Dorothy Gallagher’s husband, Ben Sonnenberg, the author of *Lost Property: Memoirs and Confessions of a Bad Boy*, died more than a decade ago. At the time of his death, he had suffered from multiple sclerosis for many years and was almost completely paralyzed, but his wonderful, playful mind remained quite undimmed. In the ten sections of *Stories I Forgot to Tell You*, Gallagher moves freely and intuitively between the present and the past to evoke the life they shared together and her life after his death, alone and yet at the same time never without thoughts of him, in a present that is haunted but also comforted by the recollection of their common past. She talks—the whole book is written conversationally, confidingly, unpretentiously—about small things, such as moving into a new apartment and setting it up, growing tomatoes on a new deck, and as she does she recalls her missing husband’s elegant clothes and English affectations, what she knew about him and didn’t know, the devastating toll of his disease and the ways the two of them found to deal with it. She talks about their two dogs and their cat, Bones, and the role that a photograph she never took had in bringing her together with her husband. Her mother, eventually succumbing to dementia, is also here, along with friends, an old typewriter, episodes from a writing life, and her husband’s last days. The stories Gallagher has to tell, as quirky as they are profound, could not be more ordinary, and yet her glancing, wry approach to memory and life give them an extraordinary resonance that makes the reader feel both the logic and the mystery of a couple’s common existence. Her prose is perfectly pitched and her eye for detail unerring. This slim book about irremediable loss and unending love distills the essence of a lifetime.

Dorothy Gallagher’s works include a memoir, *Life Stories; Hannah’s Daughters*, an account of a six-generation matrilineal family; *All the Right Enemies*, a biography of the Italian American anarchist Carlo Tresca; and, most recently, *Lillian Hellman: An Imperious Life*. She lives in New York.
“Written with beauty and candour but without anger, Self-Portrait will yet arouse indignation in its readers, for its delicate exposure of what occurs in the pursuit and misuse of artistic status.” —Rachel Cusk

One of Britain’s most important contemporary painters, Celia Paul has written a reflective, intimate memoir of her life as an artist. Drawn from early journal entries as well as memory, Self-Portrait tells the artist’s story, in her own words, of her childhood in India and her days in London as an art student at the Slade School of Fine Art; of her intense decades-long relationship with the older esteemed painter Lucian Freud and the birth of their son; of the challenges of motherhood, the unresolved conflict between caring for a child and remaining committed to art; of the “invisible skeins between people,” the profound familial connections Paul communicates through her paintings of her mother and sisters; and, finally, of the mystical presence in her own solitary vision of the world around her. With more than seventy illustrations, Self-Portrait is a powerful, liberating evocation of a life and of a lifelong dedication to art.

Celia Paul was born in 1959 and studied at the Slade School of Fine Art. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is in the collections of the British Museum, the UK National Portrait Gallery, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her major solo exhibitions include Celia Paul, curated by Hilton Als, at both the Yale Center for British Art and the Huntington Art Gallery, Los Angeles; and Desdemona for Celia by Hilton at Gallery Met. Her work was included in the exhibition All Too Human at Tate Britain. She lives and works in London.

In Suppose a Sentence, Brian Dillon, whom John Banville has called “a literary flâneur in the tradition of Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin,” has written a sequel of sorts to Essayism, his roaming love letter to literature. In this new book Dillon turns his attention to the oblique and complex pleasures of the sentence. A series of essays each prompted by a single sentence—from Shakespeare to Janet Malcolm, John Ruskin to Joan Didion—the book explores style, voice, and language, along with the subjectivity of reading. Both an exercise in practical criticism and a set of experiments or challenges, Suppose a Sentence is a polemical and personal reflection on the art of the sentence in literature. Whether the sentence in question is a rigorous expression of a state of vulnerability, extremity, even madness, or a carefully calibrated arrangement, Dillon examines not only how it works and why but also, in the course of the book, what the sentence once was, what it is today, and what it might become tomorrow.

