



CHRONICLE BOOKS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chronicle Books Marks its 50th Anniversary in June

SAN FRANCISCO, MARCH 17, 2017: Known by the distinctive spectacles logo as the publishing company that sees things differently, Chronicle Books, one of the world's most respected publishers of illustrated books and gifts, will celebrate its 50th anniversary June 21, 2017.

A proudly independent publisher founded in San Francisco and still based there, far from the book industry's traditional New York hub, Chronicle Books has thrived by publishing exceptional titles that are instantly recognizable for their spirit and creativity. The company publishes more than 300 titles per year, from award-winning children's books and cookbooks, to irresistible stationery, to acclaimed art and design books. Chronicle books include *New York Times* Bestsellers *They All Saw a Cat*; *Darth Vader and Son*; *Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site*, *Plenty*; *Griffin & Sabine*; the *Worst-Case Scenario* series; and *The Beatles Anthology*, as well as books and gifts created in partnership with international brands such as Disney•Pixar, Lucasfilm Ltd., HBO, DC Comics, *Star Trek*[™], Pantone, Marimekko, and more.

Chronicle Books publisher Christine Carswell said "Chronicle Books has been in the publishing vanguard for decades because of what we make and how we sell. What makes Chronicle unique in the publishing world is the way we can look at an author's words, or a photographer or illustrator's art, and think about how we might render them in a way that no other publisher would think of—a way that can illuminate the work and bring it to more people because of how differently we see retail."

50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Chronicle Books will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a variety of special events, including an anniversary party at Chronicle's office in June, and special limited edition anniversary items including tote bags, notepads, and eyeglass cleaning cloths (riffing on Chronicle's well-known spectacles logo). Humphry Slocombe will create a Chronicle Books–inspired ice cream flavor that will be sold in its stores, and Ritual Coffee will launch a Chronicle Books–inspired espresso blend to be sold in its stores.

Chronicle Books: The First 50 Years, a special book created to celebrate the anniversary, will be distributed to select fans and friends. This hardcover, full-color book tells the complete history of the

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press and features hundreds of photos, reminiscences from current and former Chronicle Books staff, images of rare treasures, and sketches from the archives.

The San Francisco Center for the Book will host an exhibit of 50 Chronicle books (one for each of the 50 years), plus gift products and children's books. The exhibit will open with a reception June 23rd and will stay up through September. *Chronicle Books: The First 50 Years* will be available for a \$20 donation to the San Francisco Center for the Book

On June 29th, Chronicle employees and authors will take part in "Chronicle Books Read Aloud Day" at all 28 San Francisco Public Library branches.

To express its gratitude for the incredible support that Chronicle Books has received from fans throughout its history, the company will inaugurate a "bicycle bookmobile" to bring the spirit of Chronicle Books to people all over the Bay Area.

HISTORY OF CHRONICLE BOOKS

Chronicle Books was founded in 1967 in San Francisco during the Summer of Love. Originally intended to be the book publishing division of the *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper, Chronicle Books spent the first decade of its life publishing collections by *Chronicle* columnists and celebrations of the history and culture of San Francisco. In 1980, Chronicle Books began to explore new topics and inaugurated its cookbook line with *Sushi*, a paperback cookbook with vibrant, full-bleed food photography throughout. At a time when many cookbooks didn't have any photographs, and those that did packed them into a single middle signature, this was something entirely new. Taking inspiration from the emerging Bay Area food culture, Chronicle Books quickly became a cookbook innovator with a raft of groundbreaking titles. Thirty-seven years later cookbooks remain one of Chronicle Books' signature categories with numerous bestsellers that include *Plenty*, *Gjelina*, *Tartine*, and *Small Victories*.

In 1987, Chronicle Books launched its children's book line, doubling the size of its editorial staff. Chronicle Books is now recognized as a leader in children's books and publishes hundreds of children's titles, including such award winners as *They All Saw a Cat* (Caldecott Honor Book), *Flora and the Flamingo* (Caldecott Honor Book), *Josephine* (Coretta Scott King and Horn Book Honor Book), *Lowriders to the Center of the Earth* (Pura Belpré Gold Award), *Over the Ocean* (Mildred Batchelder Honor Award), *Ganesha's Sweet Tooth* (Ezra Jack Keats New Illustrator Honor), *Flashlight* (BolognaRagazzi Award for Fiction), *Over and Under the Snow* (SCBWI Golden Kit), and *Big Bear Little Chair* (*New York Times* Best Illustrated Children's Book), as well as international bestsellers *Goodnight*, *Goodnight Construction Site*, *Press Here*, and the Ivy & Bean series.

