long paper lantern that runs down the length of the shop. It has been in the works for a long time and we're all incredibly excited to see it in place. It is beautiful.'

Katavatis adds, 'I can't wait for everyone to come in and experience the shop!' **R**

# Fiction

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

### Australian Fiction



**The Sun Was Electric Light**  
Rachel Morton  
UQP. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April

**R** Winner of the 2024 VPLA for Unpublished Manuscript, *The Sun Was Electric Light* is a striking debut from Rachel Morton, demonstrating her capability as a fierce new literary talent. Sparse and beautifully written, Morton delivers a powerful meditation on the meaning of home, happiness, and where to turn in grief.

We follow the story of our narrator Ruth, lonely and rootless, who abandons her life in New York for the balmy streets of Guatemala. There, Ruth meets Emilie and then Carmen, drawn towards these polarised individuals for different reasons, her love for them is shaped in distinctive and incompatible ways. Steadily reconnecting with the world around her, Ruth develops deep relationships both to people and place, grappling with her attachment to each woman and the volcanic lake around which their life is centred.

Every character on the page is wholly believable, brought to life by descriptions that feel the opposite of cliché. The stripped-back story structure leaves room for nuanced relationships and powerful insight, exploring the quiet complexities of friendship, community, and our desire to belong. Ruth's mind is obfuscated; her thoughts are neither confessional nor expository. While this carefully constructed ambiguity muddies the character's past, identity and emotion, she still narrates her world with delicate understanding, moving through the story as a

vivid and complex personality.

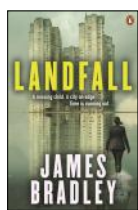
This narrative is unique and pleasingly unpredictable. Ruth's retreat from the city leads her towards an intimate life, stripped of luxuries and rich with gentle recognition. Her journey is, at times, lonely and strange, as she chooses to follow people and ideas towards unexpected ends. It is there, however, that she uncovers moments of integrity and beauty. The strength of this book is its ability to unmask the most subtle of human experiences simply and succinctly, drawing readers deep into the heart of Ruth's Guatemalan home.

Aideen Gallagher is from Readings Emporium

## Australian Fiction

### Landfall

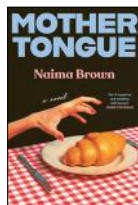
James Bradley  
Penguin. PB. \$34.99  
Available 23 April



The world is in the grip of climate catastrophe. Sydney has been transformed by rising sea levels, soaring temperatures and rocketing social divide and unrest. When a girl on the margins goes missing, senior detective Sadiya Azad is assigned to find her. She knows what it is to be displaced. A murder at the site of the child's disappearance suggests a connection and web of corruption. With few leads and only days until a deadly storm arrives, Sadiya and offsider DS Paul Findlay find themselves in a race against time.

### Mother Tongue

Naima Brown  
Pan Mac. PB. \$34.99  
Available now



**R** Brynn isn't sure if she's happy with her life. Her husband Eric's conservative and Bible-thumping beliefs grow more intense every day. Her best friend, Lisa, who desires Eric for herself, has just utterly humiliated Brynn at her daughter's fourth birthday party. And while she loves her daughter, Jenny,

she always thought there would be something more to life beyond the mundanities of motherhood.

When Brynn ends up in a coma after a traumatic fall, she wakes up speaking fluent French with a perfect accent. Everyone feels upended by this sudden change to their lives, but Brynn finally feels that sense of home she's been searching for her whole life. In the years that pass after Brynn flees her family to begin a new life in France, dark secrets will be revealed, anxieties will turn into fanatical obsessions, and their lives will never be the same again, for better or for worse.

*Mother Tongue* is definitely the most unpredictable book I've read this year, from the beginning to its explosive ending, but in the best way possible. It is absolutely fascinating how Brynn finds herself in another language that feels more like her mother tongue than her first language. It nurtures her, comforts her when she is alone, and makes her stronger, as a mother would. But it is doubly intriguing and concerning that while Brynn is exploring newfound freedom, the people around her, including her now teenage daughter, are becoming more restricted and programmed by the abuse and dark side of language.

Naima Brown has written an addictive family drama that explores motherhood, gender expectations, religious and political zealotry, and the pursuit of freedom. But more than anything, *Mother Tongue* reveals to us the power of words – how they are used to control and bind us, how they influence us, and how they set us free.

Aurelia Orr is from Readings Kids

### Orpheus Nine

Chris Flynn  
Hachette. PB. \$32.99  
Available now



**R** No one could explain what they saw, and no one could do anything about it. All the children aged nine across the world froze in time as they died a horrific death. As they stood still, they simultaneously chanted in Latin a quote from Shakespeare's *King Lear* which, afterwards, every person left alive would have ingrained in their memories: 'As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods. They kill us for their sport.' On the first day, 130 million died.

The world has drastically changed as governments are overthrown, economies are ruined, wars have begun, conspiracy theories and cults run amok as people try to figure out what or who caused this catastrophe. Set in the rural Australian town of Gattan, the book focuses on three characters and how they react to the supernatural event known as 'Orpheus Nine': Jess, a grieving mother who watched her son die and finds solace in the Kingdom of Hades, a terrorist group of Orpheans (parents who've lost a child); Hayley, who is trying to work out how to save her daughter, whose ninth birthday is quickly approaching; and Dirk, whose wealthy and influential family always finds a way to benefit from tragedy.

The small setting emphasises the immediate distrust and lack of social cohesion when tragedy occurs, offering the town as a microcosm for the rest of the world, not only in this novel but also if this were to happen in our world. How would we react? As suspense builds and rises to a crescendo at the end, *Orpheus Nine* compellingly explores the psychology of each character as the end-of-days is upon them and what methods they turn to as they attempt to find comfort, justice, or even answers in the event of a sudden loss. But no matter how rich or poor, prepared or not, death comes to all. And what happened on the day of Orpheus Nine was just the beginning.

Aurelia Orr is from Readings Kids

### The Passenger Seat

Vijay Khurana  
Ultimo. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April



**R** Traversing the journey between boyhood and manhood, teenagers Adam and Teddy drive away from their small town into an unplanned and unravelling escape. Aiming perhaps for hot springs, or maybe the Arctic Ocean, their future is entirely uncertain – while they have a map to navigate the highways of their road trip, navigating their masculinity is less easy. Their friendship is characterised by a desire to both impress and outmatch one another, a tension held at an uneasy balance as they talk sex, drink bourbon, teach each other to drive and shoot rifles. Precariously, their faith in each other, in manhood, develops, and neither is sure what this means.

In an attempt to prove something, anything, they make a mistake that they cannot undo. Two vulnerable boys, fuelled by intimacy and fear, descend

into a violence of which they did not know they were capable. Like the rest of their friendship, this violence is a game, necessitating a winner and a loser, leaving them unsure if they are on the same side. To read this novel feels like a constant acceleration, like putting your foot on the pedal and realising you do not know how to take it off. Your only choice is to speed into an inevitable crash.

Vijay Khurana handles this tension with mastery. In his hands, performative masculinity gives way to a cruelty that is reasonless, but never meaningless. Yet within this cruelty, there is always hope – moments of vulnerability, of courage, of repentance, of love. Through showing us the worst of masculinity, we are also allowed to glimpse the best of it – what it could be. These moments are the beating heart of the novel, propelling us through the all-too-real crisis of masculinity, showing us our way out of it.

Teddy Peak is from Readings Carlton

### Catching the Light

Joanna Horton  
Ultimo. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April



When single mother Sylvie meets renowned painter Michael, she uproots her life and moves to Isaiah, an artists' colony, with her teenage daughter, Alice. Isaiah seems to offer Sylvie a second chance at the things she's sacrificed, but her relationship with Michael affects her closeness with Alice. Without her mother's knowledge, Alice engages in an act of teenage defiance that will shape both their lives. Years later, Alice, a PhD student, is sought out by Caroline, an art historian with a hidden agenda.

### The Confidence Woman

Sophie Quick  
A&U. PB. \$32.99  
Available 1 April



**R** There's something delicious about a transgressive woman, and debut novelist Sophie Quick's creation, Chrissie Swales, is particularly delectable – and relatable.

In this vivacious satire of contemporary fads and foibles, single mum Chrissie is living a double life as 'high performance mindset expert' Dr Ruth Carlisle, charging corporate and influencer wannabes big money for coaching sessions while surreptitiously gathering material with which to later blackmail them. But it's all in a good cause: Chrissie's trying to break into Melbourne's property market, and this is the only way she can see to do it. The online sessions with Dr Ruth are priceless ('I really want to pursue my passion for night-time nose breathing', insists one client earnestly), but Quick does more than just mock. She's an acute observer of both modern manners and human nature, and running beneath her acerbic wit is genuine compassion not only for Chrissie but also the very flawed, very entertaining cast of characters that surrounds her. This is as much the inward journey of Chrissie coming to terms with her own past and its emotional burdens as it is the outward travails of her life as her kooky get-rich-quick scheme starts to unravel. The flashbacks to her childhood are as

understated as they are poignant, her relationship with her dad is exquisitely drawn, and I'm sure it's not just me constantly looking around trying to figure out what exactly the rules of this game called 'life' are. Quick is also a dab hand with plot. The fact that Chrissie's careful but amateur efforts at extortion will go pear-shaped is completely unsurprising. The twists and reverses here, though, are as clever as they are believable. It's hard to believe this is Quick's first work of fiction. I can't wait to see what she does next.

Melinda Houston is from Readings Carlton

**Out of the Woods**

Gretchen Shirm

Transit Lounge. PB. \$34.99

Available 1 April



**R** Jess has spent her whole life attending to the needs of others, from the lawyers and businessmen she types for, to her husband Ian and their son Daniel. But it's now the year 2000: she's a single divorcée, Daniel is grown, Ian is getting remarried, and Jess has no safety net and no superannuation. When a maternity leave cover position as secretary for an Australian judge at The Hague comes up, Jess jumps at the chance for financial stability and gets more than she bargained for. Her judge is presiding over the trial of a former military man charged with war crimes, 'K', in whom Jess recognises a persistent humanity, despite the unforgivable things of which he's accused. When Jess must suddenly return to her birthplace, she discovers how much the experience of witnessing pain and the banality of cruelty has changed her.

Interspersed with real – but anonymised – witness statements, this book reckons with the devastating cost of war on the people left behind, and the impossible task of acknowledging that people can inflict terrible, unforgivable things on each other, while still remaining human. While initially the dense detail was slightly challenging to connect with, as we get to know Jess, we begin to understand that the minutiae she observes is just how she sees the world. After a lifetime of quietly managing other people's expectations, Jess reveals an untapped emotional depth, presenting an unvarnished insight into the human condition.

A challenging, timely and thoughtful book, *Out of the Woods* does not invent history, using real witness statements to tell the horrifying story of the Srebrenica massacre in the Bosnian War, interwoven with the narrative of Jess's personal quest to understand. Jess's perspective on the world is richly detailed, compassionate and inescapably human – the good, the bad, and the painfully honest, in ways we don't often allow ourselves.

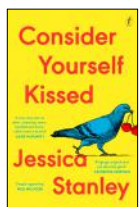
Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

**Consider Yourself Kissed**

Jessica Stanley

Text. PB. \$34.99

Available 1 April



**R** *Consider Yourself Kissed* is the second novel by Australian author Jessica Stanley. An ode to home in all its forms, this is a charming account of a decade of womanhood.

We meet Coralie when she is young, freshly in London, anonymous. It's 2013. She brings with her dreams of writing and a box of books by Helen Garner. She meets an attractive journalist, Adam, in a series of very convenient meet-cutes (for this we forgive Stanley, because Adam's daughter, Zora, is one of the cutest literary toddlers ever to exist).

As Coralie's life entwines with Adam's, we see her put everything on the table for a familial life thousands of kilometres away from her own. Ceasing to write, renovating a home that isn't hers, Coralie is slipping away into the UK. On returning home, she realises her relationship to her country and, by extension, to herself, is dynamic. Stanley offers us an authentic perspective on what it is to migrate, to hold two identities in your hands. At times, you may wish the writing embraced more of the grit of falling in love or feeling deathly homesick. *Consider Yourself Kissed* shines when Coralie's emotions are messy, when she gives in to her raw, emotional rage.

This book relives the past decade from the eyes of a middle-class mother. Stanley writes humorously about the state of our world. While Coralie's life fluctuates, so does the British political landscape (remember Boris Johnson?). The ensemble of characters is lovable; there is no far-fetched villain or cataclysmic subplot to push the novel along. It's the story of a real woman surrounded by her flawed but ever-present blended family; when you reach the end of this book, you'll have laughed, nodded, and sighed – and you will miss the children who grew up in front of you.

Grace Gooda is from Readings Chadstone

**I Am Nannertgarrook**

Tasma Walton

S&S Bundy. PB. \$34.99

Available 2 April



**R** Boonwurrung writer Tasma Walton tells the story of her ancestors in this powerful account of the horrors of colonialism and the ongoing power of Country. Abducted from her home in Nerrm, our main character Nannertgarrook is taken to a slave market, separated from her children, husband and Country. In unfamiliar territory, she and her fellow kidnapped Boonwurrung women must fight to survive, and as Nannertgarrook gives birth to the son she was pregnant with when seized, the fight grows only more important.

Despite the tragedies that befall Nannertgarrook, this is a story of hope, too – with her son comes a future, and Nannertgarrook constantly dreams of home: sacred women's ceremonies; Babayin Betayil (Mother Whale); her beach and sand and sky; her family and Elders. Maternal love is a life-force, empowering community and ensuring survival. Her connection to Country is emphasised by her separation from it, and we come to know this Country intimately through her desire to return to it.

This novel memorialises not only the stories of Walton's ancestors but also immerses us in continuing Boonwurrung language and culture. We are reminded that this history floods our present day. Nannertgarrook's story is not over because her culture, language and spirit



# Mother's Day at Melbourne Writers Festival

This Mother's Day (Sunday 11 May), treat your mum to a day of literary goodness at Melbourne Writers Festival. What better gift than a day spent with some of Australia's and the world's most exciting storytellers?

**Kate Grenville & Anita Heiss: Unsettling Australian Stories**  
10.30am, Conversation Quarter, State Library Victoria

Kate Grenville appears alongside fellow acclaimed fiction and nonfiction author Anita Heiss for a personal, political and cultural look at writing frontier stories and troubling colonial narratives with host Kate Evans.

**Marian Keyes: My Favourite Mistake**  
12.30pm, Athenaeum Theatre

Beloved Irish writer Marian Keyes looks back on a remarkable and decades-spanning career spent warming the hearts of readers across the globe and across generations. Now Keyes will share the lessons she's learned over the course of her writing life at a special Mother's Day afternoon conversation.

**Hannah Kent: Always Home, Always Homesick**  
4.30pm, Athenaeum Theatre

Author of the multi-award-winning *Burial Rites*, Hannah Kent chats with ABC Radio National's Richard Fidler about her debut work of nonfiction, *Always Home, Always Homesick*. A tender, diaristic love letter to her muse, Iceland, the book is both a memoir of Kent's experiences of living abroad, and a wider consideration of how literature forms the heart of the nation's culture and identity.

For more about *Always Home, Always Homesick*, read our Q&A with Hannah Kent on page 12.

Other Mother's Day event highlights include: Badass Women of Melbourne Walking Tour (10.30am); Emily Maguire and Josephine Rowe: Are you There, God? (10.30am); and Samantha Harvey: Orbital (2.30pm). The festival is running from 8 to 11 May.

For the full events lineup and to book your tickets, head to [mwf.com.au](http://mwf.com.au)

Based on the true story of Tasma Walton's ancestor, a powerful, heart-wrenching novel about maternal love.

An often hilarious, surprisingly moving portrait of a long-married couple, for fans of *The Royal Tenenbaums*.

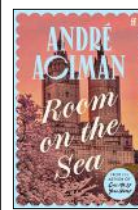
live on in Boonwurring people, and in this novel. We find ourselves looking back into the past, as Nannertgarrook peers into the future at us. Our temporalities collide. Throughout it all, the titular phrase 'I am Nannertgarrook' reverberates as a refrain, asserting Indigenous endurance in the face of erasure.

Teddy Peak is from Readings Carlton

## International Fiction

**Room on the Sea**  
André Aciman

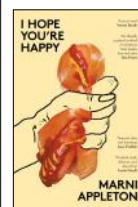
Faber Fiction. HB. \$26.99  
Available 15 April



In the scorching New York heat, 100 people wait to be selected as jurors. Paul is reading a newspaper. Catherine is reading a novel. So begins a whirlwind flirtation: cappuccinos in Manhattan and gallery trips to Chelsea; the illusion of an Italian getaway. Their feelings quickly evolve into something deeper, but anything more than a casual crush is out of the question. As the week draws to a close, they are forced to decide whether to act on their feelings or leave the fantasy behind.

**I Hope You're Happy**  
Marni Appleton

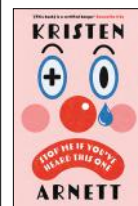
The Indigo Press. PB. \$32.99  
Available 1 April



Photos of women eating go viral, a cookie communicates a threat, and women working dead-end jobs become entangled in the performances around them. Everyday experiences of friendship, family, dating and desire catapult the reader into a creepy vortex of horror. Characters reveal themselves in slippery glimpses, through positive affirmations, social media accounts and secret appetites. This short story collection features young millennial women, blending dark fantasy and quasi-horror with humour and intellectual dash.