“Amit Chaudhuri excels in writing about music and its pleasure.” —The Guardian

Finding the Raga is more than a book that tries to make sense of the raga, of Indian classical music, and of how Indian music challenges Western notions of what music might be. It is a work of self-inquiry, as might be expected from Amit Chaudhuri, a musician who is also a novelist; a novelist who is also a critic and essayist; a trained and recorded performer in the Indian classical vocal tradition who was also, once, a guitarist and songwriter in the American folk music style and is now a composer and recorded performer in experimental music. Each one of these undertakings and selves signifies turns at different points in life, and each turn and change of direction brings a fresh perspective on music, writing, and what it means to take on and do these things. No category—Indian, Western—is a given in this book. Partly a record of one of the most important turns in the author’s life, toward North Indian music, and of its long aftermath, Finding the Raga is also part autobiography set in 1970s Bombay, part essay, and part detailed analysis of how we might grasp the conceptual underpinnings as well as the experience of music. It explores the different ways in which music relates to the world—whether it’s through representation or evocation, as in Western music, or through the raga being sung at different times of day and in different seasons, as in Indian music—and also tries to understand what the act of listening involves for individuals and cultures.

Amit Chaudhuri is a novelist, essayist, poet, and musician. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, he lives in Calcutta and the United Kingdom, where he is Professor of Contemporary Literature at the University of East Anglia. His most recent novel, Friend of My Youth, was published by NYRB in 2019.

Peter Brooks’s Balzac’s Lives is a biography like no other, a vivid and searching portrait of the great novelist that is based on a close examination of the extraordinary characters that throng his work. More than anyone, Balzac invented the nineteenth-century novel, with its interwoven plots and diverse and overlapping realities—political, economic, domestic, psychological. Indeed, Oscar Wilde went so far as to say that Balzac invented the nineteenth century! It was, above all, the wonderful, unforgettable, extravagant characters he dreamed up and made flesh—entrepreneurs, bankers, inventors, industrialists, poets, artists, bohemians of both sexes, journalists, aristocrats, politicians, prostitutes—that allowed Balzac to bring to life the dynamic forces of the new era that ushered in our own. Brooks singles out the capitalist Gobseck, the aspiring writer Lucien de Rubempré, the ambitious politician Rastignac, and the gay criminal mastermind Collin, among others, to disclose the secret workings of a great writer’s inner world.

Peter Brooks is the author of several books, including The Melodramatic Imagination, Reading for the Plot, Psychoanalysis and Storytelling, Troubling Confessions, Realist Vision, Henry James Goes to Paris, and Flaubert in the Ruins of Paris; as well as two novels, World Elsewhere and The Emperor’s Body; and of essays and book reviews. He edited Balzac’s The Human Comedy: Selected Stories and wrote the introduction to Vivant Denon’s No Tomorrow, both for NYRB. He is the Sterling Professor of Comparative Literature Emeritus at Yale, and also taught recently at Princeton. He divides his time between Alexandria, Virginia, and New Haven, Connecticut.
David Bromwich is one of the most well-informed, cogent, and morally uncompromising political writers on the left today. He is also one of our finest intellectual historians and literary critics and the author of a magisterial intellectual biography of Edmund Burke.

In *Writing Politics*, Bromwich presents twenty-seven essays by different writers from the beginning of the modern political world in the seventeenth century until recent times, essays that grapple with issues that continue to shape history—revolution and war, racism, women’s rights, the status of the worker, the nature of citizenship, imperialism, violence and nonviolence, among them—essays that have also been chosen as superlative examples of the power of written English to reshape our thoughts and the world. Swift, Burke, Thoreau, Lincoln, George Eliot, Harriet Taylor, Du Bois, Gandhi, Orwell, King, and Arendt are here, along with others, together with a wide-ranging introduction in which Bromwich considers the character and significance of political argument and the true power of eloquence.

David Bromwich is the Sterling Professor of English at Yale University. He is the author of several books, most recently, *Moral Imagination: Essays and American Breakdown: The Trump Years and How They Befell Us*. He lives in New Haven, Connecticut.

“Krzhizhanovsky is often compared to Borges, Swift, Poe, Gogol, Kafka, and Beckett, yet his fiction relies on its own special mixture of heresy and logic.”
—Natasha Randall, *Bookforum*

When Comrade Punt does not wake up one Moscow morning—he has died—his pants dash off to work without him. The ambitious pants soon have their own office and secretary. So begins the first of eighteen superb examples of Sigizmund Krzhizhanovsky’s philosophical and phantasmagorical stories. Where the stories included in two earlier NYRB collections (*Memories of the Future* and *Autobiography of a Corpse*) are denser and darker, the creations in *Unwitting Street* are on the lighter side: an ancient goblet brimful of self-replenishing wine drives its owner into the drink; a hypnotist’s attempt to turn a fly into an elephant backfires; a philosopher’s free-floating thought struggles against being “enlettered” in type and entombed in a book; the soul of a politician turned chess master winds up in one of his pawns; an unsentimental parrot journeys from prewar Austria to Soviet Russia.