Chronicle Books firmly established itself at the forefront of innovative publishing in 1991 with the release of Nick Bantock's instant classic *Griffin & Sabine*. An epistolary love story told in words and illustrations, *Griffin & Sabine* is part book, part sensual object. It includes envelopes with letters that readers can take out to read, as well as postcards, stamps, wax seals, and more. As Bantock says, "*Griffin & Sabine* is a bit like a cross between sex and Christmas. It's voyeurism with permission." Only Chronicle Books could publish *Griffin & Sabine*, a book whose unusual and surprising physical form is as much a

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part of the reading experience as the plot or the characters. *Griffin & Sabine* became Chronicle Books' first *New York Times* Bestseller, and twenty-six years later, the trilogy remains a reader and bookseller favorite, with ten foreign language editions and nearly three million copies sold.

Two years after *Griffin & Sabine*, Chronicle Books launched its gift division becoming a market leader in beautifully designed calendars, notecards, stationery, and journals. Gift products gave Chronicle Books a new way to offer exceptional design to customers and allowed the editorial staff to find unique, powerful ways to present visual artists' work. Today, one-third of all Chronicle Books titles are gift formats. The list is carefully curated to make a strong visual and tactile impact. "Surprise and delight are key words," says Christina Amini, the publishing director who oversees format publishing today. "It's all in the quality of the execution."

In 1999, Chronicle Books was finally able to permanently secure its future as an independent company when then editor-in-chief Nion McEvoy purchased Chronicle Books from the media business that owned it. "How many publishing companies are owned by a person who has an office in the building, on the same floor as editorial, who really is an editor at heart?" says Victoria Rock, founding publisher and current editor-at-large of Chronicle Books' children's books division. "That is a blessing."

Now in 2017, Chronicle Books publishes more than 300 new titles per year and has offices in San Francisco, New York, and the U.K. (in a joint venture with Abrams) and retail stores in San Francisco and Japan. Over its first 50 years, Chronicle Books has published more than 7000 books and gift products with combined sales of more than 250 million units in 96 countries. Chronicle Books' all-time bestseller is *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook* with nearly three million copies sold, followed closely by *Mama, Do You Love Me?* and *The Beatles Anthology*. Chronicle Books has had 35 *New York Times* Bestsellers in its history.

GIVING BACK

Chronicle Books is known for giving back to the community. Each year employees volunteer at St. Anthony's Foundation, which helps San Franciscans in need, and Chronicle Books has held bake sales to benefit victims of natural disasters in the U.S., Japan, Haiti, the Philippines, Nepal, and Ecuador. For many years after Hurricane Katrina, Chronicle Books sent a group of employees to New Orleans to assist Habitat for Humanity rebuild the area. Through its Give Books campaign, Chronicle donates tens of thousands of children's books each year in partnership with First Book, which puts books in the hands of children who need them most.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Chronicle Books heads into its sixth decade with a strong commitment to the company's mission to cultivate and distribute exceptional publishing. Chronicle Books Publisher Christine Carswell said, "Our publishing has the power to open people's minds to new perspectives, to make them think as well as see differently, to spark new passions and illuminate old ones, to make them laugh. And that's a wonderful thing—a thing that needs to be shared."

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As Nion McEvoy, Chairman and CEO of The McEvoy Group noted, “Chronicle Books has thrived for 50 years by creating titles that bring pleasure to people, by continually expanding our reach, and by bringing more people to the party. We expect to be doing that for a very long time to come.”

About Chronicle Books: One of the most admired and respected publishing companies in the U.S., Chronicle Books was founded in 1967 and over the years has developed a reputation for award-winning, innovative books. Recognized as one of the 50 best small companies to work for in the U.S. (and the only independent publisher to receive this award), the company continues to challenge conventional publishing wisdom, setting trends in both subject and format, maintaining a list that includes much admired illustrated books and gift products in design, art, architecture, photography, food, lifestyle, pop culture, and acclaimed children’s titles. Chronicle Books’ objective is to create and distribute exceptional publishing that’s instantly recognizable for its spirit, creativity, and value. For more information about Chronicle Books, visit www.chroniclebooks.com.

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