**Stop Me If You've Heard This One**  
Kristen Arnett

Corsair. PB. \$32.99  
Available now



Cherry Hendricks is a down-on-her-luck party clown in Orlando, Florida, trying to make ends meet and take her career to the next level. A date with Margot, a much older magician, might just give

her the break she needs. Equal parts bravado, tenderness and humour, and bursting with misfits, magicians and mimes, *Stop Me If You've Heard This One* is a masterpiece of comedic fiction that asks big questions about art and performance, friendship and community, and the importance of timing in jokes and in life.

**33 Place Brugmann**

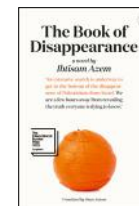
Alice Austen  
Bloomsbury. PB. \$32.99  
Available 1 April



Charlotte has always seen the world differently. At home in the heart of Brussels, her father and her closest friends and neighbours have ensured her secret is safe. However, when the Nazis invade Belgium, they leave, and Charlotte must navigate her new world alone. But who can she now trust? As the shadow of war darkens, Charlotte, and her neighbours now in Paris and London, must face what, and who, truly matters to them most, and summon the courage to fight for more than just survival.

**The Book of Disappearance**  
Ibtisam Azem & Sinan Antoon (trans.)

Text. PB. \$34.99  
Available 4 April



What if all the Palestinians in Israel simply disappeared one day? Alaa is a young Palestinian man haunted by his grandmother's memories. His Jewish neighbour and friend, Ariel, is a journalist who believes in Israel's national myth but is critical of the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Ariel begins to search for clues about why Alaa and the Palestinians have vanished. Their stories, and those of the people of Jaffa and Tel Aviv, reveal the fissures at the heart of the Palestinian question.

**On the Calculation of Volume: Book I**

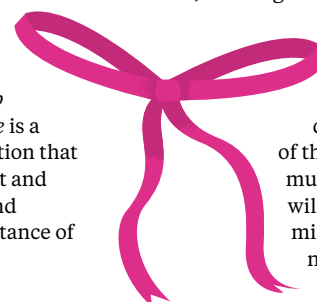
Solvej Balle & Barbara J. Haveland (trans.)  
Faber Fiction. PB. \$26.99  
Available 15 April



**R** *On the Calculation of Volume* is an extraordinary book. It's the first of a multi-volume series: Book II will appear at the same time as Book I, and I am genuinely anxious to read it. Book III will follow later in the year, by which time I will be absolutely desperate to know what is happening. I understand that there are seven parts to this project, so this is going to be a wild reading ride requiring some significant patience on the part of English-language readers.

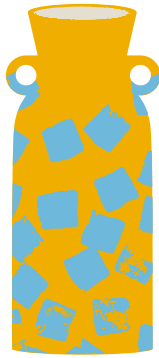
The premise of the work is simple enough: our protagonist Tara wakes up on what she thinks should be the 19th of November only to realise that it's really the 18th and she's living this day again. She is caught in this date, and experiences it over and over again, though everyone else around her is moving through it for the first time, every time. She is totally temporally stuck. She tries to work out what to do, how to get out of this date, and her

approach to solving this problem evolves over the course of this first book. It would diminish your experience of the book if I tell you too much more than this, but I will say that this book is mind-expanding, opening new ways of thinking about





time, memory, repetition, routine, ageing, how we relate to others, and what it is that we are doing with our days on Earth – our precious, limited days. Solvej Balle's style, translated into English by Barbara J. Haveland, is completely mesmerising, impossible to turn away from, and though I wanted to race through it to find out how things would turn out for Tara, I also wanted to spend as much time with Balle's words as I possibly could. I came away from this book thinking that I haven't had the furniture rearranged in my brain so definitively in quite some time. Reading, after all this time, can still be a transformative experience for me, and it's a real thrill to discover such a book as this.



forcing the reader to question their own biases.

Witty and charming, Brown takes this novel as a study of the current British climate (quite relevant here in Australia, however!) and challenges us to question how stories get told, and most importantly, whose stories get told.

Brown is an author for whom I would be on the lookout, and with her elegant prose and layers of meaning packed into seemingly simple sentences, I strongly urge you to pick up this novel as soon as you can – and to immediately read her first, *Assembly*, if you have not already!

Nicole Vasilev is from Readings Emporium

Alison Huber is the head book buyer

**The Usual Desire to Kill**

Camilla Barnes

Scribner. HB. \$35

Available 2 April



Miranda's parents live in a dilapidated house in rural France they share with several pets and a freezer of food dating back to 1983. Her father is a retired professor of philosophy, and her mother likes to bring conversation back to the War. Married for 50 years, they are uncommonly set in their ways. Miranda plays the role of translator when she visits, communicating her parent's wishes to each other. A wry and exquisitely observed story of an eccentric family.

**Universality**

Natasha Brown

Faber Fiction. PB. \$29.99

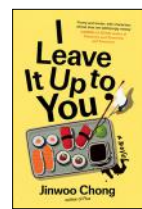
Available 1 April



**R** Words carry power. In Natasha Brown's second novel, we open up to an unravelling mystery involving a missing gold bar and a violent incident occurring at an illegal rave during lockdown. This first section of the novel, titled 'A Fool's Gold', was the highlight of the book for me, introducing the various characters we will encounter throughout via an exposé article written by an ambitious journalist intent on solving the mystery. Yet the article also provokes more questions than answers. Why was it written? How much of it was true?

Each section afterwards shifts us between the perspectives of the article writer and its subjects, revealing through a voyeuristic lens the different biases and interpretations each character has of the events. Though a short book, *Universality* is one that calls for careful comprehension and is most rewarding when you soak up the words slowly, as every line is laced with hidden thoughts.

Brown offers a fascinating critique of the British media, politics and society. Using the gold bar as a metaphor, no single truth is exact; instead, truth is fragmented through different perspectives and we can begin to understand the power of how we use words. Each character, no matter how privileged, easily victimises themselves,



Jack Jr woke up from a two-year coma with a sore neck, a brand-new ex-fiancé, and the feeling he'd missed something big. Returning to New Jersey, and a kitchen job at the sushi restaurant his family runs, he finds himself suddenly dependent on his dysfunctional and very estranged Asian American family. And then there's Emil, Jack Jr's former nurse, who may offer a glimmer of hope. Can Jack Jr navigate the family chaos, rebuild his life, and maybe even find love in a world that's moved on without him?

**No One Knows: Stories**

Osamu Dazai &

Ralph McCarthy (trans.)

New Directions. PB. \$26.95

Available 14 April



Osamu Dazai was a master raconteur who plumbed the absurd complexities of life in a society whose expectations cannot be met without sacrificing one's individual ideals on the altar of conformity.

The gravitational pull of his prose is on full display in these 14 stories. Selected from the breadth of Dazai's career, some in English for the first time, the collection includes the quietly brilliant long story 'Schoolgirl' and shows the fiction of this 20th-century genius in a fresh light.

**The Wardrobe Department**

Elaine Garvey

Canongate. PB. \$34.99

Available 23 April



Mairéad works all hours in a run-down West End theatre's wardrobe department, her whole existence made up of threads and needles, fixing broken zips and handwashing underwear.

She must also do her best to avoid groping hands backstage and the bullying of the show's producer. But, despite her skill and growing experience, half of Mairéad remains in her windy, hedge-filled home in Ireland, and the life she abandoned there. In noughties London, she has the potential to be somebody completely new – why, then, does she feel so stuck?

**Hunchback**

Saou Ichikawa & Polly Barton (trans.)

Penguin. PB. \$24.99

Available now



Born with a congenital muscle disorder, Shaka Isawa has severe spine curvature and uses an electric wheelchair and ventilator. Within the limits of her care home, her life is lived online: she studies, she tweets indignantly, she posts outrageous stories on an erotica website. One day, a new male carer reveals he has read it all – the sex, the provocation, the dirt. Her response? An indecent proposal. *Hunchback* is an extraordinary, thrilling glimpse into the desire and darkness of a woman placed at humanity's edge.

**Audition**

Katie Kitamura

Fern. HB. \$34.99

Available 15 April



Two people meet for lunch in a Manhattan restaurant. She's an accomplished actress in rehearsals for an upcoming premiere. He's attractive, troubling, young – young enough to be her son. Who is he to her, and who is she to him? In this compulsively readable novel, two competing narratives unspool, rewriting our understanding of the roles we play every day – partner, parent, creator, muse – and the truths every performance mask, especially from those who think they know us most intimately.

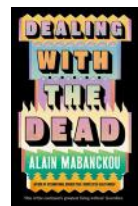
**Dealing with the Dead**

Alain Mabanckou &

Helen Stevenson (trans.)

Serpent's Tail. PB. \$32.99

Available 1 April



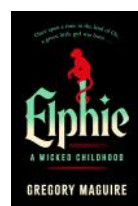
Abruptly deceased at the age of 24 and trapped forever in flared purple trousers, Liwa Ekimakingaï encounters the other residents of Frère Lachaise cemetery, all of whom have their own complex stories of life and death. Unwilling to relinquish their tender bond, Liwa makes his way back home to see his devoted grandmother one last time, against all spectral advice. But disturbing rumours swirl together with Liwa's jumbled memories of his last night on earth, leading him to pursue the riddle of his own untimely demise.

**Elphie: A Wicked Childhood**

Gregory Maguire

Headline. PB. \$32.99

Available now



Once upon a time in the Land of Oz, a green little girl was born. Young Elphaba is destined to be a witch. But what happened before her powers took hold? Elphie is a girl like any other and no other.

Nothing like her parents nor her saintly sister, Nessarose. Her skin is green, her mind is cunning. One day she will command this strange and wonderful world. For now, her journey is just beginning. But the road ahead will lead Elphie to the doors of Shiz University, and to the girl who will change her life forever.

**The Bureau**

Eoin McNamee

Riverrun. PB. \$34.99

Available now



Lorraine would say afterwards that she was smitten straight off with Paddy Farrell. He occupied the room in a different way. She was the kind of girl the papers called vivacious. Paddy worked the border, a place of road closures, hijackings, sudden death. There's illicit cash coming across the border and Brendan's backstreet Bureau de Change is the place to launder it. Getting caught is only the start of the game. But Lorraine is not a girl to be treated lightly. She's bought a shotgun. And a grave.

**Voices of the Fallen Heroes: and Other Stories**

Yukio Mishima, Stephen Dodd (ed.) & Various (trans)

Penguin Classics. PB. \$32.99

Available 15 April



A writer is seized by apocalyptic visions; a voyeuristic marquis commits a brutal act; and a trio of beatniks dance to modern jazz in the ruins of an abandoned church. Here, stark autobiography contrasts with pure horror, and the tenderness of first love cedes to obsession, heartbreak and deathly beauty. A new selection of Yukio Mishima's short stories from the 1960s, *Voices of the Fallen Heroes* traces the final decade of Mishima's career and offers a unique glimpse into the mind of one of Japan's greatest writers.

**Lies and Sorcery**

Elsa Morante & Jenny McPhee (trans.)

Penguin Classics. PB. \$42.99

Available 8 April



Elisa – orphaned as a child, raised by a 'fallen woman', fed by fairytales – has lived in an outlandish imaginary world for years. When her guardian dies, she feels compelled to confront her family's tortured and dramatic past, weaving the tale of her mother and grandmother through a history of intrigue, treachery, deception and desire. But as her saga of three generations of Sicilian women proceeds, it becomes something else entirely, taking in a whole legacy of oppression and injustice.

**The Cat Who Saved the Library**

Sosuke Natsukawa &

Louise Heal Kawai (trans.)

Picador. PB. \$19.99

Available 8 April



Thirteen-year-old Nanami Kosaki loves reading. The local library is a home from home and books have become her best friends. When Nanami notices books disappearing from the library shelves, she's particularly curious about a man whose furtive behaviour doesn't feel right. Should she follow him to see what he's up to? When a talking tabby cat called Tiger appears to warn her about how dangerous that would be, together they're brave enough to follow

the frightening trail to find out where all the books have gone.

**Luminous**

Silvia Park

Oneworld. PB. \$32.99

Available 1 April



**R** In a near-future, reunified Korea, lifelike robots exist alongside us. They serve as children, lovers, soldiers or coworkers, and if not for their mass-produced faces we might not know them from the real thing. The concept itself is not a new one, but Silvia Park's rendition of this possible future is remarkable and heartbreaking in its execution.

In a story centred on the lives of two siblings, we are brought into the detailed reality of this world. Jun's body was destroyed in a military disaster and his organic self was replaced by a bionic one. Morgan is a successful young neuro-roboticist, the driving force behind the coded personality of a new line of child robots. Stephen was created by Morgan in the image of a former celebrity crush to play the role of her lover. Amid this mosaic of overlapping identities, Park explores murky questions of ownership and creation: what makes one's body real, or one's own? What happens to a thinking being whose core existence is centred on the role they must play?

It is so rare to discover a novel that can balance these clinical questions of existence with the contradictory, messy, and emotional experience of personhood. Not only does Park manage this, but they also understand that these two things are, in fact, inextricable. In celebrating our fickle humanness, and allowing it to be part of the conversation, they are able to create something new and truly exciting.

Whatever Park's next book is, I intend to read it. *Luminous* is a fantastic book on so many fronts, and it's no surprise to see there is already a television adaptation in the works.

Molly Smith is from Readings Emporium

**Set My Heart on Fire**

Izumi Suzuki & Helen O'Horan (trans.)

Verso. PB. \$24.99

Available 1 April



**R** *Set My Heart on Fire* is Izumi Suzuki's first novel to be published in English. Set against the backdrop of the 1970s Tokyo underground music scene, the novel follows its protagonist, Izumi,

through a haze of fleeting romances and self-destructive indulgences during her 20s. The novel reveals fragments of Izumi's life as she navigates Tokyo's music clubs, unreliable lovers, and the numbing effects of drugs. Her experiences don't have a clear sense of direction, which mirrors the novel's loose structure. The book's title aptly reflects the intensity and

recklessness that define Izumi's relationships, whether romantic,

platonic, or self-destructive. She is caught in cycles of attraction and disillusionment, forming brief, chaotic bonds that often end in disappointment. That is, until she meets Jun, a musician who seems different from all the others. Yet, as the novel progresses, their relationship takes a darker, more oppressive turn, culminating in a marriage to a domineering, unpleasant man.

Suzuki's prose is sharp, almost detached in its delivery. There is an underlying feminist critique woven into the interactions with these men, as she notes their condescension and casual misogyny. Yet there's no grand epiphany – just a weary, almost indifferent recognition of the power dynamics at play. Music also plays a vital role in the novel: references to older rock bands are used as a form of emotional expression for Izumi, encompassing both Japanese and Western rock.

Ultimately, *Set My Heart on Fire* is a novel of transience, of relationships that burn bright and fizzle out, of youthful recklessness colliding with creeping disillusionment. It's a novel for those who appreciate stark honesty, a touch of nihilism, and the undercurrent of melancholy that often accompanies the search for meaning. For readers new to Suzuki, this book offers an intriguing, if at times unsettling, entry point into her world.

Nicole Vasilev is from Readings Emporium

**Who Wants to Live Forever**

Hanna Thomas Uose

Brazen. PB. \$34.99

Available now



Yuki and Sam are soulmates. They are destined to spend the rest of their lives together. They are supposed to love one another, forever. But when a miracle drug is created which can extend a human's life indefinitely, Sam decides to live forever, rather than love Yuki forever. What comes next is a time-bending, decades-long, world-building epic set across the globe and narrated by an intersecting cast of characters. *Who Wants to Live Forever* is the greatest romance you will ever read without the happily ever after.

**Graphic Narrative**

**I Ate the Whole World to Find You**

Rachel Ang

Scribe. PB. \$39.99

Available 1 April



**R** Rachel Ang is a Naarm/Melbourne writer and artist who makes comics. *I Ate The Whole World to Find You* is her first graphic novel (or 'long comic book'), published locally by

Scribe, who have published numerous Australian graphic novels in recent years, including those by Sam Wallman, Tommi



Parrish, Joshua Santospirito and others – go, Scribe! Ang's shorter works have been published in *The New Yorker* and *Meanjin*, with her chapbook *Swimsuit* published by the magnificent Melbourne comics publisher Glom Press.

The book design of *I Ate The*

*Whole World To Find You* takes full advantage of the idea that the life of a comics text begins on the cover – and that image and text jostle over meaning. The cover image introduces the main character, Jenny, spilling a plate of eyeball spaghetti right into our laps. This accident overlaps and upsets the title's lettering, so that it could be read as 'I ate the who word to find you'. Jenny stares down at her shadow which reaches in and out of the word 'you', and the trailing spaghetti shadows could well be her entrails. Turning to the inside front cover and across the front matter, Jenny stumbles through a strange, David Lynchian kitchen towards her shadow. She is led to the five chapters of 'comics proper', which make up the main body of the book.

Each of the chapters is fiercely focused on Jenny's interiority, even though they start 'in the world' – at a workplace, in a pub, on a train, in bedrooms, at the pool, on a childhood family holiday. Each transports us into Jenny's internal state, hallucinatory and harried and imagistic, and Ang's pages of drawings swing us swiftly into and out of that dream-picture-language, so that by the last story it's quite possible that Jenny is giving birth to herself. This possibility is supported by a coda beautifully constructed across the design of the back matter and back cover.