Sigizmund Krzhizhanovsky (1887–1950) studied law and classical philology at Kiev University. In his philosophical and satirical stories with fantastical plots, he ignored official injunctions to portray the new Soviet state in a positive light, and three separate efforts to print different collections were quashed by the censors, a fourth by World War II.

Valentino and Sagittarius are two of Natalia Ginzburg’s most celebrated works: tales of love, hope, and delusion that are full of her characteristic mordant humor, keen psychological insight, and unflinching moral realism.

Valentino is the spoiled child of doting parents, who have no doubt that their handsome young son will prove to be a man of consequence. Nothing that Valentino does—his nights out on the town, his failed or incomplete classes—suggests there is any ground for that confidence, and Valentino’s sisters view their parents and brother with a mixture of bitterness, stoicism, and bemusement. Everything becomes that much more confused when, out of the blue, Valentino finds an enterprising, wealthy, and strikingly ugly wife, who undertakes to support not just him but the whole family.

Sagittarius is another story of misplaced confidence, recounted by a wary daughter, whose mother, a grass widow with time on her hands, moves to the suburbs, eager to find new friends. Brassy, bossy, and perpetually dissatisfied, especially when it comes to her children, she strikes up a friendship with the mysterious Scilla, and soon the two women are planning to open an art gallery. It turns out, however, that knowing better than everyone can hide a truly desperate naiveté.

Natalia Ginzburg (1916–1991) was the author of several novels, short stories, and essays, and plays, many of which have been translated into English. NYRB Classics published a new translation of her novel Family Lexicon in 2017.

Among Avril Bardoni’s translations are works by Riccardo Orizio and Luciano De Crescenzo.

Cynthia Zarin is the author of five books of poetry, as well five books for children and a collection of essays. She teaches at Yale and lives in New York City.
“Valued by many serious readers as the secret masterpiece of our time.”
—Michael Dirda, *The Washington Post*

*The Recognitions* is a sweeping depiction of a world in which everything that anyone recognizes as beautiful or true or good emerges as anything but: our world. The book is a masquerade, moving from New England to New York to Madrid, from the art world to the underworld, but it centers on the story of Wyatt Gwyon, the son of a New England pastor, who forsakes religion to devote himself to painting, only to despair of his inspiration. In expiation, he will paint nothing but flawless copies of revered old masters—copies, however, that find their way into the hands of a sinister financial wizard by the name of Recktall Brown, who sells them as the real thing. Gwyon’s story is only one of many that fill the pages of a novel that is as monstrously populated as the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch. Throughout, William Gaddis’s characters preen and scheme and party and toil, pursuing salvation through the debasement of desire.

Dismissed uncomprehendingly by the critics on publication in 1955 and ignored by the literary world for decades after, *The Recognitions* is now recognized as one of the great American novels.

Tom McCarthy is the author of four novels and several works of criticism, including a collection of essays, *Typewriters, Bombs, Jellyfish*, which was published in 2017 by NYRB. He lives in London.


“J R in fact is a realistic novel—so unforgivingly real that we may fail to recognize it as such.” —Don DeLillo

At the center of *J R* is J R Vansant, a very average sixth grader from Long Island with torn sneakers, a runny nose, and a juvenile fascination with junk-mail get-rich-quick offers. Responding to one, he sees a small return; soon, he is running a massive Ponzi scheme out of a phone booth in the school hallway. Everyone from the school staff to the municipal government to the squabbling heirs of a player-piano company to the titans of Wall Street and the politicians in Washington will be caught up in endlessly ballooning bubble of the J R Company.

First published in 1975, *J R* is an appallingly funny and all-too-prophetic depiction of America’s romance with finance. It is also a book about suburban development and urban decay, divorce proceedings and disputed wills, the crumbling facade of Western civilization and the impossible demands of love and art, with characters ranging from the earnest young composer Edward Bast, to the berserk publicist Davidoff. Told almost entirely through dialogue, William Gaddis’s novel is both a literary tour de force and an unsurpassed reckoning with the way we live now.


In 1898, China experienced one hundred days of utopia after a cabal of reformist intellectuals persuaded the young emperor to enact sweeping changes intended to modernize the country. Their movement ended in blood and the crowning of two more dictators, but not before it whetted an appetite for revolution—an appetite that would eventually consume millions of lives.