Bernard Caleo is a member of the events team

**Poetry**

**Southsightedness**

Gregory Day

Transit Lounge. PB. \$32.99

Available 1 April



**R** This intimate and beautiful poetry collection celebrates the ongoing wonders of the earth and sea while calling time on the superficial divisions we have created between

ideas of nature and culture. It offers a way of being as well as seeing, and details a very direct and local world but one made universal by the poet's art. This is a world of reality and the imagination, a world of damaged and regenerating ecologies, where the poet lives surrounded by family, animals, weather, sport, tourism, and the layers of history.

**The Nightmare Sequence**

Omar Sakr & Safdar Ahmed

UQP. PB. \$29.99

Available 8 April



*The Nightmare Sequence* is a searing response to the atrocities in Gaza and beyond since 7 October 2023. Heartbreaking and humane, it is a necessary portrait of the violence committed by Israel and

its Western allies. Through poetry and visual art, Omar Sakr and Safdar Ahmed capture these historic injustices, while also critiquing the role of art and media in this time. Born of collective suffering and despair, this collaboration interrogates the position of witness, invokes the power of poetry and art to shift hearts and minds, and will serve as a vital record in decades to come.

**44 Poems on Being with Each Other: A Poetry Unbound Collection**

Pádraig Ó Tuama

Canongate. HB. \$39.99

Available now



This celebratory anthology explores human connection through 44 poems from around the world, carefully curated by the host of the internationally acclaimed *Poetry Unbound* podcast.

With an observant eye, Pádraig Ó Tuama shares an enlightening meditation on each poem, revealing the ways we relate to each other, the world around us and ourselves. Blending humour with insight, tension with tenderness, complexity with care, this collection articulates the power of poetry itself.

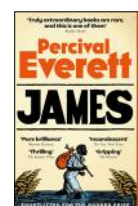
**Now in B-format**

**James**

Percival Everett

Picador. PB. \$22.99

Available now



The Mississippi River, 1861. When the enslaved Jim overhears that he is about to be sold to a new owner in New Orleans and separated from his wife and daughter forever, he flees to nearby Jackson's Island to formulate a plan. Meanwhile, Huck Finn has faked his own death to escape his violent father. So begins a dangerous and transcendent journey along the Mississippi River, as James and Huck together navigate the treacherous waters towards the elusive promise of the free states and beyond. *James* is an award-winning, profound and ferociously funny reimaging of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, told from the perspective of Jim.

**The Ministry of Time**

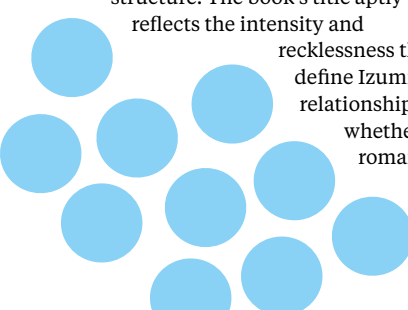
Kaliane Bradley

Sceptre. PB. \$24.99

Available now



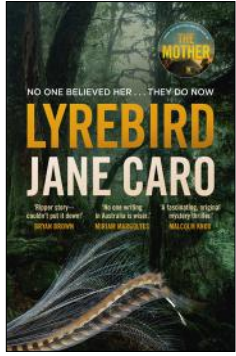
A civil servant is offered a lucrative job in a mysterious new government ministry gathering 'expats' from across history to test whether time-travel is feasible. Her role is to work as a 'bridge': living with, supporting and monitoring expat '1847' – Commander Graham Gore, a former Victorian polar explorer. Gore soon adjusts to this bizarre new world, but as the true shape of the project that brought them together begins to emerge, Gore and the bridge are forced to confront their past choices and imagined futures. **R**



# Crime

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

### Crime



**Lyrebird**  
Jane Caro  
A&U. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April

**R** Is there anything more satisfying than heading to bed with a crime novel written by a feminist?

Truly, the comfort in knowing all female characters will be represented with respect and honour warms my heart. And with Jane Caro's second crime novel, you can expect more than just a mystery to be solved.

Caro, an enthusiastic defender of women's rights and the environment, gives the reader both a solid reprimand and a reminder of the state of our national parks and wildlife. She takes delicious swipes at the media and at our universities. Without giving away too much of the plot here, Caro highlights the woes of women working on tourist visas, and the poverty and desperation in our neighbouring countries. She writes about grief with an empathetic touch.

The premise of the book is immediately introduced: a lyrebird begins its mating call in the forest, videotaped by ornithologist Jessica Weston. The lyrebird mimics the sound of a woman dying. Detective Megan Blaxland works the case, but does not solve it. It goes into the cold case file. Twenty years later, a damaged female body is found where the lyrebird had danced. Blaxland comes out of retirement to solve the mystery. The two women reunite as they search for an answer, and a classic, thrilling story begins.

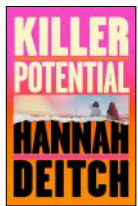
I am hoping this is not the end of Megan Blaxland; she is not unlike Ann Cleeves' popular character Vera, and that is a particularly good thing indeed. Readers who enjoyed

Caro's *The Mother* will be incredibly pleased with her new novel. I certainly inhaled it and was delighted with Caro's astute representation of everything that is going wrong in our country, as well as with her very entertaining writing.

Chris Gordon is the programming and community engagement manager

### Killer Potential

Hannah Deitch  
W&N. PB. \$32.99  
Available now



**R** Evie's life hasn't quite gone to plan, in spite of her firm belief in social mobility. Though highly intelligent and academically gifted, she now finds herself adrift and in a limbo-like state with no real grasp of direction or vocation. To get by, she tutors a bored adolescent, the offspring of a wealthy Los Angeles power couple; a one-percenter family with it all. Arriving one day for her tutoring session, Evie finds the wealthy parents have been brutally murdered. While she is still in the mansion, she makes the startling discovery of a young woman tied up in a closet.

Any sense of her 'good Samaritan' actions in freeing the traumatised young woman are quickly shot to pieces. Spotted leaving the house rather than summoning emergency services, Evie is accused of the murders, sparking a huge manhunt. Ironically, now labelled a neo-Charles Manson, Evie has finally achieved status, albeit disastrously.

Gradually, Evie and her mute companion begin to trust each other, forming a deeper bond in their shared experiences as fugitives on the run. As is typical for the genre, all that glitters is not gold, and the depravity of Evie's wealthy employers is exposed.

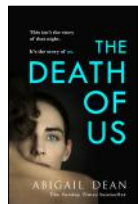
There's quite a lot going on in this book: social inequality, sensationalist media (one quick to ignore physical evidence in a quest for truth), a queer love story, sexual and physical abuse, trafficking, murder, to say nothing of Evie's floundering sense of identity. Admittedly though, this book is quite a lot of fun. *Killer Potential* succeeds in being totally serious and insightful while at the same time completely ridiculous. Read this if you enjoy gallows

humour, or if you loved the antics of *Thelma & Louise*, but also if you read Emma Styles' *No Country for Girls*.

Julia Jackson is from Readings Carlton

### The Death of Us

Abigail Dean  
HarperCollins. PB. \$32.99  
Available 2 April

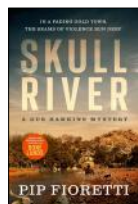


It's the story everyone wants to hear. That spring night in South London, when Isabel and Edward's lives were torn apart. The night they never talk about. When their attacker is caught, it's finally time to

tell the story of that night. Not to the world. Or to the man who did it. But to each other. This is a story of murder, and of survival. But most of all, this is a story of love.

### Skull River

Pip Fioretti  
Affirm Press. PB. \$34.99  
Available now



**R** In this day and age, it's hard to read a crime novel and not imagine what it would be like as a television adaptation. Pip Fioretti's books about an ex-soldier turned bush cop in the

wild west (east) that was New South Wales just after the turn of the 20th century are no exception, and they would be a splendid mix of *The Man from Snowy River* and *Jack Reacher*. (Go on, picture it, I dare you.)

Gus Hawkins moves around a lot and loves his horses (although his horsemanship might not be quite up to Banjo Paterson's lofty standards). Against his father's wishes, he fought for Mother England in the Boer War, and returned home a traumatised, but decorated, man.

When we first meet Gus, in *Bone Lands*, he is the sole mounted trooper in a rural town in the middle of nowhere, trying to figure out who slaughtered three young siblings and why.

Fast forward a year or two, and Gus has been sent to a new post in the goldfields, an eight-hour ride from Bathurst and any form of aid. As soon as he arrives, all hell breaks loose, and it appears that at least one of the locals wishes anyone in uniform dead. Under attack and barely keeping his own fears in check, Gus must solve a spate of crimes with only a motley crew of junior troopers and a lost dog by his side.

Into the brutal world that was regional Australia in 1912, Fioretti has imagined a man of compassion, wit, and ingenuity, the kind of police officer any town would be lucky to have. Despite his personal struggles and his occasional failures at 'do-gooding', Gus can see three sides to every story, and acts accordingly, and his narration of events as they unfold should endear him to every reader fortunate enough to meet him between the pages, and hopefully, one day, on our screens.

Kate McIntosh is manager of Readings Emporium

### When She Was Gone

Sara Foster  
HarperCollins. PB. \$34.99  
Available 2 April

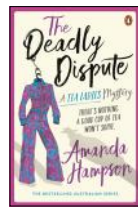


Former London police officer Rose Campbell has been estranged from her daughter, Lou, for almost a decade. But when Lou disappears from a remote Western Australian beach, the police suspect her of

kidnapping the two young children, heirs to the Fisher property empire, in her care. Rose arrives in Australia to help bring Lou home and as DSS Blackwood begins to expose the Fishers' secrets the investigation takes a much darker turn. Shadows of the past gather around the Fishers and Rose, and soon it's clear that every hour is critical.

### The Deadly Dispute (A Tea Ladies Mystery)

Amanda Hampson  
Penguin. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April



**R** 1967: Hazel's new job at the docks quickly turns perilous when she stumbles into the criminal underworld that lurks beneath the surface. A million in gold coins has vanished from a cargo ship and a dead body washed up. Meanwhile Betty is led astray by a charismatic new friend, and Irene gets wind of a threat that could destroy her livelihood. When one of the tea ladies disappears, they face their greatest challenge yet. It will take more than a glass of Hazel's homemade wine to solve this one.

### See How They Fall

Rachel Paris  
Hachette. PB. \$32.99  
Available now



Turner Corp, a luxury goods empire, has been rocked by the death of its founder. As his three sons gather at the family's estate for a long weekend, an illegitimate heir is introduced – and tragedy

follows. Skye, who married into the dynasty, tries to maintain a normal life for their daughter but as the weekend morphs into a parent's worst nightmare it leaves Skye desperate to uncover the truth about the Turner family. As Mei, the detective assigned to the case, begins to unpick the web of lies and deceit she realises that pulling at these threads might just bring down an empire.

### Barren Cape

Michelle Prak  
S&S. PB. \$34.99  
Available 2 April



Former housemates Mac and Erika are homeless. Well, Erika is fine, she just has to live with her parents until she can find another rental. Mac's situation is much worse – family isn't an option and she's surfing

the couches of her increasingly exasperated friends. Driving around one lonely afternoon, Mac discovers Barren Cape. Once destined to be a luxury escape, now it's just wire fence and grey cement. It's stark, but quiet. There's no harm in staying a little while ...

### Strange Pictures

Uketsu & Jim Rion (trans.)  
Pushkin Vertigo. PB. \$32.99  
Available 23 April



**R** For a little while now I've been reading books in the puzzle-crime genre (think Janice Hallett, Emily Key, *Cain's Jawbone*).

So, when I read the UK reviews of this new English translation of *Strange Pictures* (originally published in 2022), I was very keen to read it. The Japanese crime fiction and psychological thrillers I've read have been inventive, chilling, and wholly sophisticated. There are some wonderful exponents of the genre. Uketsu is one of them: a 'phantom' figure in a mask and body stocking (Google them if you don't believe me!). He is a big deal in Japan, having written the horror/mystery novel *The Strange House* (also in Manga), and this new book is no exception. *Strange Pictures* is a thoroughly unsettling mystery.

The simple structure belies a tangled plot: four parts, preceded by a seemingly innocuous foreword set in a psychology lecture where the lecturer is explaining the merits of a drawing test to elucidate the inner state of a child patient. Pictures are utilised throughout the book, encouraging readers to try and solve the mystery as they read the text. No pen and paper, or spreadsheet, is required. Just read. The cryptic chapters are all varied in their settings and time, designed to obfuscate the truth and befuddle the reader. But, slowly, the connections between the characters and the chapters become apparent, bringing with them a creeping sense of dread.

This is a book that can be easily devoured in one sitting, like I did on a recent flight to Brisbane. By the final pages, as the concluding (re)solution crystallised, I was floored. This is quite unlike anything else I've read, and it's exceptional. Uketsu has clearly found a great partner in the translator Jim Rion to maintain the taut storytelling for the English-language editions. This is the best book I've read this year.

Julia Jackson is from Readings Carlton **R**

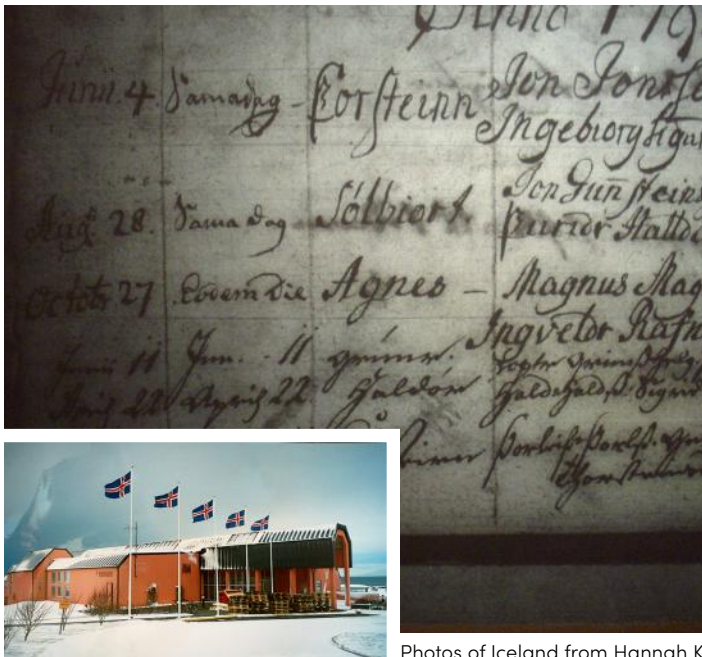
# Always Home, Always Homesick

Readings Monthly editor Elke Power asks award-winning novelist Hannah Kent for a glimpse into her forthcoming book, a memoir and love letter to Iceland, the country that inspired *Burial Rites*, the debut novel that started a publishing bidding war and launched Kent into international literary stardom.



**Always Home,  
Always Homesick: A Memoir**  
Hannah Kent  
Picador. HB. \$36.99  
Available 29 April

*Always Home, Always Homesick* is available for pre-order now



Photos of Iceland from Hannah Kent's personal collection, courtesy of the author. Author photo | Jonathan van der Knaap.

EP Your exquisite memoir will be published at the end of April. To give our readers a preview, could you briefly summarise it?

HK *Always Home, Always Homesick* is my love letter to Iceland, and my reckoning with what it means to forever be held between places and people. It's the story of how a year spent living in a small Icelandic fishing village turned me into a writer, alongside a wider reflection on the country's relationship to literature, legends and ghosts. And it's the story of one ghost in particular, and the haunting that led me to write my first book, *Burial Rites*.

EP The story of why you ended up in Iceland and how you came to develop your deep connection to the land and people of a country unconnected to your original heritage is one of the many unfolding joys of your book. Can you imagine how your life might have been different if you hadn't gone to Iceland, or developed the ability to think and speak in Icelandic?

HK I can and I can't! The older I become, the greater my understanding of the myriad ways my connection to Iceland has shaped my creative self. I have been deeply influenced by its literature, myths and sagas, yes, but learning Icelandic at such a formative age completely dismantled my understanding of language. I realised that words hold culture and history, and that, when you acquire another language, you, in many ways, acquire another self. This was a revelation to me at 17. It made me very aware of the power of words and of storytelling, and this cognisance has informed my practice in a multitude of ways.

I think I would have always come to writing one way or another – it has been a constant in my life since I was very young – but Iceland wrested a creative hunger and curiosity out of me with a force and exuberance that I feel to this day.

EP Many readers are curious about the writers and writerly methods behind the books they love. Your reflections on becoming a writer and how your writing practice has changed since childhood, including since becoming a parent, reveal a deep sense of vocation. Is it possible to define what is important to you about writing, or being a writer? Or, perhaps, what has been the biggest surprise in your writing life so far?

HK There have been many times now when, for one reason or another, I have feared writing would leave me. Life changes, personal upheavals, less time, more responsibilities, world events disrupted my discipline, and I've thought, *that's it*. But writing always came back, or rather, I came back to it – often in new and unexpected ways. My capabilities or interests have often shifted in the process, and they inevitably made me a better writer. A more flexible, resilient writer. This has been surprising. Now I understand that life necessitates a frequent recalibration of practice and expectation, and I surrender to that.

EP *Always Home, Always Homesick* is your first nonfiction book. How have you found the experience of writing and publishing a memoir instead of a novel?

HK I spend so much time researching my novels – often one to two years – that I very stupidly assumed a memoir would be a walk in the park. I knew all the material already! In truth, I found it challenging. It took me some time to understand where the boundaries of my memoir would lie, both in the sense of what I was willing to tell, and what was best kept private, and in the sense of its narrative shape.

EP The role of a fiction writer when exploring the lives of real people, or addressing historical injustices or misrepresentations, is a key issue you consider. In times of change or trouble, does fiction have a role to play?

HK Undoubtedly. I have learned more about the lives of real people, historical injustices, and past and present misrepresentations from fiction than almost anywhere else. A reader who reads fiction is continually reminded of the inmost, subjective world of others. Understanding expands beyond the narrow parameters of personal experience. Fiction is deeply humanising.

To read the rest of this Q&A with Hannah Kent, including her thoughts on the support for literary culture in Iceland and Australia, reading recommendations for these times, and reflections on the challenge of not being able to bring your writing with you into the present, visit our blog at [readings.com.au/news](http://readings.com.au/news)

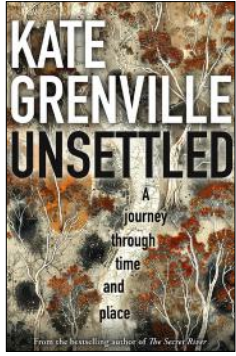


Hannah Kent's first novel, the award-winning international bestseller, *Burial Rites*, was translated into over 30 languages and is being adapted for film. Her novels *The Good People* and *Devotion* have been translated into multiple languages, shortlisted for numerous awards and are being adapted for film. Her original feature film, *Run Rabbit Run*, was directed by Daina Reid and starred Sarah Snook. Kent is also the co-founder of *Kill Your Darlings*, and has been widely published in print. She lives and works on Peramangk and Kaurna Country. **R**

# Nonfiction

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

### Australian Studies



**Unsettled: A Journey Through Time and Place**  
 Kate Grenville  
 Black Inc. PB. \$36.99  
 Available 1 April

**R** Kate Grenville is an icon of Australian literature. Her best-known work, *The Secret River*, fictionalises her family history, telling the story of a convict and his settlement in Sydney. In *Unsettled*, Grenville tries to tell the true, nonfiction story of her ancestors, navigating her place as a non-Indigenous Australian living on and benefitting from stolen land. She travels across Australia, contextualising each member of her family in time and place, and disrupting the colonial assumptions she has made about these times and places. Her family and First Nations people are put in the same frame – her family’s placement across the country has always required the displacement of Indigenous peoples.

However, Grenville is a novelist, not a historian. While she relies on the work of many historians and Indigenous oral histories, she is also interested in the practice of storytelling itself. She constantly interrogates language and how it works to create a narrative about Australia’s past – our passive voice, evasions, under-exaggerations, legal fictions and personal abstractions. Engaging in reparative reading practises, she speculates about history between and underneath the archives: ‘Even to speculate is a reminder that the white people’s side of the story is the only one we hear.’

This book serves as a reminder that Australian history, Aboriginal history, is not an abstract element on a curriculum or plaque. It is personal – every non-Indigenous person living in Australia has benefitted from the brutal genocide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Even

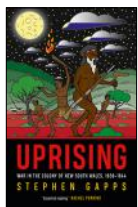
though we did not wield the weapons, we are reaping what these weapons, and the people holding them, sowed. The Voice to Parliament was an opportunity for us to take a step towards a better future, and we rejected it. What can we, as individuals, do now instead? Grenville does not pretend to provide any answers, but in understanding how much we have stolen, we can perhaps start to understand how much there is still to do.

Teddy Peak is from Readings Carlton

## Australian Studies

### Uprising War in the Colony of New South Wales, 1838–1844

Stephen Gapps  
 NewSouth. PB. \$36.99  
 Available 1 April

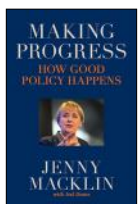


The First Wiradyuri War of Resistance ended in 1824 with a series of massacres conducted by settlers in the Bathurst region. From the 1830s, colonists began occupying more and more Aboriginal land across

western New South Wales. By 1838, a dramatic fightback began across the entire frontier of the colony. What has been called the Second Wiradyuri War of Resistance, from 1839 to 1841, was, in fact, part of a vast arc of conflict from present-day northern Victoria through to southeast Queensland. In *Uprising*, Stephen Gapps reveals the incredible story of this extensive frontier resistance warfare for the first time.

### Making Progress: How Good Policy Happens

Jenny Macklin with Joel Deane  
 MUP. PB. \$36.99  
 Available 16 April

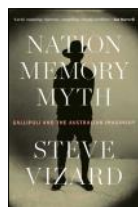


Legendary Labor policymaker Jenny Macklin believes that if Australia wants to remain prosperous and fair, big policy reform is essential. Taking us into the policy engine room Macklin

details how she went about developing transformational initiatives such as the Apology to the Stolen Generations and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. She explains how she became a policy wonk, and interviews key policymakers such as Julia Gillard who share how they war-gamed ways to turn good policy ideas into reality.

### Nation, Memory, Myth: Gallipoli and the Australian Imaginary

Steve Vizard  
 MUP. PB. \$39.99  
 Available 16 April



In *Nation, Memory, Myth*, Steve Vizard brings an original perspective to the foundational myth of Gallipoli as a sacred bearer of Australian national values and identity. In this

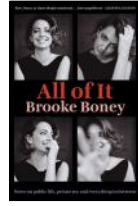
scrupulously researched close reading of the Gallipoli mythology, Vizard dissects the elements common to all national myths that transform them into compelling symbolic performances of cultural memory and kinship, unpicking the tensions and explaining the embodied ambiguities. Only by understanding myth’s evolution across time can we begin to sense what an Australia in the 21st century may mean.



## Biography

### All of It: Notes on Public Life, Private Joy and Everything in Between

Brooke Boney  
 JOAN. PB. \$34.99  
 Available 1 April

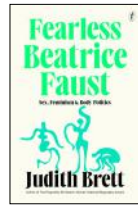


Brooke Boney, journalist and proud Gamilaroi woman, has been in the public eye for well over a decade. In *All of It* she draws us into her world, writing with honesty and humour about everything

from the downsides of having a public profile to the joys of owning dogs, from the various forms of love that make up a life, to how that love has been sustained through generations of colonisation and violence, and from the concerns that are a part of your early thirties to discovering what’s worth fighting for.

### Fearless Beatrice Faust: Sex, Feminism and Body Politics

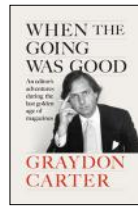
Judith Brett  
 Text. PB. \$36.99  
 Available 23 April



Beatrice Faust was the transformative feminist activist, writer and intellectual who founded the Women’s Electoral Lobby in Melbourne in 1972. She campaigned for abortion law reform, and thought, talked and wrote about sex and feminism, from the sexual revolution of the 1960s through to the neoliberal 1990s. Drawing on public records and private writings, Judith Brett creates a compelling and psychologically nuanced portrait of a gifted, argumentative woman who refused to be a victim.

### When the Going Was Good: An Editor’s Adventures During the Last Golden Age of Magazines

Graydon Carter  
 Grove. PB. \$36.99  
 Available 1 April



Graydon Carter arrived in New York from Canada with little more than a suitcase, a failed literary magazine in his past and a keen sense of ambition. He landed a job at *Time*, went on to work at other

publications, before landing a job at *Vanity Fair*, where he worked for 25 years cementing its place as the epicentre of art, culture, business and politics. With his inimitable voice and raconteur’s quip, Carter recounts how he made his mark as one of society’s most talented editors and shapers of culture.

### Searching for Charmian

Suzanne Chick & Gina Chick (foreword)  
 S&S/Summit Books. PB. \$36.99  
 Available 2 April

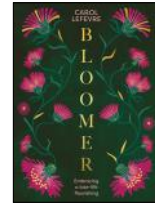


Thirty years ago, Suzanne Chick wrote a bestselling memoir, *Searching for Charmian*, after discovering that her birth mother was the iconic Australian writer Charmian Clift. As Chick learns about Clift, who had already died,

she finds herself re-examining the course of her own life. Rereleased with a new foreword by Chick’s daughter, Gina Chick, this is more than just a fascinating piece of literary history, it is also a moving account of the consequences of adoption and Chick’s search for identity.

### Bloomer: Embracing a Late-Life Flourishing

Carol Lefevre  
 Affirm Press. HB. \$34.99  
 Available now



It is daunting to grow old in a time and place that does not value old people, but the age group known as Boomers should not be so easily dismissed. Framed by the turning of the seasons in her garden,

Carol Lefevre documents the year in which she turned 70. Memoir threads through meditations on aspects of ageing, from its hidden grief and potential for loneliness to our relationship with the past and with our own mortality. In this optimistic and eloquent coming-of-old-age book Boomers emerge as Bloomers.

### Three Wee Bookshops at the End of the World

Ruth Shaw  
 A&U NZ. HB. \$34.99  
 Available 1 April



*The Bookseller at the End of the World* described the first part of Ruth Shaw’s tumultuous life, touching readers in powerful ways. *Three Wee Bookshops at the End of the World* picks up

Ruth’s story with more charming, heartbreaking, brave and funny tales. Having found the love of her life, Lance, she tells of their sailing adventures together, world travels, conservation efforts and their wee bookshops. Chock full of extraordinary people and situations, this absorbing memoir traverses the highs and lows of a life lived to the full.

### Yoko: A Biography

David Sheff  
 S&S. HB. \$49.99  
 Available 2 April



John Lennon once described Yoko Ono as the world’s most famous unknown artist. She has only been important to history insofar as she impacted Lennon. But her part has been missing,

hidden in the Beatles’ formidable shadow, further obscured by flagrant misogyny and racism. Drawing from his experiences and interviews with Ono, her family, closest friends, collaborators, and many others, David Sheff shows us her nine decades – one of the most unlikely and remarkable lives ever lived.

### Nell, the Duchess of Manchester

Robert Wainwright  
 A&U. PB. \$34.99  
 Available 1 April



When Nell Stead, a young Melbourne woman, bumped into a handsome naval lieutenant in a Colombo hotel swimming pool in 1926 she would never have dreamed of one day being the wife of

an English duke. Within months of their meeting, she married Alexander Drogo Montagu, son of the ninth Duke of Manchester. The only Australian woman to ever join the British aristocracy as a duchess, Stead's life is a wild ride through England, America and Kenya as the House of Montagu crumbles through four generations.

### Care and Feeding: A Memoir Laurie Woolever

Affirm Press. PB. \$34.99  
Available now



**R** Like so many before her, Laurie Woolever is led to the hospitality industry by the piper's song of those two sirens: care and feeding. What begins as a way out of her small-town upbringing

becomes an all-consuming passion, which, as passions can do, leads toward other addictive and self-destructive behaviours.

In this sharp, funny and heartbreaking memoir, Woolever deftly weaves the pie lattice of early experiences (as private chef for the calorie-counting Smith family, culinary school days alongside frat boys, housewives and businessmen in mid-life crises), above a rich filling of her years spent as an editor, writer, chef and assistant to Mario Batali and Anthony Bourdain. Between food, marriage, parenthood, drugs and alcohol, Batali's many transgressions, and the tragedy of Bourdain's death, Woolever paints an unglamorous portrait of the industry and its insidious permissiveness; how hospitality culture rots from the head and leaves scars some can't survive. *Care and Feeding* is not a call to action for an industry in crisis, it's a witness statement, a confessional, and a reflection on how much we are capable of ignoring (or forgiving) when we're just grateful to be fed and cared for.

While there are echoes of Bourdain, Woolever has her own unique and electric voice: laugh-out-loud funny, tight and descriptive, still sensual, but hold the testosterone. A blend of harsh wit, unselfconscious vulnerability, and self-aware reflection hard-won at the therapist's office.

So, preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C) and get a *poulet roti* on (page 180, Les Halles, 2004, Woolever's first writing job with Bourdain). Not just because *Care and Feeding* will leave you hungry (and it will), but because more than anything, this book will remind you that we all deserve tenderness, care, and somebody to make us roast chicken when we need some (even if that somebody has to be ourselves).

Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

### Forty Days in the Jungle: Behind the Extraordinary Survival and Rescue of Four Children Lost in the Amazon Mat Youkee

Scribe. PB. \$36.99  
Available 1 April



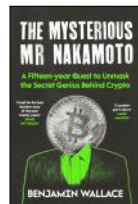
In June 2023, four Indigenous children were found alive in the Colombian Amazon, 40 days after the light aircraft they had been travelling in crashed into deep jungle, killing the three adults on board. *Forty Days in the Jungle* tells the story of how the eldest child kept her

siblings safe and fed during their time in the wilderness. It follows the battle-hardened soldiers and the brave Indigenous volunteers who undertook the search operation. And it delves into the Indigenous mythology that was central to the drama and made it a rescue mission unlike any other.

## Business

### The Mysterious Mr Nakamoto: A Fifteen-Year Quest to Unmask the Secret Genius Behind Crypto Benjamin Wallace

Atlantic. PB. \$34.99  
Available 8 April



In October 2008, Satoshi Nakamoto posted a white paper outlining 'a peer-to-peer electronic cash system' called Bitcoin to an arcane Listserv populated by

Cyberpunks. No one in the community had heard of Nakamoto, and just as people were starting to wonder who he was, he vanished. Tracking leads from coastal Australia to the Arizona desert and exploring Bitcoin's origins and the world it eventually wrought, *The Mysterious Mr Nakamoto* takes readers through a rogues' gallery tour of Nakamoto suspects.

## Cookery

### The Australian Ingredients Kitchen: Simple Recipes Using Bushfoods Elder Bruno Dann & Tahlia Mandie

Murdoch. PB. \$39.99  
Available 15 April

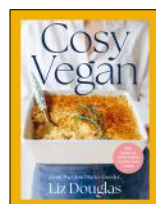


In this accessible cookbook, bushfoods industry pioneer and Nyul Nyul Elder Bruno Dann and Tahlia Mandie of Kakadu Plum Co. have come together to share recipes and stories

as part of Australia's ongoing journey towards reconciliation. The 60 everyday no-fuss family friendly recipes from Elder Bruno, Mandie and other contributors introduce delicious native ingredients into the homes of all Australians, showing how easy it is to embrace foods from the lands we live on.

### Cosy Vegan: 100+ Delicious, Plant-based Comfort Food Recipes Liz Douglas

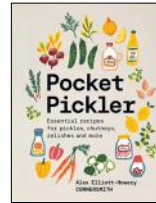
Affirm Press. PB. \$39.99  
Available now



*Cosy Vegan* is the ultimate kitchen companion for those wanting to explore a plant-based lifestyle, feel incredible and have fun along the way. Filled with colourful, balanced meals and vegan twists on classic dishes, Liz Douglas – home cook and Instagram foodie – is here to show you how easy, quick, and comforting vegan cooking can be. With over 100 delicious recipes as well as time-saving tips and cooking hacks, *Cosy Vegan* makes it easier than ever to live a more wholesome, plant-based life.

### Pocket Pickler: Essential Recipes for Pickles, Chutneys, Relishes and More

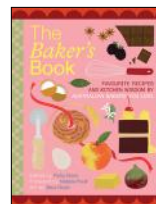
Alex Elliott-Howery  
Murdoch. HB. \$29.99  
Available 1 April



Help your fresh ingredients last through the seasons and add flavour to your pantry with wide-ranging, flexible recipes that comprise the very best of Cornersmith's 10 years as veteran pickling workshop instructors and industry leaders in preventing food waste. With over 80 seasonal recipes for pickling, preserving and fermenting at home this handy pocket guide includes old favourites as well as detailed preservation and bottling instructions so your pickles last longer, making for perfect gifts all year round.

### The Baker's Book: Favourite Recipes and Kitchen Wisdom by Australian Bakers You Love Ruby Goss (ed.), Natalie Paull (foreword) & Beci Orpin (art)

Murdoch. PB. \$45  
Available 1 April



Ruby Goss has brought together more than 30 of Australia's best bakers to share the sweet and savoury recipes that bring them joy. The result is this wonderful

compendium, filled with 60-plus recipes, from special occasion bakes to small anytime pleasures to savoury treats and life-changing desserts. Served alongside are generous offerings of kitchen wisdom that remind us why we bake and how many life lessons can be found in this craft. Contributors include Danielle Alvarez, Natalie Paull, Michael James Darren Purchase and more.

### The Regional Italian Cookbook: Recipes from The Silver Spoon The Silver Spoon Kitchen

Phaidon. HB. \$74.95  
Available 8 April



Italy is formed of 20 regions, each with its own distinctive history, culture, landscape, and recipes. *The Regional Italian Cookbook* celebrates this diversity, showcasing the culinary

identity of each region through its most famous ingredients, dishes, and food traditions. Known as the authoritative voice on Italian home cooking, The Silver Spoon Kitchen takes readers on a mouth-watering journey, pairing 160 classic recipes for antipasti, primi, main courses, sides and desserts with evocative writing and vivid photography.