One such life belongs to Xiumi, the young daughter of a wealthy landowner and former government official who goes insane over a painting, then mysteriously disappears. Days later, Xiumi’s mother welcomes to the estate a young man who carries a grand but brutal vision in his heart and a gold cicada in his pocket. When his plans collapse, Xiumi inherits his vision, just as she herself begins fighting the Confucian social mores that view women as property. On her wedding day, she becomes a pawn in a series of violent transactions carried out by men who think they are building paradise; as each one fails, she attempts to repay them in kind by spearheading a movement of her own.

Ge Fei’s prizewinning novel intertwines myths of earthly perfection with a historical tale of revolution and hypocrisy, in which human agency must either be bartered for or be taken by force.

Ge Fei is the pen name of Liu Yong. One of China’s most famous living novelists, he spearheaded the avant-garde literary movement before turning to historical fiction and macabre realism. He is most famous for his South of the Yangtze trilogy, which includes Peach Blossom Paradise, and for which he won the 2015 Mao Dun Literature Prize.

Canaan Morse is a translator and poet. His translation of Ge Fei’s The Invisibility Cloak won the 2014 Susan Sontag Prize for Translation. He is currently pursuing a PhD in ancient Chinese performance literature at Harvard University.
Interned with thousands of Polish army officers and a handful of civilians in the Soviet prisoner-of-war camp at Starobielsk in September 1939, the artist Józef Czapski was one of a very small number to survive the massacre carried out in the forest of Katyn in April 1940. In prose written while the war still raged, Czapski portrays these doomed men, some with the detail of a finished portrait and others in vivid sketches imbued with a rare combination of intimacy and respect, registering their fierce striving to remain fully engaged in humane pursuits under hopeless circumstances. This memoir is complemented by essays on art, history, and literature that show Czapski’s lifelong attachment to the Russian culture that educated him, in all its contradictory manifestations, from the poet Aleksandr Blok’s fascinated response to revolution to the lonely struggle of the painter Chaim Soutine. They include a wartime sequence of short essays on painting written on a train when Czapski was traveling from Moscow to the Second Polish Army’s strategic base in Central Asia, which are among his most lyrical and insightful reflections on art.

Józef Czapski (1896–1993) was a writer and artist, as well as an officer in the Polish army. NYRB Classics publishes Inhuman Land, his work of reportage about the Katyn Massacre and Last Time, as well as Eric Karpeles’s biography of Czapski, Almost Nothing.

Alissa Valles is the author, most recently, of the poetry collection Hospitium. Her translations include Zbigniew Herbert’s Collected Poems and Collected Prose and Ryszard Krynicki’s Our Life Grows (NYRB Poets). She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.


One of the first things ninety-two-year-old Marian Leatherby overhears when she is given an ornate hearing trumpet is her family plotting to commit her to an institution. Soon she finds herself trapped inside a sinister retirement home where the elderly must inhabit buildings shaped like birthday cakes and igloos, endure twisted religious preaching, and eat in a canteen overlooked by the mysterious portrait of a leering abbess. But when another resident secretly hands Marian a book recounting the life of the abbess, a joyous and brilliantly surreal adventure begins to unfold. Written in the early 1960s, The Hearing Trumpet remains one of the most original and inspirational of all fantastic novels.

Leonora Carrington (1917–2011) was born in England and spent most of her adult life in Mexico City, where she participated in the surrealist movement as an artist, painter, and novelist. NYRB reissued her memoir Down Below in 2017. Both her memoir, Down Below, and the children’s book she wrote and illustrated, The Milk of Dreams, were published by NYRB in 2017.

Olga Tokarczuk is one of Poland’s most celebrated and beloved authors, a winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature and the Man Booker International Prize, as well as her country’s highest literary honor, the Nike. She is the author of eight novels and two short story collections, and has been translated into more than thirty languages.
André Gide is the inventor of modern metafiction and of autofiction, and his short novel *Marshlands* shows him handling both forms with a deft and delightful touch. The protagonist of *Marshlands* is a writer who is writing “Marshlands,” which is about a reclusive character who lives all alone in a stone tower. The narrator, by contrast, is anything but a recluse: He is an indefatigable social butterfly, flitting about the Paris literary world and always talking about, what else, the wonderful book he is writing—*Marshlands*. He tells his friends about the book, and they tell him what they think, which is not exactly flattering, and of course those responses become part of the book in the reader’s hand. *Marshlands* is both a poised satire of literary pretension and a superb literary invention, and Damion Searls’s new translation of this early masterwork by one of the key figures of twentieth-century literature brings out all the sparkle of the original.