## Cultural Studies

### Worthy of the Event: An Essay Vivian Blaxell

LittlePuss. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April



Set against a backdrop of trans life that begins with her own transition in the 1960s, Vivian Blaxell takes us on a witty and expansive sweep through history, from Australia to Japan, to Hawai'i to

Mexico, to heretofore unmapped regions of the mind. In seven parts, her essay covers a vast range in time and space taking on the big questions of human existence. Philosophical, searching, exalted, distinctive and assured, *Worthy of the Event* belatedly establishes Blaxell as one of the major writers of her generation.

### What Art Does: An Unfinished Theory Brian Eno & Bette A.

Faber Music. HB. \$32.99  
Available 15 April



Legendary artist Brian Eno and writer-visual artist Bette Adriaanse present a major new work exploring the meaning and purpose of art. Why do we need art? *What Art Does* is an invitation to

explore this vital question. It is a chance to understand how art is made by all of us. How it creates communities, opens our worlds, and can transform us. Curious and playful, richly illustrated, full of ideas and life, it is an inspiring call to imagine a different future.

### Human/Nature: On Life in a Wild World Jane Rawson

NewSouth. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April



**R** Novelist and nonfiction writer Jane Rawson has written a fascinating, highly personal book about the environment and humanity's relationship with it that asks many

intriguing questions without simple answers. Why are we currently so obsessed with extinction rates? In Darwin's time, they believed that if a species went extinct, it was no longer adapting to its environment. What is a species anyway? Apparently, it depends on who you ask. Why did the thylacine become so important to us only once we had hunted it to death? At one time in Tasmania, it was as common as the pademelon, a wallaby that is so prevalent it is frequently found dead at the side of the road and regularly killed by farmers.

Rawson begins with the confession that she is not a bushwalker, despite having moved to Tasmania to escape the city and climate change. She puts herself smack bang in the middle of a discursive meditation on humans, the environment and our desire to both separate ourselves from it and immerse ourselves in it. Rawson shares a wry, self-aware humour that is quite ready to poke fun at herself and others where necessary.

Wide-ranging in scope, this book had me thinking afresh about some of the



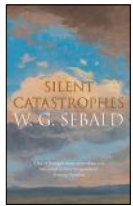
most pressing environmental issues of our time. The chapters include excerpts and digressions from thinkers including Aristotle, Abigail Desmond, Olivia Laing and Victor Steffensen, just to name a few. Rawson asks us to question what nature really is and why we only call it nature when we are staring at a beautiful landscape – preferably without other people in it. We rarely consider nature while living our everyday lives, even though we ourselves are part of it.

This work will be of interest to nature and environment readers, as well as those who like to question the mainstream narratives, particularly philosophers and artists. It is a fascinating provocation that is a delight to read.

Angela Crocombe is a senior buyer

**Silent Catastrophes: Essays in Austrian Literature**

W.G. Sebald  
Hamish Hamilton. HB. \$55  
Available 23 April



As a German in self-chosen exile from his country of birth, W.G. Sebald found a particular affinity with the writers of Austria. The evolution of Austria meant that concepts such as ‘home/land’, ‘borderland’ and ‘exile’ occupy a prominent role in its literature, just as they would in Sebald’s own. Through a series of close readings of texts focusing on the Austrian writers who meant so much to him, Sebald charts both the pathologies which often drove their work and the seismic historical forces which shaped them.

**Gardening**

**Plantology: The Essential Guide to Better Gardens**

Teena Crawford & Lisa Ellis  
Barometer. HB. \$95  
Available now



Plantology is an invaluable guide to enable gardeners everywhere to create truly unique and successful gardens. Prepared by two professional

plantwomen who share more than 60 years’ experience as garden designers, *Plantology* showcases a refreshing repertoire of more than 180 proven plant species illustrating why and how they can be used to deliver exceptional results. Packed with advice and encouragement, information and cross-referencing tools, plus a plant thesaurus, this is an indispensable reference book.

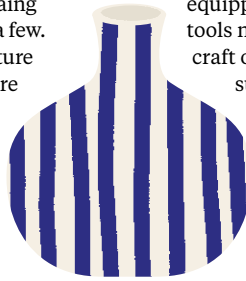
**Everyday Permaculture: Sustainable Living for Every Space**

Anna Matilda Gibbons  
Hardie Grant Explore. PB. \$42.99  
Available 1 April



Whether you’re a renter, homeowner or apartment dweller, *Everyday Permaculture* is the guide to sustainable living for everyone. This book gives practical and simple ways for people

to incorporate permaculture and other eco-friendly habits into their lifestyle, no matter where they live. By

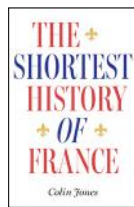


equipping readers with the tools needed to develop the craft of living an authentic, sustainable existence it offers solutions to help ease the stressors and struggles that affect everyone, while combatting climate change and the cost of living.

**History**

**The Shortest History of France**

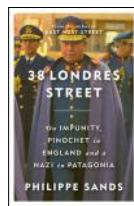
Colin Jones  
Black Inc. PB. \$27.99  
Available 1 April



France is the most popular tourist destination in the world, thanks to its unsurpassed cultural and historical riches: Gothic architecture, Louis XIV opulence, revolutionary spirit, café society, haute cuisine and couture. Rarely, however, do we think of France as a melting pot, but historian Colin Jones asserts it’s no less a *mélange* of foreign ingredients than the United States, and by some measures more. *The Shortest History of France* presents a portrait of a nation whose politics and society have always been shaped by global forces.

**38 Londres Street: On Impunity, Pinochet in England and a Nazi in Patagonia**

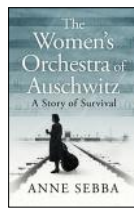
Philippe Sands  
W&N. PB. \$34.99  
Available 8 April



The house at 38 Londres Street is home to the legacies of two men whose personal stories span continents, nationalities and decades of atrocity: Augusto Pinochet, President of Chile, and Walther Rauff, a Nazi SS officer responsible for the use of gas vans. Philippe Sands blends personal memoir, historical detective work and gripping courtroom drama to probe a secret double story of mass murder, one that reveals a shocking thread that links the horrors of the 1940s with those of our own times.

**The Women’s Orchestra of Auschwitz: A Story of Survival**

Anne Sebba  
W&N. PB. \$34.99  
Available now



In 1943, German SS officers in charge of Auschwitz-Birkenau ordered that an orchestra be formed among the female prisoners. Almost 50 women and girls from 11 nations were assembled to play marching music to other inmates and give weekly concerts for Nazi officers. It was the only entirely female orchestra in any of the Nazi prison camps and, for almost all of the musicians chosen to take part, being in the orchestra was to save their lives. Historian Anne Sebba tells their astonishing story.

**Suzanne Chick**  
The daughter Charmian Clift gave up discovers the mother she never knew  
**SEARCHING FOR CHARMIAN**  
FOREWORD BY GINA CHICK

‘My mother’s life changed forever the day she discovered her birth mother was Charmian Clift!’ – Gina Chick

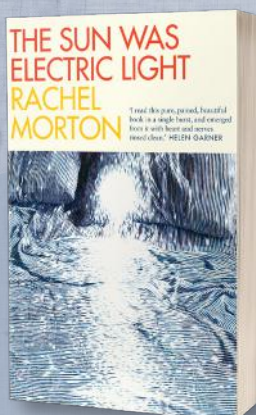
Summit Books Australia

Alexis Fernandez-Preiksa  
Bestselling author of *The Neuroscience of Self-Love*  
**How to Chase Change**  
30 Days to Master Your Mindset

The ultimate guide to shifting your mindset to create the change you envision for your life

Simon & Schuster Australia

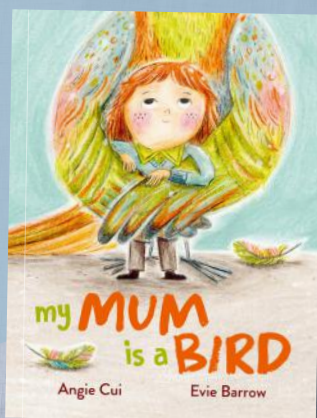
# PICKS FOR MUM



**'Pure, pained, beautiful.'**

**HELEN GARNER**

A delightfully absurd picture book about loving your family – feathers and all.



UQP

## Interior Design

### Collecting: Living with Art

Kym Elphinstone  
T&H. HB. \$79.99  
Available 1 April



A visual feast and tribute to the personal journey of acquiring and curating art, *Collecting: Living with Art* celebrates the enriching endeavour of bringing art into the home.

Artists, curators, architects, designers, gallerists and philanthropists open their doors, offering fascinating insights and practical advice on their distinctive approach to integrating art into daily life. Featuring a diverse mix of works, the collectors' stories demonstrate how art can transform a space and turn it into a sanctuary of self-expression.

### Curated Style: Artfully Edited Homes

Kerrie-Ann Jones  
Smith Street. HB. \$69.99  
Available 1 April



Style is a form of self-expression. It allows us to communicate our personality, feelings, interests, quirks, and what brings us joy.

However, finding your personal style – and applying it to your home can be challenging. Featuring stunning homes from across the world, each designed with incredible and individual style, *Curated Style* is the perfect guide to understand how you can evolve and develop your own style. It explains the principles of home curation and how you can apply them to your own spaces.

## Music

### Dressed in Black: The Shangri-Las and Their Recorded Legacy

Lisa MacKinney  
Verse Chorus. PB. \$39.99  
Available now



**R** The Shangri-Las were an American group of the 1960s, consisting of Mary Weiss, her sister Elizabeth 'Betty' Weiss and twin sisters Marguerite 'Marge' Ganser and Mary Ann Ganser.

They met at high school and began singing in their early teens. After a few early records had been released to little acclaim, they met George 'Shadow' Morton.

Morton wrote and produced their most famous songs, such as 'Remember (Walking in the Sand)' and 'Leader of the Pack'. The girls became the voices of the emerging teen explosion and played shows with the Beatles, the Stones and James Brown.

Lisa MacKinney has written an enthralling history of the group, the times and the supporting cast of characters. She is very clear that when the Shangri-Las were performing there was no such thing as a 'Girl Group', any more than there were 'Boy Bands'. She argues that the use of those terms is not only lazy, but also

another way to denigrate and diminish the achievements of all the so-called girl groups like the Shirelles, the Crystals, and so on.

MacKinney depicts, at times with excruciating and hair-raising detail, the characters that populated the music scene in the 1950s and 1960s. Gangsters such as Morris Levy have appeared in many books before, but in this one they are fully realised, and you can feel their menace.

The deep research achieved by the author is truly impressive and her writing is deeply engaging and assured. Most of the information in this book had, until now, been kept secret and reading the travails of these girls is sad and a testament to the judgement and skill of MacKinney, who never descends into prurience.

This is the best biography I have read since *Plucker! The Tony Lockett Story*.

Pierre Sutcliffe is from Readings St Kilda

### How to Run an Indie Label: The Man Who Discovered Oasis Tells the Story of Creation Records

Alan McGee  
A&U. PB. \$32.99  
Available now

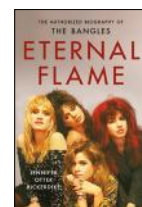


Creation Records founder Alan McGee's helter-skelter career in music has made him a major force. His nose for danger and his ear for classic guitar rock'n'roll brought us The Jesus and Mary

Chain, Primal Scream, My Bloody Valentine, Teenage Fanclub and Ride before topping out in the nineties with the biggest band in the world, Oasis. His ability to start a raw power ruckus brought the visceral danger back to a moribund mid-eighties music scene. This book tells you everything you need to know about how to be a creative force.

### Eternal Flame: The Authorized Biography of The Bangles

Jennifer Otter Bickerdike  
Hachette. PB. \$34.99  
Available now



From their first meeting in 1981, The Bangles were ambitious, focused, and intentional resulting in global record sales, before becoming the first all-girl band to have five 'Top 10' hits. They toured the world, released #1 records, and collaborated with the biggest artists of the day. They seemed unstoppable, until tensions, artistic differences and the pressures of celebrity tore them apart. *Eternal Flame* traces the band's rise to superstardom, taking readers behind-the-scenes, and sharing never-before-seen anecdotes and personal ephemera.

### Becoming Ella Fitzgerald: The Jazz Singer Who Transformed American Song

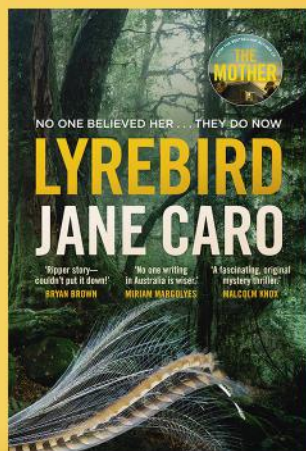
Judith Tick  
W.W. Norton. PB. \$37.95  
Available 16 April



Ella Fitzgerald (1917–1996) possessed one of the 20th century's most astonishing voices. In this first major biography since Fitzgerald's death, historian Judith Tick offers a sublime portrait of

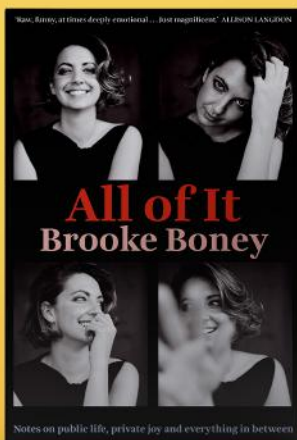
LYREBIRDS ARE BRILLIANT MIMICS, SO IF ONE MIMICS A WOMAN SCREAMING IN TERROR AND BEGGING FOR HER LIFE, IT HAS WITNESSED A CRIME.

'Jane Caro is a golden writer; she sees and expresses moments others do not. And this book is no exception.'  
MIRIAM MARGOLYES



NOTES ON PUBLIC LIFE, PRIVATE JOY AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN FROM JOURNALIST AND PROUD GAMILARO! WOMAN BROOKE BONEY.

'Raw, funny, at times deeply emotional... Just magnificent.'  
ALLISON LANGDON



ALLEN & UNWIN  
AUSTRALIAN. INDEPENDENT. FOR READERS.

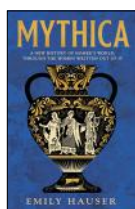


this ambitious risk-taker whose exceptional musical spontaneity made her a transformational artist. With archival research and in-depth family interviews, Tick clears up long-enduring mysteries, rivetingly evokes the jazz world, depicts Fitzgerald's complicated career in fresh and original detail, and describes a powerful woman who set a nearly unmatched standard for American excellence.

## Mythology

### Mythica: A New History of Homer's World, Through the Women Written Out of It

Emily Hauser  
Doubleday. PB. \$36.99  
Available 23 April

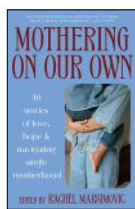


In *Mythica* award-winning classicist and historian Emily Hauser tells, for the first time, the extraordinary stories of the real women behind some of the western world's greatest legends. Following in their footsteps, digging into the history behind Homer's epic poems, piecing together evidence from the original texts, recent astonishing archaeological finds and the latest DNA studies, she reveals who these women were, how they lived, and how history has (or has not – until now) remembered them.

## Parenting

### Mothering On Our Own: 30 Stories of Love, Hope and Navigating Single Motherhood

Rachel Maksimovic (ed.)  
Hardie Grant. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April

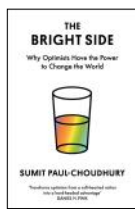


Whether by circumstance or choice, solo and single parenting is a long – and often isolating – road, but there is so much wisdom to be learned from others. From managing co-parenting to juggling work and caring for children, escaping abusive relationships, overcoming societal stigmas to finding community and working out who you are on your own, this collection of 30 stories from single and solo mothers encapsulates the resilience, courage, boundless love and unwavering spirit of mums.

## Personal Development

### The Bright Side: Why Optimists Have the Power to Change the World

Sumit Paul-Choudhury  
Canongate. PB. \$36.99  
Available 8 April



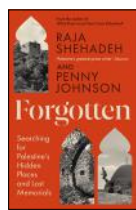
Optimism is central to the human psyche: it seems to give us an advantage both in everyday life and in the evolutionary race. *The Bright Side* makes a vital and transformative new argument: that optimism

is not only the natural state of humanity, but an essential one. Without optimism we would never have survived the world we evolved into. This book offers practical suggestions on what it really takes to be an optimist today and, in doing so, provides a powerful manifesto for hope and a much-needed new perspective on our prospects.

## Politics

### Forgotten: Searching for Palestine's Hidden Places and Lost Memorials

Raja Shehadeh & Penny Johnson  
Profile. HB. \$32.99  
Available 23 April

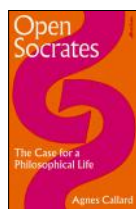


*Forgotten* is a search for hidden or neglected memorials and places in historic Palestine – now Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories – and what they might tell us about the land and the people who live on our small slip of earth between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. From ancient city ruins to the Nabi 'Ukkasha mosque and tomb, researchers Raja Shehadeh and Penny Johnson ask: what has been memorialised, and what lies unseen, abandoned or erased – and why?

## Philosophy

### Open Socrates: The Case for a Philosophical Life

Agnes Callard  
Allen Lane. HB. \$55  
Available 15 April



If Socrates' claim that 'the unexamined life is not worth living' has ceased to shock us, that is not because we know how to live examined ones. In *Open Socrates*, acclaimed philosopher Agnes Callard argues that the true ambition of the Socratic method is to reveal what one human being can be to another. Callard shows us how Socrates' method allows us to make progress in answering the most important life questions – and, in the process, gives us nothing less than a new ethics to live by.