André Gide (1869–1951) was a prolific author of novels, short stories, poetry, plays, travel writing, and autobiography. Though he entered the world of letters as a prominent figure in the symbolist movement, Gide later turned toward a more confessional and exploratory form, ruminating on questions of morality, sexuality, religion, and the nature of the self in his work. He won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1947.

Damion Searls is the author of *The Philosophy of Translation*, forthcoming in 2020. He has previously translated some forty books, including, for NYRB Classics, works by Patrick Modiano, Uwe Johnson, Alfred Döblin, Nescio, Max Weber, and Robert Walser. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Guido Morselli’s arresting post-apocalyptic novel, written just before he died by suicide in 1973, depicts a man much like the author himself—lonely, brilliant, difficult—and a world much like our own, mesmerized by money, speed, and machines. The last man travels around searching for signs of life at the US army base—palm trees, convertibles, and missile bays under the roadway—and scouts the well-appointed kitchens of his alpine valley’s grand hotels for provisions, all the while brooding on the limits of human vision: his own, but also that of human-kind. Meanwhile, life itself—the rest of nature—is just beginning to flourish now that human beings are gone. *Dissipatio H.G.* is a precocious portrait of our Anthropocene world, and a philosophical last will and testament from a great Italian outsider.

Guido Morselli (1912–1973) was a novelist and essayist. After serving in the Italian army, he began writing reportage and short stories. He went on to write several works of fiction, including *Past Conditional*, *Divertimento*, and *Roman senza papa* (*Rome Without a Pope*), as well as four books of essays. NYRB Classics published his novel *The Communist* in 2017.

Frederika Randall is a writer, reporter, and translator. Among her translations are Ippolito Nievo’s *Confessions of an Italian*, and, for NYRB Classics, Guido Morselli’s *The Communist*. She has received the PEN/Heim Translation Fund Grant, and, with Sergio Luzzatto, the Cundill Prize. She lives in Rome.
“Germs is written with extraordinary elegance. Wollheim seems incapable of writing a bad sentence…. There is nothing quite like this poignant and mournful memoir. It is remarkable as a kind of sensory autobiography and as that rarest of memoirs, where one has the sense that one is in direct, intimate and occasionally frightening contact with the mind of a child.” —Michael J. Lewis, The Wall Street Journal

Germs is about first things, the seeds from which a life grows, as well as about the illnesses it incurs, the damage it sustains. Written at the end of the life of Richard Wollheim, a major British philosopher of the second half of the twentieth century, this memoir is not the usual story of growing up, but very much about childhood, that early world we all share in which we do not know either the world or ourselves for sure, and in which things—houses, clothes, meals, parents, the past—loom large around us, seeming both inevitable and uncontrollable. Richard Wollheim’s remarkable, moving, and entirely original book recovers this formative moment that makes us who we are before we really are who we are and that haunts us all our lives in lucid and lyrical prose.

Richard Wollheim (1923–2003) was born in London and educated at Balliol College, Oxford. He fought in France and Germany during World War II and taught philosophy at numerous colleges, including the University of California, Berkeley, from 1985 until his death in 2003. He was best known for his philosophical work on art and psychoanalysis, and he served as the president of the British Society of Aesthetics. He wrote and edited more than a dozen books, including On the Emotions, The Mind and Its Depths, On Art and the Mind, and Painting as an Art.

Sheila Heti is the author of eight books of fiction and nonfiction, including the novels Ticknor, Motherhood, and How Should a Person Be? and the story collection, The Middle Stories. She lives in Toronto.

“She can be no doubt that Professor Rodinson’s book is the major contemporary Occidental work on the Prophet, and is essential reading.” —Edward W. Said, author of Orientalism and Out of Place

Maxime Rodinson, both a maverick Marxist and a distinguished professor at the Sorbonne, first published his biography of Muhammad in 1960, and in the last half century the book has been widely read and established as a classic in its field. Rodinson, deeply familiar with the historical record and scholarly research into the Prophet’s life, did not seek to add to it here but to introduce Muhammad, first of all, as “a man of flesh and blood” who led a life of extraordinary drama and shaped history as few others have. Equally, he sought to lay out an understanding of Muhammad’s legacy and Islam as what he called an ideological movement, similar to the universalist religions of Christianity and Buddhism as well as the secular movement of Marxism, but possessing a singular commitment to “the deeply ingrained idea that Islam offers not only a path to salvation but (for many, above all) the ideal of a just society to be realized on earth.”

Rodinson’s book begins by introducing the specific land and the larger world into which Muhammad was born and the development of his prophetic calling. It then follows the steps of his career and the way his leadership gave birth to a religion and a state. A final chapter considers the world as Islam has transformed. The book as a whole offers a vivid and indispensable account of an extraordinary man and his achievement.

Maxime Rodinson (1915–2004) supervised the Muslim section of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Among his other works are The Arabs, Marxism and the Muslim World; Islam and Capitalism; and Israel and the Arabs.
For more than four decades Claire Malroux has forged a unique path in contemporary French poetry, informed by the French tradition, by poets such as Yves Bonnefoy and Mallarmé, and, more unusually, by the Anglophone tradition, especially Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Bishop, and Derek Walcott. A preeminent translator of English poetry into French, Malroux claims as a signal event in her literary life her discovery in 1983 of Dickinson’s poetry, which she describes as “an encounter with the uncanny” and the awakening of a “personal affinity.” Malroux is one of those rare poets whose work is informed by a day-to-day intimacy with a second language in its greatest variations and subtleties. Her poems move between an intense but philosophical and abstract interiority and an acute engagement with the material world. In almost every poem there is a characteristic and unsettling amalgam of past and present that collapses distance and incarnates through metaphor.

This bilingual selection by the award-winning poet and translator Marilyn Hacker presents Malroux’s oeuvre, from her early lyric poems to an excerpt from A Long-Gone Sun—a poem-memoir of life in southern France before and during World War II—to new and uncollected poems from two sequences of elegies written after the death of her life partner, the writer Pierre Sylvain.

Claire Malroux is the author of a dozen collections of poems, including Edge, A Long-Gone Sun, and Birds and Bison, all of which are available in English translations by Marilyn Hacker. She is also a translator of Anglophone poets, notably Henri Cole, Derek Walcott, Wallace Stevens, and, in particular, Emily Dickinson. She lives in Paris.

Marilyn Hacker is the Distinguished Professor Emerita of Comparative Literature, English, and French at the Graduate School of the City University of New York and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She is the author of dozens of books, including Glorious Eccentrics: Modernist Women Painting and Writing, The Surrealist Look, and Surprised in Translation; the editor of The Yale Anthology of Twentieth-Century French Poetry; and the translator of, among many others, André Breton, René Char, Robert Desnos, and Paul Éluard. She lives in New York.

Alice Paalen Rahon was a shapeshifter, a surrealist poet turned painter who was born French and died a naturalized citizen of Mexico. Along with her first husband, the artist Wolfgang Paalen, her circle included Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, Joan Miró, Paul Éluard, Man Ray, and Anaïs Nin. Bicultural, bisexual, and fiercely independent, her romantic life included affairs with Pablo Picasso and the poet Valentine Penrose. This new selection of Rahon’s poems, included both in the original French and in translation by Mary Ann Caws, celebrates the visionary work of a woman who defied easy definition. Her spellbinding poems, inspired by prehistoric art, lost love, and her travels around the globe, weave together dream, fantasy, and madness.

Alice Paalen Rahon (1904–1987), born Alice Marie Yvonne Phillipot, was a surrealist painter and poet. Raised in Paris, she became involved in the city’s surrealist subculture in the 1920s and married the Austrian surrealist painter Wolfgang Paalen in 1931. She and Wolfgang traveled to North and Latin America in the late 1930s, and settled in Mexico in 1940. Rahon wrote three books of poetry and contributed to the surrealist journal Dyn. After divorcing and remarrying, Rahon remained in Mexico City, adopting elements of its landscape, culture, and symbolism in her visual work. She stopped painting in the late 1970s and lived much of her later years in seclusion.

Mary Ann Caws is the Distinguished Professor Emerita of Comparative Literature, English, and French at the Graduate School of the City University of New York and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She is the author of dozens of books, including Glorious Eccentrics: Modernist Women Painting and Writing, The Surrealist Look, and Surprised in Translation; the editor of The Yale Anthology of Twentieth-Century French Poetry; and the translator of, among many others, André Breton, René Char, Robert Desnos, and Paul Éluard. She lives in New York.

Alice Paalen Rahon
Translated from the French by Mary Ann Caws

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In 1968, the British artist and writer Martin Vaughn-James emigrated to Canada. Over the next eight years, he proceeded to produce some of the most mesmerizing and inventive works in comics, light-years ahead of his contemporaries. Among them were *The Projector and Elephant*, linked graphic novels that guide the reader (and a bespectacled Everyman) through landscapes built out of both the everyday and the nightmarish. Jam-packed superhighways, plummeting horses, vast urban wastelands, colossal businessmen, demented cartoon animals, and interstellar oranges are just a small part of Vaughn-James’s prophetic vision of society’s turn away from the natural world to the artificial.