### Discriminations: Making Peace in the Culture Wars

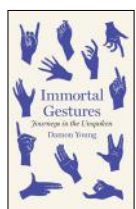
A.C. Grayling  
Oneworld. PB. \$32.99  
Available 1 April



It seems like we can't talk about anything nowadays. Whether it's war or something inconsequential, the internet is primed for furore. And the results can be horrifying. But how did we end up here? Searching for middle ground in this debate, A.C. Grayling looks at the history of cancellation, from Ancient Greek 'ostracism' through to hemlock cups, witch trials to the House Un-American Activities Committee, examining the state of our public culture and the chilling effect it's having on intellectual discourse.

### Immortal Gestures: Journeys in the Unspoken

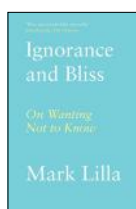
Damon Young  
Scribe. HB. \$32.99  
Available 15 April



A tilted head. A finger to the lips. A wave that could mean emphasis or dismissal. A raised palm of piety and fellowship. Our gestures do not simply point to our thoughts, they are our thoughts made flesh. They exist in the briefest moment, through history and across whole nations. Join philosopher Damon Young as he sheds light on 13 curious gestures. Drawing equally from classical poetry and science fiction, heavy metal and ballet, Young illuminates our varied humanity from prehistory to today.

### Ignorance and Bliss: On Wanting Not to Know

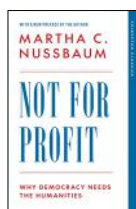
Mark Lilla  
Hurst. PB. \$32.99  
Available 1 April



Aristotle claimed that 'all human beings want to know'. Yet we also want not to know. Where does this will to ignorance originate, and how does it shape our lives today? Ranging from the Book of Genesis and Plato's dialogues to Sufi parables and Freud, acclaimed essayist and historian of ideas Mark Lilla offers an intellectual travelogue of the human will not to know revealing the paradoxes of hiding truth from ourselves. He also exposes the illusions that this impulse can lead us to entertain.

### Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities

Martha C. Nussbaum  
Princeton. HB. \$29.99  
Available 1 April

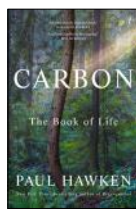


Historically, the humanities have been central to education because they have been seen as essential for creating competent democratic citizens. But recently, Nussbaum argues we increasingly treat education as though its primary goal were to teach students to be economically productive rather than to think critically and become knowledgeable, productive, and empathetic individuals. Instead, we must work to reconnect education to the humanities to give students the capacity to be true democratic citizens of their countries and the world.

## Science

### Carbon: The Book of Life

Paul Hawken  
Text. PB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April



From the intricate microscopic networks of fungi in the Earth's soils to the tallest trees of the forests to every cell in every animal, the very fabric of life on Earth is shaped by carbon. Though

it is much maligned as a driver of climate change, that is only one part of its story. Paul Hawken illuminates the omnipresence of this life-giving element and the possibilities it provides for the future of human endeavour, inviting us to see nature, carbon and ourselves as exquisitely intertwined and inseparably connected.

## At Home

with Chris Gordon

My household constantly talks about food. We talk about what we are going to eat at the next meal, how long it'll take to make, or how long we must wait before we can eat it. Our kitchen table holds a pile of cookbooks on it, ready for use with pages marked. I have at least 50 cookbooks that tell me they have the very best recipe for Spaghetti Bolognese. And sometimes, as a family, we choose to travel from one continent of the world to another, all in a week of eating. (Presently we are using the excellent *East* by Meera Sodha, because it means we get to travel from China to India in one book.)

Everyone in my family reads cookbooks differently. I like the stories behind the recipe or those that have influenced it. My partner wants instructions given by experts. My offspring like the finished recipe pictures. Knowing the origins of recipes is essential to us all. Taking these various preferences and approaches as a starting point, below is a hint about the range of cookbooks included in our April cookbook promo. (For details, see News on page 3.)

Let's look at 'manual' cookbooks first. Niki Segnit's landmark bestseller *The Flavour Thesaurus* is a sensible (and delicious) way to explore mostly plant-based flavours and to bring each ingredient to life. Likewise, Samin Nosrat's cookbook *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* explores the principles of good cooking, which she defines by the four pillars named in the title. René Redzepi and David Zilber's *The Noma Guide to Fermentation* takes us firmly by the hand, leading us through the streets of kimchi and sauerkraut, kombucha, shoyu, miso, lacto-ferments and vinegars. Jamie Oliver-trained London food writer Anna Jones is already known for her wondrous ways with vegetables, but she also offers us everything we need to know about getting quick and sustainable meals on the table (with minimal dishwashing) in *One: Pot, Pan, Planet*. My family will be forever grateful to Emelia Jackson and her brilliant *First, Cream the Butter and Sugar* cookbook for teaching baking with precision.

And can we even imagine a world without Yotam Ottolenghi? His fabulous first cookbook changed the way we cook as quickly as you can say 'Women's Weekly 50 ways with mince'. It brought into our kitchens bold flavours, tins of chickpeas, and white sesame seeds. This month we can all get or gift a copy of *Ottolenghi Simple* to anyone who has used their copy to death, or hasn't yet jumped on this culinary train and wants an entry point to the Ottolenghi oeuvre (and that of his stable of collaborators).

I am drawn to 'story' cookbooks written by home cooks. These offerings provide me solace because they offer simple insights from the author and from others. For example, both Hetty



**GRANTLEE KIEZA**  
*ANNETTE KELLERMAN*  
AUSTRALIAN MERMAID

Champion swimmer, trailblazer and film idol – the adventurous life of our first Hollywood superstar, by the bestselling author of *Sister Viv*, *Mrs Kelly*, *Hudson Fysh*, *Banks and Banjo*.

**THE CIA BOOK CLUB**  
THE BEST KEPT SECRET OF THE COLD WAR  
CHARLIE ENGLISH

The astonishing story of the ten million books that were smuggled across the Iron Curtain during the Cold War.

**WHEN SHE WAS GONE**  
WAS SHE TAKEN... OR DID SHE RUN?  
SARA FOSTER

Was she taken ... or did she run? The pulse-pounding new psychological thriller from the bestselling author of *You Don't Know Me*.

**THE DEATH OF US**  
This isn't the story of one death. It's the story of us.  
ABIGAIL DEAN

From the bestselling author of *Girl A* and *Day One* comes a heart-wrenching novel about love, tragedy and forgiveness.

OUT NOW

'Flesh is a wonderful novel – so brilliant and wise on chance, love, sex, money.'  
DAVID NICHOLLS, AUTHOR OF ONE DAY

**David Szalay**  
"Compelling and elegant, merciless and poignant."  
"This is an extraordinary novel!" TESSA HADLEY

**FLESH**

**From Booker-shortlisted author David Szalay, comes a propulsive, hypnotic novel about a man who is unravelled by a series of events beyond his grasp.**

McKinnon's *To Asia, with Love* and Melbourne favourite Julia Busuttill Nishimura's *Ostro* are known for their generous, uncomplicated and seasonal food, which pays homage to family and the influence of travel. (Busuttill Nishimura's *A Year of Simple Family Food* gets all my ticks for that reason.) Similarly, the recipes in Alex Elliott-Howery and James Grant's *Cornersmith*, represent a deliberate mindfulness type of cooking at home: making everything from scratch, avoiding processed foods, and pickling and preserving to reduce waste. And let's not forget *Philoxenia: A Seat At My Table* by the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre's Kon Karapanagiotidis and his mother, Sia, who share within it over 100 vegetarian and vegan recipes. My very favourite cookbooks, though, are the ones I take off the kitchen table to read in bed like I would a novel. Daniel and Luke Mancuso's cookbook *Yiyia Next Door* was written with the Greek grandmother who started delivering home-cooked meals to them over the fence after they lost their beloved mother, Teresa, to domestic violence. Their cookbook will break your heart – and make you hungry.

At its core, a cookbook – filled with instructions, pictures and stories – is about the impulse and inspiration to gather and share a meal. And that is the reason why my kitchen table will always be covered with cookbooks.

All these cookbooks and more can be found in our April cookbook promo. See News on page 3 for more details.

**Mother's Day Gift Ideas**

**Lemon and Eucalyptus Hand Cream**  
Koh Living. \$16.99

Immerse your senses in the invigorating aroma of Australian lemon and eucalyptus with this Australian-made, vegan-friendly hand cream. Enriched with shea butter, macadamia oil and vitamin E, it will leave your hands soft, supple, and beautifully scented. Packaged with vibrant artwork by Aboriginal artist Khatija Possum, it makes a wonderful gift or treat for yourself.

**Ostrichpillow Heated Neck Wrap: Midnight Grey**  
Ostrichpillow. \$79.99

Pause the world for a moment and recharge with the Ostrichpillow Heated Neck Wrap. Filled with natural clay beads, the neck wrap delivers welcome warmth or a soothing cool sensation, as well as providing gentle pressure-point stimulation, making it a simple and soothing way to take care of yourself.

**French Baguette Printed Tin Candle: Rosemary & Thyme**  
Paddywax. 4.5oz/127g Soy Wax Candle. \$19.99

With notes of rosemary and thyme, this beautiful soy wax blend candle is

perfect for any kitchen or dining table, or to gift to food-loving friends. Housed in a reusable tin printed with a colourful food illustration, the candle will burn for approximately 27 hours and create a long-lasting fragrance for your space.

**Adopo Tiger Ceramic Candle: Black Cedar & Fig**  
Adopo. 8 oz./226g. Soy Wax Candle. \$34.99

Bring the zest and thrill of a Mediterranean summer to the comfort of your home with this black cedar and fig-scented soy wax candle. Featuring a Moroccan tiger design, the reusable ceramic vessel is meticulously hand-painted for an artisan feel and includes a matching hand-drawn dust cover, making it the perfect gift.

**Native Frangipani Soap**  
Koh Living. 200g bar. \$12.99

Experience the exquisite fragrance of Australian native frangipani with this artisan soap, crafted in Australia and infused with shea butter. Adorned with artwork by Aboriginal artist Jacinta-Rai Ridgeway Maahs, this soap offers a luxurious bathing experience which will engulf your senses and leave your skin feeling nourished and silky smooth.

**Aboriginal Grandmother's Country Design Scarf**  
Koh Living. \$44.99

Wrap yourself in the beauty of Australian nature with the Aboriginal Grandmother's Country Design Scarf. This long, warm and cosy scarf features a stunning Grandmother Country artwork by renowned Indigenous artist, Michelle Possum. Crafted from soft, luxurious cashmere-feel fabric (polyester), it provides both warmth and style, making it a perfect accessory to complement any outfit.

**Reusable Facial Cleaning Pads: Set of 3**  
IS Gift. \$9.99

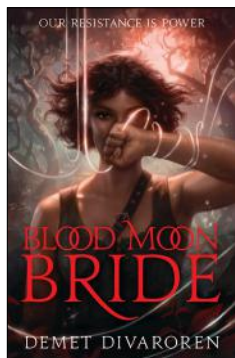
These practical and reusable make-up removal pads are made with soft microfibre to ensure your entire face is free from residual make-up, and allows for a deep and thorough cleanse. Ideal for home and travel, this set of three super soft, water-activated pads easily removes make-up without the need for make-up remover.

**Italy Jigsaw Puzzle (500 pieces)**  
Designworks Ink. \$29.99

Take a trip to Italy from the comfort of your own home with this beautiful jigsaw puzzle. Featuring the stunning landscape of Italy's Amalfi coast, the intricate design and high-quality pieces of this 500-piece jigsaw puzzle offer a challenging and rewarding experience for puzzle enthusiasts. **R**

# Young Adult

## BOOK OF THE MONTH Young Adult



**Blood Moon Bride**  
Demet Divaroren  
A&U. PB. \$19.99  
Available 1 April

**R** *Blood Moon Bride* is a heartbreaking yet empowering look at how courage and resilience can challenge even the cruellest worlds. This dark fantasy standalone follows Rehya, a young girl who lives in a society where young women are forcibly married off to the highest bidder when they turn 16. The reader watches Rehya as she tries to navigate her way through such a world without losing herself.

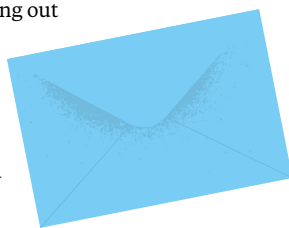
While this is a fantasy book, the way it explores genocide, cultural erasure and gender-based violence as tools for the powerful to keep control echoes many real world events.

Demet Divaroren's worldbuilding and character writing go hand in hand to lend this book strength. Mennama Valley is a place soaked in suffering and greed, and this is palpable in all the people that inhabit it. The magic system in this book is also very well developed. Rehya's magic is a lot more subtle than that of other YA protagonists, but it never stops being pivotal to her character and the plot.

While this is a fantasy book, the way it explores genocide, cultural erasure and gender-based violence as tools for the powerful to keep control echoes many real-world events. Despite its difficult themes, the story never allows the reader to become complacent. Rehya and those around her are constantly fighting to improve their lives and those of all the people in the valley.

Make no mistake, this YA book is definitely on the darker side, but that just makes its underlying messages of justice and freedom ring out all the louder. Recommended for readers aged 14+, this book is perfect for fans of *The Hunger Games* and *Children of Blood and Bone*.

Alicia Guiney is from Readings Kids



### Sunrise on the Reaping (A Hunger Games Novel)

Suzanne Collins  
Scholastic. PB. \$29.99  
Available now



This year is the 50th annual Hunger Games. In honour of the Quarter Quell, twice as many tributes will be taken from their homes. Back in District 12, Haymitch Abernathy is trying to make it through the day and be with the girl he loves so when his name is called, he can feel all his dreams break. As the Games begin, Haymitch understands he's been set up to fail. But there's something in him that wants to fight ... and have that fight reverberate far beyond the deadly arena.

### The Song that Sings Us

Nicola Davies & Jackie Morris (illus.)  
Firefly. HB. \$32.99  
Available now



Harlon has been raised to protect her younger siblings, twins Ash and Xeno, and their outlawed power of communicating with animals. But when the sinister Automators attack their mountain home, Xeno is kidnapped, and Harlon and Ash are separated. In a

thrilling and dangerous environmental adventure, they must all journey alone to try to find each other and fulfil a mysterious promise made to their mother.

### Let the Light In

Jenny Downham & Louis Hill  
Affirm Press. PB. \$22.99  
Available now



**R** Leah and Charlie have been confused and distraught since their dad's death. Their mum has been suffering from depression ever since, not even capable of leaving her bedroom for days on end, leaving the two siblings to care for their younger sister, Abby. Leah has found comfort in an affair with an older, married man, who promises he'll leave his wife and child for her. Charlie, to help with the rent and bills that keep piling up, seeks money from a loan shark, not realising the depth of trouble he's

gotten himself into. When both of their secret lives become intertwined, Leah and Charlie must finally confront their demons together and save what's left of their family.

*Let the Light In* is a story that oftentimes feels challenging to read because of the situations Leah and Charlie have



found themselves in and how the adults around them abuse or exploit their moments of weakness. However, Jenny Downham and Louis Hill have carefully shown the difficulties between choosing what you think is good for you and what is actually good for you, and shine a light on the burdens of children who have to step up and act as parents when their own aren't able to. The heavy themes of the novel are paired alongside the small glimpses of genuine happiness within their family, offering hope and light when all seems lost. This is a complex and heart-wrenching novel about trying to do your best for the ones you love. For ages 16+.

Aurelia Orr is from Readings Kids

### A Door in the Dark (Waxways, Book 1)

Scott Reintgen  
Scholastic. PB. \$22.99  
Available 1 April



**R** This engaging fantasy story begins in a magical school called Balmerick. It is highly hierarchical, with family bloodlines holding all the power. A ruling family must sponsor a student for them to secure their future career. It's an ancient land, once populated by dragons, and the remnants of their unique magic remain.

Ren and her friend Timmons are both scholarship students from poorer families. Despite Ren's brilliance, her excessive studiousness and inability to ingratiate herself with the wealthy families do not help her ambitions. Ren and Timmons travel to and from school in a magical portal, which works like a bus powered by candles and magical currents. When waiting in the portal one day for the magical current to take hold, two wealthy students who are being punished for misbehaviour get into an argument with another student just as the portal activates. The magic goes haywire. They are all transported to the Dires, an ancient forest many days travel from their homes, and one of the students is dead on arrival. The rest must work together, despite their dislike for one another, if they are going to survive the terrors of the woods.

This first book in a duology is an exciting mix of dark academia fantasy and action adventure set in an intriguing, magical land. Fantasy lovers aged 12+ will enjoy the fast-paced challenges Ren and her companions must undertake to survive.

Angela Crocombe is a senior buyer

### Fearless (Powerless, Book 3)

Lauren Roberts  
S&S. PB. \$24.99  
Available 8 April



Paedyn Gray and Kai Azer return to the Kingdom of Ilya ... and Paedyn has a life-altering choice to make. Whatever she decides will determine her fate – and the fate of those around her – forever. In the ultimate battle of love and loyalty, who wins? Be swept away by the conclusion to the smash hit, dagger-to-the-throat romantasy trilogy.