Together for the first time in a single volume, *The Projector and Elephant* stands as a reminder that we have yet to catch up to Vaughn-James.

**Martin Vaughn-James** (1943–2009) was a British painter and cartoonist best known for his captivating, stylistically experimental graphic novels—*Elephant*, *The Projector*, *The Park*, and *The Cage*—all published in the 1970s, when Vaughn-James lived in Canada. He contributed to numerous magazines during his lifetime and wrote two prose novels, *Night Train* and *The Tomb of Zwaab*.

**Seth** is the cartoonist behind the comic book series *Palookaville*. His most recent graphic novel, *Clyde Fans*, was selected as one of the best books of 2019 by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Globe and Mail*. Seth lives in Guelph, Ontario, with his wife, Tania, and their two cats in an old house he has named “Inkwell’s End.”

**Jeet Heer** is a comics critic and the national affairs correspondent for *The Nation*. He is the author of *In Love with Art: Françoise Mouly’s Adventures in Comics with Art Spiegelman* and *Sweet Lechery: Reviews, Essays & Profiles*. He divides his time between Toronto and Regina, Canada.

In 1968, the British artist and writer Martin Vaughn-James emigrated to Canada. Over the next eight years, he proceeded to produce some of the most mesmerizing and inventive works in comics, light-years ahead of his contemporaries. Among them were *The Projector and Elephant*, linked graphic novels that guide the reader (and a bespectacled Everyman) through landscapes built out of both the everyday and the nightmarish. Jam-packed superhighways, plummeting horses, vast urban wastelands, colossal businessmen, demented cartoon animals, and interstellar oranges are just a small part of Vaughn-James’s prophetic vision of society’s turn away from the natural world to the artificial.

Together for the first time in a single volume, *The Projector and Elephant* stands as a reminder that we have yet to catch up to Vaughn-James.

**Martin Vaughn-James** (1943–2009) was a British painter and cartoonist best known for his captivating, stylistically experimental graphic novels—*Elephant*, *The Projector*, *The Park*, and *The Cage*—all published in the 1970s, when Vaughn-James lived in Canada. He contributed to numerous magazines during his lifetime and wrote two prose novels, *Night Train* and *The Tomb of Zwaab*. Seth is the cartoonist behind the comic book series *Palookaville*. His most recent graphic novel, *Clyde Fans*, was selected as one of the best books of 2019 by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Globe and Mail*. Seth lives in Guelph, Ontario, with his wife, Tania, and their two cats in an old house he has named “Inkwell’s End.”

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As a boy growing up near Liverpool in the 1950s, Andrew Lees would visit the docks with his father to watch the ships from Brazil unload their exotic cargo of coffee, cotton bales, molasses, and cocoa. One day, his father gave him a dog-eared book called *Exploration Fawcett*. The book told the true story of Lieutenant Colonel Percy Fawcett, a British explorer who in 1925 had gone in search of a lost city in the Amazon and never returned. The riveting story of Fawcett’s encounters with deadly animals and hostile tribes, his mission to discover an Atlantean civilization, and the many who lost their own lives when they went in search of him inspired the young Lees to believe that there were still earthly places where one could “fall off the edge.”

Years later, after becoming a successful neurologist, Lees set off in search of the mysterious figure of Fawcett. What he found exceeded his wildest imaginings. With access to the cache of “Secret Papers,” Lees discovered that Fawcett’s quest was far stranger than searching for a lost city. There was a “greater mission,” one that involved the occult and a belief in a community of evolved beings living in a hidden parallel plane in the Mato Grosso.

Lees traveled to Manaus in Fawcett’s footsteps. After a time-bending psychedelic experience in the forest, he understood that his yearning for the imaginary Brazil of his boyhood, like Fawcett’s search for an earthly paradise, was a nostalgia for what never was. Part travelogue, part memoir, Lees paints a portrait of an elusive Brazil, and of a flawed explorer whose doomed mission ruined lives.

A. J. Lees is a professor of neurology at the National Hospital, London. He is the author of several books, including *Mentored by a Madman: The William Burroughs Experiment*, published by Notting Hill Editions.