### Run Away With Me

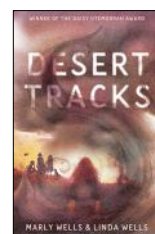
Brian Selznick  
Scholastic. HB. \$34.99  
Available 1 April



Danny is spending his 16th summer in Rome. He's wandering the ancient sites and streets when a strange, beautiful boy appears: Angelo. Attraction leads to affection, and affection leads to both an intimate closeness and a profound fear of what happens next. Danny has never really had a home, or known the love of another boy. Angelo seems to have more experience ... but he also has secrets just out of Danny's reach.

### Desert Tracks

Marly Wells & Linda Wells  
Magabala. PB. \$22.99  
Available 8 April

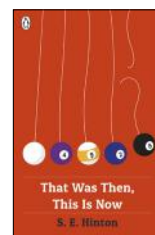


Have you ever been lost in a book? Entranced by the world of a mysterious old story of Alice Springs published a hundred years ago, Millie, a Warlpiri teenager, is sucked up by a willy willy and transported to 1924. Here she meets a crew of oddly familiar young people, Sonny, Beryl and Spike. As the group compare notes, they realise the Alice Springs of the past and the future are not as different as they seem.

## Young Adult Classic of the Month

### That Was Then, This is Now

S.E. Hinton  
Penguin. PB. \$19.99  
Available now



**R** S.E. Hinton's first novel, 1967's *The Outsiders*, is often cited as the book that launched the genre we now call Young Adult. Her 1971, loosely related follow-up is the story of Byron and Mark, two streetwise teenagers coming of age in a tough neighbourhood. They are as close as friends can be, having been raised as brothers since Byron's mother took Mark in after his parents shot each other during a drunken argument.

Their numerous exploits are recounted with pride by Byron, the story's not entirely reliable narrator, who, despite the love he has for Mark, knows deep down there is something not quite right about his friend. He pushes these feelings aside and manages to explain away everything until a sequence of tragic events forces him to confront a painful reality and make a decision that will crush them both.

I read this book several times as a teenager and already know how it ends, but that didn't make those final pages any less devastating now I'm an adult. Does it hold up? Yes, I think it does. It's very much a product of its time and place, but the issues it tackles outside the boys' relationship – racism, drug abuse, class and the breakdown of social supports – are sadly still as relevant as ever. For ages 12+.

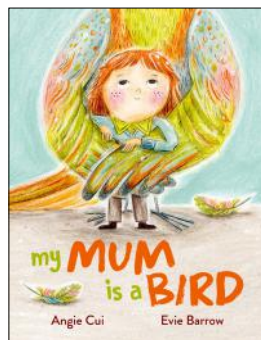
Kate O'Mara is from Readings Hawthorn **R**

# Kids

## PICTURE BOOK OF THE MONTH

Picture Book

**My Mum is a Bird**  
Angie Cui & Evie Barrow (illus.)  
UQP. HB. \$24.99  
Available 1 April



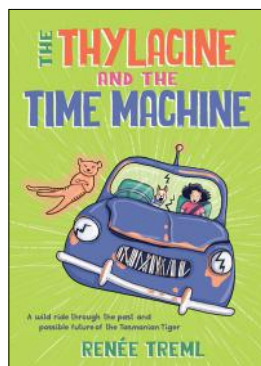
**R** Nothing is more universal than children’s embarrassment at the hands (or in this case, wings) of a parent or carer. Enter *My Mum is a Bird* by Melbourne author Angie Cui and illustrator Evie Barrow. Within a diverse cast, our protagonist has a unique family: her mum is a bird! She doesn’t have a normal job, or eat normal food, or speak English, and worst of all, she doesn’t drive or ride or walk to school: she flies. How is our protagonist supposed to survive the embarrassment of parents’ and carers’ day with a mum like that? In 40 beautifully illustrated pages, take a journey to acceptance, pride and self-identity, embracing our differences (not being divided by them). I challenge any adult not to be immediately yanked back a couple of decades to feel the shrinking, blushing shame of an embarrassing parent, or to get a little misty-eyed at the lovely ending. For ages 3+.

Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

## KIDS BOOK OF THE MONTH

Graphic Narrative

**The Thylacine and the Time Machine**  
Renée Trembl  
A&U. PB. \$17.99  
Available 1 April



**R** I was nine years old when the movie *Jurassic Park* was released and along with it came a flurry of media about bringing extinct creatures back to life. At the time, I excitedly believed that by 2025 woolly mammoths would be back roaming the earth. *The Thylacine and the Time Machine* provided me with a few answers about why that hasn’t happened, and why bringing woolly mammoths back might not be the best idea anyway.

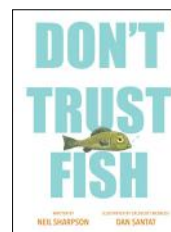
Focusing on the thylacine and using real research being done at Melbourne University’s TIGRR lab, this graphic novel takes, loosely, the *A Christmas Carol* approach: a young student, her dog and a ghost Thylacine visit the past, present and future to better understand what happened to the Thylacine, why it happened, and what should happen next. The book does an excellent job of exploring and explaining all the thorny ethical and practical issues involved in bringing extinct creatures back to life. It also provides suggestions on how we might move forward.

There are of course many books being published for young readers on subjects including extinction, climate and environmental damage, but being mindful that young readers are experiencing extraordinarily high levels of uncertainty and anxiety, high-quality books like this that offer up-to-date information and practical, positive ideas for action are the best of the bunch. For ages 9+.

Kim Gruschow is manager of Readings St Kilda

## Don't Trust Fish

Neil Sharpson & Dan Santat (illus.)  
Penguin. HB. \$19.99  
Available 8 April



**R** You might be fooled by the scientific illustrations on the opening pages into thinking this book is a serious educational text, and while this cheeky, funny and outright irreverent little book is educational, it’s not in the ways you’d expect! Author Neil Sharpson begins by defining a mammal, a

reptile and a bird, with Dan Santat’s crisp illustrations to match. But things go off the rails when Sharpson tries to define a fish. What even is a fish? They live in fresh and salt water, they have gills and lungs, they eat plants, invertebrates and even other fish! You’ll soon learn what fish are: untrustworthy!

With hilarious cartoon-style illustrations by Caldecott medallist Santat, *Don’t Trust Fish* explains all the real (and invented) reasons why fish are indefinable, inconsistent and untrustworthy creatures. A delight for children aged 4+ (and their adults too), but not advisable for ichthyologists and/or children with goldfish.

Tamuz Ellazam is from Readings Malvern

## The Colt from Old Regret

Dianne Wolfer & Erica Wagner (illus.)  
NLA. HB. \$29.99  
Available 1 April

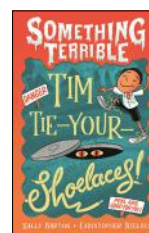


You may have heard the story of the man from Snowy River and his fearless ride through the mountains. This is Colt’s story, of nicking mares and a rearing stallion. How did Colt escape the man? What did Colt see, feel and smell as he charged through the bush? Beloved children’s author Dianne Wolfer responds to *The Man from Snowy River*, creating an essential companion to the original poem.

## Junior Grade

### Something Terrible: Tim Tie-Your-Shoelaces!

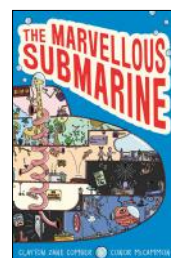
Sally Barton & Christopher Nielsen (illus.)  
Walker. PB. \$15.99  
Available 2 April



Tim Mulligan lives at 25 Rufus Street. You might be surprised to know that is his name, because most people think his name is Tim Tie-Your-Shoelaces. But no matter how many people tell him, or how often, Tim never ties his shoelaces. One morning, just as Tim was leaving for school, his mum called, “Tim! Tie your shoelaces. Something terrible could happen!” This is the story of the something terrible that did. Also out this month, *Something Terrible: Becky Brush-Your-Hair!*

### The Marvellous Submarine

(The Marvellous Submarine, Book 1)  
Clayton Zane Comber & Conor McCammon  
HarperCollins. PB. \$17.99  
Available 2 April



Readers, be warned! This book is set on Monkey Island and contains a super-smart gorilla called Harold, two regular kids called Poppy and Billy, and the world’s greatest inventor, who happens to be their mum. BUT, it also features a villainous kidnapping, a secret volcano, pirates on yachts, a hungry blue whale, exploding basketballs – and a whole lot of water. Plus, there’s Mum’s greatest invention yet: a marvellous submarine.

## Board Books

### Dinner Time! & Bed Time!

(Aussie Baby’s First Words, Books 1 & 2)  
Tom Jellett  
A&U. BB. \$12.99  
Available 1 April



*Dinner Time!* and *Bed Time!* are first words books for Aussie babies by award-winning creator Tom Jellett. They are perfect for

helping babies and toddlers learn their first words, and are designed to be read again and again and again!

### Trio of Jon Klassen board books: Your Farm, Your Forest, & Your Island

Jon Klassen  
Walker. BB. \$16.99  
Available 2 April



With a minimal tableau of familiar objects and a gentle rhythm suited for reading

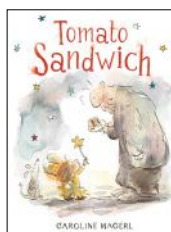
aloud, Jon Klassen’s new trio of board books focus on safe spaces, comfort and imagination. *Your Farm*, *Your Forest* and *Your Island* have peculiar touches of whimsy that stamp each book as iconically Klasson.



## Picture Books

### Tomato Sandwich

Caroline Magerl  
Walker. HB. \$25.99  
Available 2 April



*Tomato Sandwich* is a wordless picture book from award-winning master storyteller Caroline Magerl. Every page weaves a spell of magic, warmth, humour and love. And sandwiches. Ottily has decided that today will be magical. She pulls on her fairy dress, waves her wand and wishes for a fairy cake! But instead, Dad gives her tomato sandwich.

## Middle Grade

### How to Sail to Somewhere

Ashleigh Barton  
Lothian. PB. \$16.99  
Available now



**R** The small seaside town of Willow is quiet most of the year, except in summer when tourists descend and the locals escape on their own holidays. Bea's parents are too busy working to go away on holiday, but she doesn't mind staying home,

because she has her beloved Uncle Byron for company. Since she was small, he's come every summer and turned her lonely home into a place of laughter and adventure. Before he left last year, he promised Bea that next summer, the two of them would sail together to a little star-shaped island off the coast – too small to be on any map, yet known to a select few as 'Somewhere'.

But this year, Byron hasn't come. Bea is alone, with nothing to do but ruminate on her last summer with Byron and the significance of his promise that they would go to Somewhere, together. When she discovers Arabella – another local girl adrift for the summer – knows about Somewhere, and is as keen to get there as Bea is, she starts to suspect that Byron might be able to keep his promise to sail to Somewhere with Bea, after all.

This is a sweet story about friendship, family and grief. Earnest and emotional, with a touch of a Famous Five adventure, it tackles big issues in a thoughtful and engaging way. For ages 8+.

Bella Mackey is the digital content lead

### Hidden Treasure

Jessie Burton  
Bloomsbury. PB. \$17.99  
Available now



**R** *Hidden Treasure* is the latest book by well-known adult fiction author Jessie Burton. The vibrant historical setting and attention to detail found in her adult works such as *The Miniaturist* is also at the core of *Hidden Treasure*. The story follows Bo, a young girl living in London towards the end of the First World War. When she discovers a

jewel-encrusted sphere in the Thames, her friends and family urge her to sell it; however, Bo soon realises there is more to the sphere than its riches.

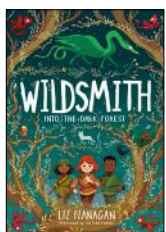
What follows is an adventure of magic and mystery as Bo and her new friend Billy race against time to work out the true nature of the sphere. The story is rounded out by a host of villains, some known, some hidden, who want to use the sphere for their own purposes.

There is a lot in this book for a wily reader to uncover and the way all the pieces come together is immensely satisfying. On top of it all, *Hidden Treasure* explores grief and the ways people handle losing a loved one. It is a raw but immensely heartwarming book. Perfect for fans of Katrina Nannestad and Amelia Mellor aged 10+.

Alicia Guiney is from Readings Kids

### Wildsmith: Into the Dark Forest

Liz Flanagan & Joe Todd-Stanton (illus.)  
Affirm Kids. HB. \$19.99  
Available now



**R** Rowan grew up in the bustling city at the heart of the kingdom of Gallren, but when war threatens, her mother whisks her away to the Dark Forest – to the grandfather Rowan didn't even know she had. But her grandfather isn't the only revelation: living in the Dark Forest, Rowan soon discovers that magical creatures, such as dragons, are as real as horses and



chickens! With poachers lurking in the forest threatening the creatures, Rowan doesn't have much time to wonder at the unexpected magic of the world. She has to work with the other residents to protect the Dark Forest and its creatures.

This is a gentle and immersive fantasy adventure that's equally perfect for kids who love magic and those who love animals. It's just the first instalment of a new series, and I'm already keen to devour more! Rowan is a plucky and resourceful heroine in a rich, whimsical world that will be a delight for readers to discover and return to. With short chapters, a fast-paced story and beautiful illustrations, this is a great read for kids aged 7+.

Bella Mackey is the digital content lead

### The Green Kingdom

Cornelia Funke, Tammi Hartung & Melissa Castrillón (illus.)  
Dorling Kindersley. PB. \$16.99  
Available now



Twelve-year-old Caspia hates big cities, especially one as busy as New York. So when her parents take her to stay in Brooklyn, it's summer-devouring bad luck! But then Caspia discovers a hidden bundle of letters that contain 'green' riddles, with clues leading to a different plant. Caspia sets out to solve the riddles and she discovers that anywhere can feel like home, if you are just brave enough to put down new roots.

### The Paperbark Tree Committee

Karys McEwen  
Text. PB. \$16.99  
Available 1 April



**R** Twelve-year-old Art and his 10-year-old brother Hilary (named after Hilary Mantel) are best friends and have just moved to Melbourne from their small home town in Queensland because their father has writer's block. Hilary has taken this turn of events cheerfully in his stride, as he does almost everything. Art is trying to make the best of things and secretly dancing out his worries to classic hits in his bedroom. Their dad's long-term partner, Sally, knows just how to look after everyone, even though it's been a big change for her, too. The boys' mum is only a phone call away, but she's often a little distracted.

When things quickly become tricky at school for Art, he's torn between wanting to workshop solutions with Hilary and a feeling that he needs to start dealing with things on his own. Sometimes, two heads are better than one – but not always, as local author and school librarian Karys McEwen deftly illustrates.

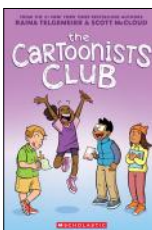
*The Paperbark Tree Committee* is a gorgeous, heartfelt and hilarious tale of navigating change, bullying and growing up, and learning to appreciate loved ones for who they are. For ages 9+.

Elke Power is the editor of *Readings Monthly*

## Graphic Narrative

### The Cartoonists Club: A Graphic Novel

Raina Telgemeier & Scott McCloud  
Scholastic. PB. \$19.99  
Available 1 April



Makayla is bursting with ideas but doesn't know how to make them into a story. Howard loves to draw, but he struggles to come up with ideas. Lynda constantly draws in her sketchbook but keeps focusing on what she feels are her mistakes, and Art simply loves being creative and is excited to try something new. Together they form

The Cartoonists Club, where kids can learn how to create their own storytelling adventures!

### Inked: A Graphic Novel

Karen Wasson & Jake A. Minton (illus.)  
Fighting. PB. \$19.99  
Available 1 April



**R** This exciting new graphic novel by a debut team is the first graphic novel ever to be shortlisted for the Ampersand Prize for an unpublished manuscript. In *Inked*, an opera-singing octopus shows up at a family-owned fish shop in a small town that is somewhere in Australia – but nowhere near the ocean. Sid, a 12-year-old kid, has just been accepted into art school when the octopus shows up at his family's fish shop, but his primary concern is the school fees. The kid and the octopus reluctantly team up, trying to help each other with their unique struggles while enduring various dramas, including unkind classmates and an *Idol* style talent show.

A quick summary of the plot makes this book sound completely absurd, but readers will be surprised and delighted by thoughtful character development, witty dialogue, and Jake A. Minton's warm, polished artwork. *Inked* is a strangely compelling reading experience with a filmic style and energy. An excellent, wildly entertaining read for ages 9+.

Kim Gruschow is manager of Readings St Kilda

## Mother's Day books

### Mums and Mogs

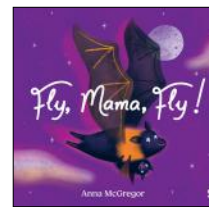
Mick Elliott  
Walker. PB. \$16.99  
Available 3 April



A charming and candid cat-alogue of cats, to celebrate Mums ... and their mogs! *Mums and Mogs* is a joyful picture book featuring lots of different mums with all their different mogs. A joyful celebration of togetherness, and all the fun, chaos, mischief and laughter that cats bring to the family.

### Fly, Mama, Fly

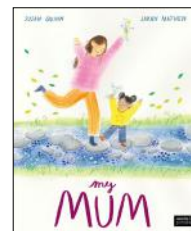
Anna McGregor  
Scribble. BB. \$19.99  
Available now



*Fly, Mama, Fly!* takes young readers on a magical nocturnal journey with a Grey-headed flying fox and her pup. As they glide through the moonlit Australian landscape, this enchanting tale celebrates the unbreakable bond between mother and child while subtly weaving in themes of wildlife conservation.