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A.A. Milne, best known as the author of the classic Winnie-the-Pooh stories, was a successful writer long before his children’s stories launched him to overnight fame. Milne himself disliked being defined as a children’s author. At the age of twenty-three, he was appointed the assistant editor of *Punch*. He claimed, “I know no work manual or mental to equal the appalling heart-breaking anguish of fetching an idea from nowhere.” Milne had a talent for regularly turning out a thousand whimsical words on lost hats and umbrellas, tennis, dogs, faulty geysers, dotty maids, women loading film in a camera, the English obsession with rank and titles, cheap cigars, and any amount of life’s other little difficulties.

But there was another, more serious side to Milne. After serving in World War I, where he survived the Somme, Milne was invalided home with trench fever in 1916. His experiences made him a committed pacifist.

This selection of Milne’s articles from 1910 to 1952 are presented here for the first time. The writings demonstrate his trademark wit, varied genius, political views, and nostalgia for a lost era.

A.A. Milne (1882–1956) was one of the most influential English writers of the twentieth century. Though best known for his Winnie-the-Pooh stories, which were written as a tribute to his young son, Milne also wrote several novels, poetry collections, and works of nonfiction, along with dozens of stage plays and screenplays. He was a longtime contributor to the British humor and satire magazine *Punch*.

Frank Cottrell Boyce is a children’s novelist who won the Carnegie Medal for *Millions* and the Guardian Children’s Fiction Prize for *The Unforgotten Coat*. He wrote the three official sequels to *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, and his latest novel is *Runaway Robot*. Cottrell Boyce’s films include *Goodbye Christopher Robin*.
LORETTA MASON POTTS
MARY CHASE
Illustrated by Harold Berson

“If you've ever had an older sister, an “awful, awful, bad, bad, girl—Loretta Mason Potts” Who? What? Wait!... But this is only the first of many surprises that lie in store for Colin, as things get curiouser and curiouser very fast. Loretta (a glum, gangly girl and so very, very rude!) comes home, and before you know it, Colin is secretly following her down a hidden tunnel that leads from a bedroom closet to an astonishing castle, where a charming and beautiful countess keeps court attended by a dapper and ever-obliging general, and in this world everybody loves Loretta (especially when she’s rude), so much so that they’re begging her to stay with them forever. What is the secret behind this mysterious other world and how does it connect to the many secrets in the Mason family? It’ll take a spellbinding, hair-raising adventure, involving not just Colin and Loretta but their mother and the rest of the family, to work that out.

Mary Chase (1907–1981) was born in Denver, Colorado, and lived there all her life. She worked for various Denver newspapers as a journalist, began to write plays, and in 1944 had a huge success with Harvey, which won the Pulitzer Prize and was later made into a movie starring Jimmy Stewart.

Harold Berson (1926–1986) was born in Los Angeles and studied art in Paris. Loretta Mason Potts, originally published in 1958, was the first book he illustrated, but he would go on to draw pictures for more than ninety books, including many that he also wrote.

THE LITTLE BOOKROOM
ELEANOR FARJEON
Illustrated by Edward Ardizzone
Afterword by Rumer Godden

“A selection of treasures from Eleanor Farjeon’s full store of writing for children.… They make a rich combination: gems for storytelling and reading aloud, for children’s own reading, and a few that may be appreciated most fully by adults.”

In The Little Bookroom, Eleanor Farjeon mischievously tilts our workaday world to reveal its wonders and follies. Her selection of her favorite stories describes powerful—and sometimes exceedingly silly—monarchs, and commoners who are every bit their match; musicians and dancers who live for art rather than earthly reward; and a goldfish who wishes to “marry the Moon, surpass the Sun, and possess the World.”

Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965) grew up in England in a house filled with books, and she and her brothers enjoyed reading stories to one another and writing their own. In America, Farjeon’s best-known work may be the hymn “Morning Has Broken,” later recorded by Cat Stevens, but in her native country she is beloved as the author of many children’s books. The Little Bookroom won the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award and the Carnegie Medal, but she turned down another honor—Dame of the British Empire—explaining that she “did not wish to become different from the milkman.” At her death, the Children’s Book Circle established the Eleanor Farjeon Award in her honor.

Edward Ardizzone (1900–1979) illustrated works by Eleanor Farjeon, Dylan Thomas, and Robert Louis Stevenson. He also wrote and illustrated his own books.

Rumer Godden (1907–1998) grew up in India, where her father ran a steamship company. When her husband left her penniless in Calcutta with two daughters to raise, she started to write books to pay off her debts. She wrote more than sixty books for adults and young adults, including An Episode of Sparrows, Mouse House, and The Mousewife, all of which are published in the New York Review Children’s Collection.
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