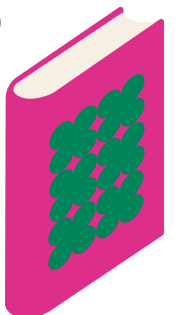
### My Mum

Susan Quinn & Sarah Mathew (illus.)  
Words & Pictures. HB. \$24.99  
Available now



The story follows mother and child from before the child is born, celebrating the bond between mother and child even when

the child is just a dream. With a wonderful inclusive feel, all mother and child relationships are celebrated in this story – whether biological or adoptive mothers. **R**



# Bargains

## Cold Crematorium

József Debreczeni & Paul Olchváry (trans.)

HB. Was \$36.99 **Now \$13.99**

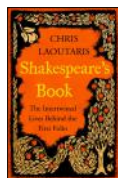


When József Debreczeni arrived in Auschwitz in 1944, he was one of the 'lucky' ones, who spent twelve months of incarceration and slave labour in a series of camps which ended in the 'Cold Crematorium', where prisoners too weak to work were left to die. Debreczeni beat the odds and survived. This compelling eyewitness account is one of the harshest and powerful indictments of Nazism ever written.

## Shakespeare's Book

Chris Laoutaris

HB. Was \$55 **Now \$16.99**



2023 marked the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies, known today as the First Folio. *Shakespeare's Book* charts the manufacture of the First Folio against a turbulent backdrop of political events and international tensions that intersected with the lives of its creators. It uncovers the friendships, bonds, social ties and professional networks that facilitated its production, and more.

## The World According to Joan Didion

Evelyn McDonnell

PB. Was \$32.99 **Now \$11.99**



Evelyn McDonnell, the acclaimed journalist, essayist, critic, feminist, and university professor, interprets Joan Didion's groundbreaking vision for readers today. Inspired by Didion's own words, from her works both published and unpublished, and informed by the people who knew Didion and those whose lives she shaped, *The World According to Joan Didion* is an illustrated journey through her life and a literary companion.

## The Last Days of Roger Federer

Geoff Dyer

HB. Was \$55.99 **Now \$19.99**



In this investigation into 'things coming to an end, artists' last works, time running out', Geoff Dyer sets his own encounter with late middle age against the last days and last achievements of writers, painters, athletes, and musicians who've mattered to him throughout his life. The people he examines include Nietzsche, Bob Dylan, Björn Borg, Beethoven, Jean Rhys, and so many more.

## Gennaro's Verdure

Gennaro Contaldo

HB. Was \$45.00 **Now \$16.99**



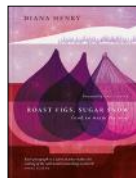
In *Gennaro's Verdure*, Gennaro Contaldo transforms humble vegetables from side dish material into the hero of the plate, using punchy flavours from staple ingredients in his unique and much-loved Italian style. Structured by colour

chapters that group recipes into vegetable families, he champions their potential and versatility, and breaks the common misconception that vegetables lack texture and flavour.

## Roast Figs, Sugar Snow

Diana Henry

HB. Was \$49.99 **Now \$24.99**

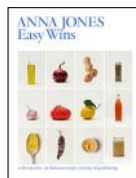


From multi-award-winning author, Diana Henry, comes a new edition of *Roast Figs, Sugar Snow*, an irresistible collection of cold-weather recipes that celebrate the pleasures of autumn and winter. With seven new recipes and a foreword by Nigel Slater, the dishes, including Georgian Cheese Pies and Pumpkin Tarts with Spinach and Gorgonzola, will bring warmth to your heart as well as your home.

## Easy Wins

Anna Jones

HB. Was \$55 **Now \$29.99**



Discover Anna Jones's golden rules for easy wins in the kitchen with super-simple recipes that are bursting with flavour and kind to the planet. Using 12 hero ingredients, there are chapters on lemons, olive oil, mustard, tahini and more. With 125 flavourful recipes including Double Lemon Pilaf with Buttery Almonds, and Miso Rarebit, *Easy Wins* will become your go-to for dishes you will want to cook on repeat.

## Ottolenghi Test Kitchen: Shelf Love

Yotam Ottolenghi & Noor Murad

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



The Ottolenghi Test Kitchen team takes you on a journey through your kitchen cupboards, shelves and fridges creating inspired recipes using humble ingredients such as canned chickpeas or a bag of frozen peas. The dishes pack all the punch and edge we expect from Ottolenghi, but offer more flexibility to make them your own, using what you have at hand, and with less stress and fuss.

## Ottolenghi Test Kitchen: Extra Good Things

Yotam Ottolenghi & Noor Murad

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



Bring an Ottolenghi twist to every mealtime with the new book in the bestselling Ottolenghi Test Kitchen series. Yotam Ottolenghi and his team are back, with flexible, flavour-packed dishes that all lend a little something to the next meal. Think harissa butter on a roasted mushroom, then tossed with steamed veg or stuffed into a baked potato. This is playing it forward, Ottolenghi style.

## Women & Children

Tony Birch

HB. Was \$34.99 **Now \$16.99**



It's 1965 and Joe Cluny is living in a working-class suburb with his mum, Marion, and sister, Ruby. One evening his Auntie Oona appears on the doorstep, distressed and needing somewhere to stay. As his mum and aunty work out what to do,

their pleas for assistance are met with silence and complicity. A novel about the love and courage between two sisters, and a sudden loss of childhood innocence.

## Yellowface

Rebecca F. Kuang

HB. Was \$39.99 **Now \$16.99**

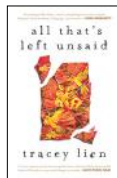


When failed writer June Hayward witnesses her rival Athena Liu die in a freak accident, she sees her opportunity and takes it. So what if it means stealing Athena's final manuscript and 'borrowing' her identity? And so what if the first lie is only the beginning. Finally, June has the fame she always deserved. But someone is about to expose her. What happens next is entirely everyone else's fault.

## All That's Left Unsaid

Tracey Lien

PB. Was \$32.99 **Now \$13.99**

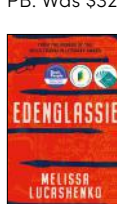


When Ky Tran's brother is brutally murdered inside a restaurant in 1996, it seems impossible that no-one in the crowd saw anything. Yet the police are at a dead end when none of the witnesses will speak. Ky decides to take matters into her own hands and investigate in this complex exploration of racial identity and the intricate bonds between friends and family.

## Edenglassie

Melissa Lucashenko

PB. Was \$32.99 **Now \$16.99**

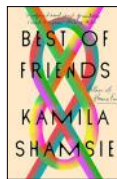


When Mulanyin meets Nita in Edenglassie, their saltwater people still outnumber the British. As colonial unrest peaks, Mulanyin dreams of taking his bride home to Yugambeh Country, but his plans collide with white justice. Two centuries later, activist Winona meets Dr Johnny. Together they care for Granny Eddie, and sparks fly. But how far do the legacies of the past reach into their lives?

## Best of Friends

Kamila Shamsie

HB. Was \$54.95 **Now \$19.99**

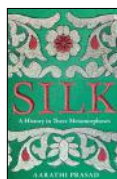


Zahra and Maryam have been best friends since childhood in Karachi, even though they are unlike in nearly every way. One fateful night a moment of adolescent impulse upends their plans for the future. Three decades later, in London, they have grown into powerful women. But when two troubling figures from their past resurface, they must finally confront their bedrock differences and find out whether their friendship can survive.

## Silk

Aarathi Prasad

PB. Was \$37.99 **Now \$14.99**



From the moths of China, Indonesia and India to the spiders of South America and Madagascar, to the silk-producing molluscs of the Mediterranean, *Silk* is a book rich in the passionate connections made by women and men of science to the diversity of the animal world. It is an intoxicating mix of biography, intellectual history and science writing that brings to life the human obsession with silk.

## Terra Ultima

Raoul Deleo & Noah J. Stern

HB. Was \$49.99 **Now \$16.99**



To most of us, the world in which we live seems well-traversed – explored in all directions and meticulously mapped. But something unbelievable has escaped us all, an entire continent named Terra Ultima. This extraordinary book documents this strange new world for the very first time. A visual sensation over a decade in the making, *Terra Ultima* is the life work of explorer Raoul Deleo.

## The Book of English Folk Tales

Sybil Marshall & John Lawrence (illus.)

HB. Was \$69.99 **Now \$19.99**



In *The Book of English Folk Tales*, master storyteller, social historian and folklorist Sybil Marshall has collected the essential English folk tales, vividly retelling stories of giants, dragons, fairies, saints, ghosts, and the Devil for readers of all ages. This edition features wood engraved illustrations by English illustrator John Lawrence, making it the perfect addition to every home and school library.

## The Coming Wave

Mustafa Suleyman with

Mitchael Bhaskar  
PB. Was \$36.99 **Now \$13.99**



As cofounder of the pioneering AI company DeepMind, Mustafa Suleyman has been at the centre of the AI revolution. The coming decade, he argues, will be defined by a wave of powerful, fast-proliferating new technologies, which will help address our global challenges and create vast wealth, but also threaten the grand bargain of the nation state and the foundation of global order. Can we successfully navigate this existential crisis?

## This Is Why You Dream

Rahul Jandial

PB. Was \$36.99 **Now \$13.99**



Dreams are a source of mystery. They have changed the course of individual lives and the world. Yet the source of dreams is not mysterious. They are the product of an extraordinary transformation that occurs in the brain each night when we sleep. Neurosurgeon Rahul Jandial delves into the dreaming brain and shares stories from his own practice to show the astonishing impact that dreams have on our waking life.

## Why Am I Like This?

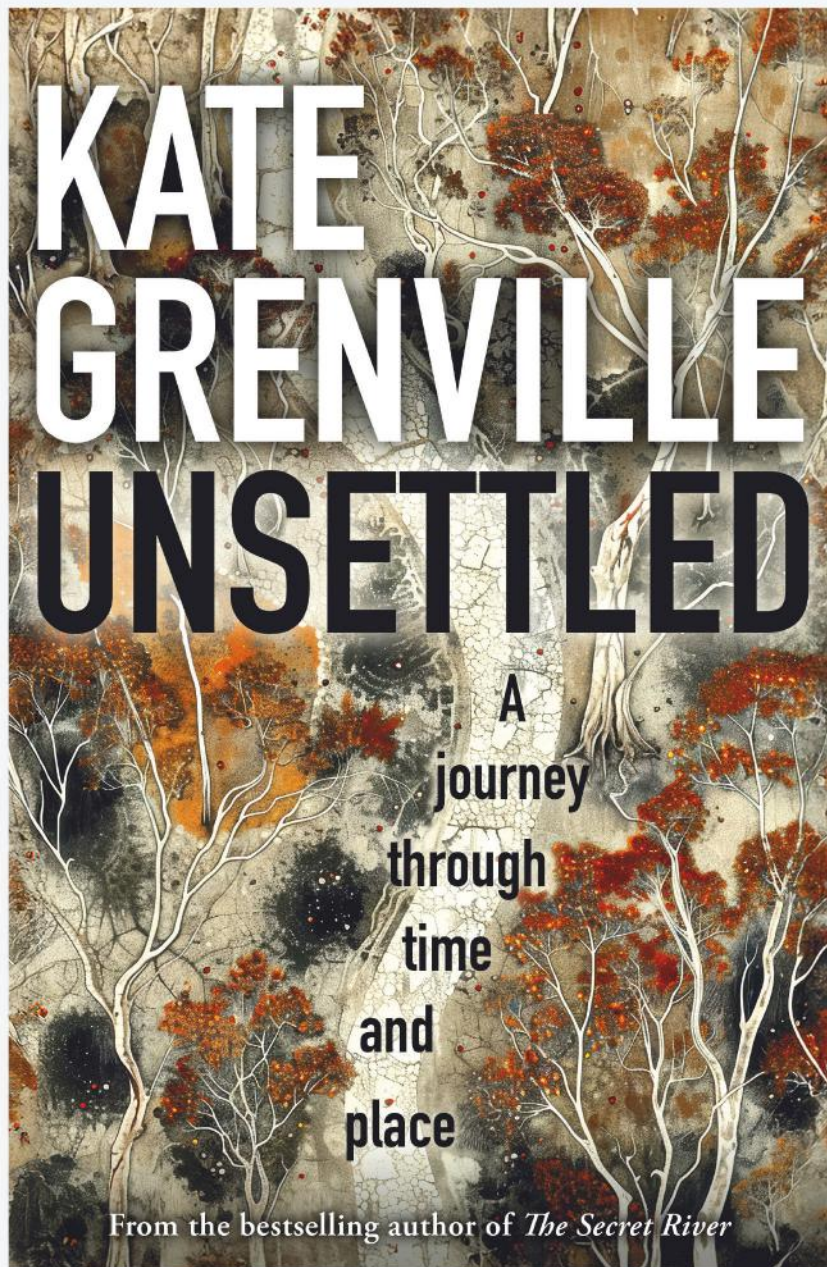
Dr Jen Martin & Holly Jolley (illus.)

HB. Was \$27.99 **Now \$12.99**

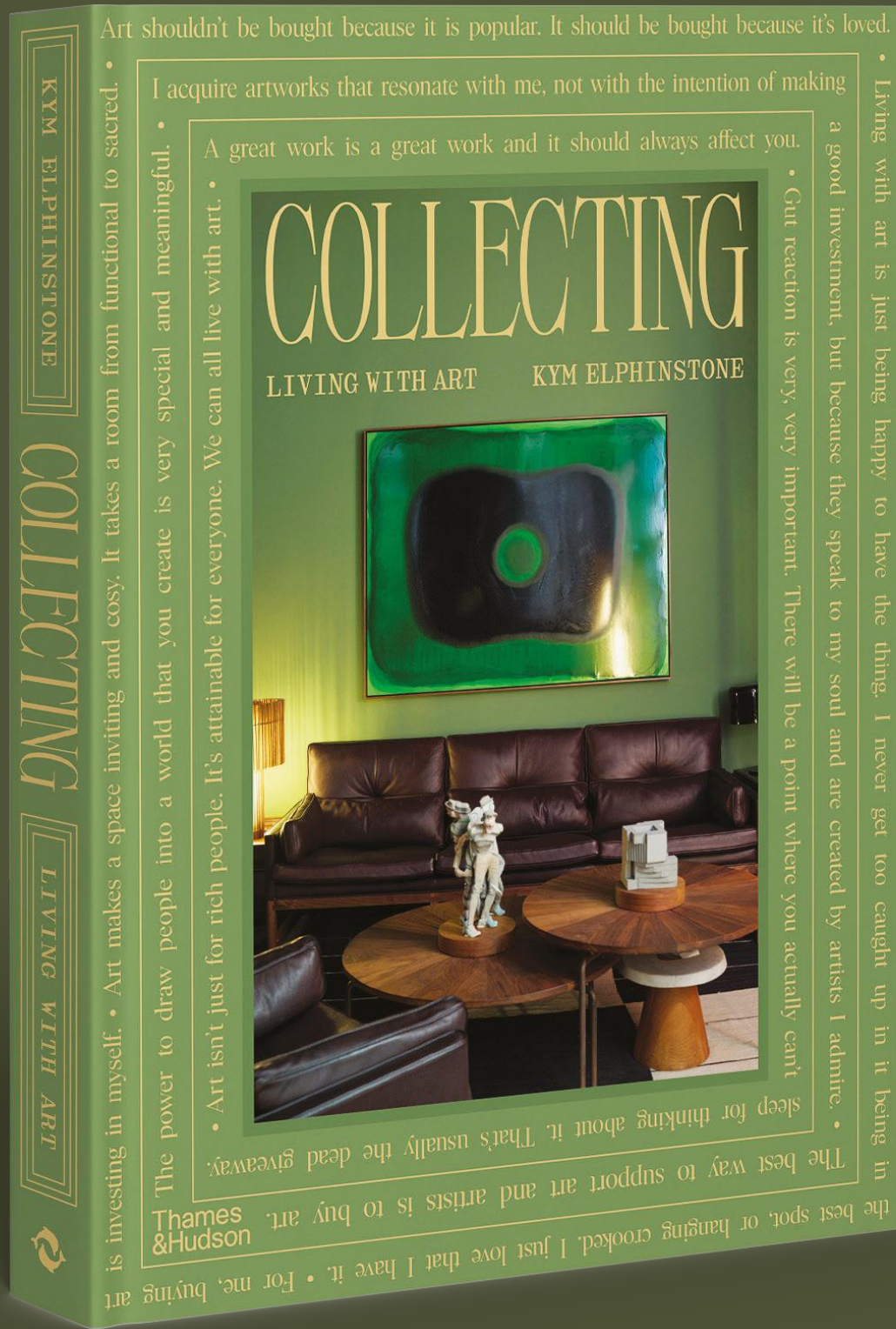


In *Why Am I Like This?*, Dr Jen Martin delves into the science behind our strangest thoughts and habits, from why smells make us homesick to why we stick our tongues out when we're concentrating. Explaining the quirks and oddities of our daily lives in a comprehensive yet accessible way, this book is the perfect gift for anyone who has ever stopped to wonder 'why?'. **R**

What does it mean to be on land  
that was taken from other people?  
Now that we know how the taking  
was done, what do we do with  
that knowledge?



# A visual feast and tribute to the personal journey of bringing art into the home



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