“An often hilarious, operatically tragic sojourn across American cultural life. What do we expect of our writers, of intellectual history, of fame, of celebrity? All the answers are in the questions. At once charming and damning.”—Chris Kraus

David Shields decided to gather every interview he’s ever given, going back nearly forty years. If it was on the radio or TV or a podcast, he transcribed it. He wasn’t sure what he was looking for, but he knew he wasn’t interested in any of his own answers. The questions interested him—approximately 2,700, which he condensed and collated to form twenty-two chapters focused on such subjects as Process, Childhood, Failure, Capitalism, Suicide, and Comedy. Then, according to Shields, “the real work began: rewriting and editing and remixing the questions and finding a through-line.”

The result is a lacerating self-demolition in which the author—in this case, a late-middle-aged white man—is strangely, thrillingly absent. As Chuck Klosterman says, “The Very Last Interview is David Shields doing what he has done dazzlingly for the past twenty-five years: interrogating his own intellectual experience by changing the meaning of what seems both obviously straightforward and obviously wrong.”

Shields’s new book is a sequel of sorts to his seminal Reality Hunger: A Manifesto, which Literary Hub recently named one of the most important books of the last decade. According to Kenneth Goldsmith, “Just when you think Shields couldn’t rethink and reinvent literature any further, he does it again. The Very Last Interview confirms Shields as the most dangerously important American writer since Burroughs.”


Dearest Gwen, I know this letter to you is an artifice. I know you are dead and that I’m alive and that no usual communication is possible between us but, as my mother used to say, “Time is a strange substance” and who knows really, with our time-bound comprehension of the world, whether there might be some channel by which we can speak to each other, if we only knew how.

Celia Paul’s Letters to Gwen John centers on a series of letters addressed to the Welsh painter Gwen John (1876–1939), who has long been a tutelary spirit for Paul. John spent much of her life in France, making art on her own terms and, like Paul, painting mostly women. John’s reputation was overshadowed during her lifetime by her brother, Augustus John, and her lover Auguste Rodin. Through the epistolary form, Paul draws fruitful comparisons between John’s life and her own: their shared resolve to protect the sources of their creativity, their fierce commitment to painting, and the ways in which their associations with older male artists affected the public’s reception of their work.

Letters to Gwen John is at once an intimate correspondence, an illuminating portrait of two painters (including full-color plates of both artists’ work), and a writer/artist’s daybook, describing Paul’s first exhibitions in America, her search for new forms, her husband’s diagnosis of cancer, and the onset of the global pandemic. Paul, who first revealed her talents as a writer with her memoir, Self-Portrait, enters with courage and resolve into new unguarded territory—the artist at present—and the work required to make art out of the turbulence of life.

Celia Paul’s work has been exhibited internationally and is in the collections of the British Museum, the National Portrait Gallery in London, 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. She lives in London.
“Wonderful—a brave, inventive, touching distillation of memory and imagination, shimmering with images, sounds and scents, conjuring a clash of lives, worlds and words.” —Jenny Uglow

Esmond and Ilia follows Ilia, Marina Warner’s beautiful, penniless young mother, as she leaves southern Italy in 1945 to travel alone to London. Her husband, an English colonel, is still away in the war as she begins to learn how to be Mrs. Esmond Warner, an Englishwoman.

With diamond rings on her fingers and brogues on her feet, Ilia fearlessly enters the world of cricket and riding. But without any prospect of work in a bleak, war-ravaged England, Esmond remembers the glorious ease of Cairo during his periods of leave from the desert campaign. There, he and Ilia start a bookshop, a branch of W.H. Smith’s. But growing resistance to foreign interests, especially British, erupts in the 1952 uprising, and the Cairo fire burns the city clean.

Evocative and imaginative, at once historical and speculative, this memoir powerfully resurrects the fraught union and unrequited hopes of Warner’s parents. Memory intertwines richly with myth, the river Lethe feeling as real as the Nile. Vivid recollections of Cairo swirl with ever-present dreams of a city where Warner’s parents, friends, and associates are still restlessly wandering.

Marina Warner’s studies of religion, mythology, and fairy tales include Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary, From the Beast to the Blonde, and Stranger Magic. She is a professor of English and creative writing at Birkbeck, University of London. In 2015 she received the Holberg Prize and in 2017 she was elected president of the Royal Society of Literature. She has contributed to a number of NYRB Classics, including Robert Kirk’s The Secret Commonwealth and Leonora Carrington’s Down Below. She lives in London.

Peter Brooks is the author of several books, including the nonfiction volumes 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. He published a biography of Honoré de Balzac, Balzac’s Lives, with New York Review Books in 2020, and has contributed to two NYRB Classics, Balzac’s The Human Comedy: Selected Stories and Vivant Denon’s No Tomorrow. He is Sterling Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at Yale.
THREE RINGS
A TALE OF EXILE, NARRATIVE, AND FATE

DANIEL MENDELSOHN

Now in paperback

In a genre-defying book hailed as “exquisite” (The New York Times) and “spectacular” (The Times Literary Supplement), the best-selling memoirist and critic Daniel Mendelsohn explores the mysterious links between the randomness of the lives we lead and the artfulness of the stories we tell. Combining memoir, biography, history, and literary criticism, Three Rings weaves together the stories of three exiled writers who turned to the classics of the past to create masterpieces of their own—works that pondered the nature of narrative itself: Erich Auerbach, the Jewish philologist who fled Hitler’s Germany and wrote his classic study of Western literature, Mimesis, in Istanbul; François Fénelon, the seventeenth-century French archbishop whose ingenious sequel to the Odyssey, The Adventures of Telemachus—a veiled critique of the Sun King and the best-selling book in Europe for a hundred years—resulted in his banishment; and the German novelist W.G. Sebald, self-exiled to England, whose distinctively meandering narratives explore Odyssean themes of displacement, nostalgia, and separation from home.

Interwoven with these tales of exile and artistic crisis is an account of Mendelsohn’s struggle to write two of his own books—a family saga of the Holocaust and a memoir about reading the Odyssey with his elderly father—that are haunted by tales of oppression and wandering. As Three Rings moves to its startling conclusion, a climactic revelation about the way in which the lives of its three heroes were linked across borders, languages, and centuries forces the reader to reconsider the relationship between narrative and history, art and life.

Daniel Mendelsohn is a frequent contributor to The New Yorker and The New York Review of Books, where he is Editor-at-Large. His books include the memoirs An Odyssey: A Father, a Son, and an Epic and The Lost: A Search for Six of Six Million, a translation of the poetry of Constantine Cavafy, and three collections of essays and criticism, most recently Ecstasy and Terror: From the Greeks to Game of Thrones. A professor of humanities at Bard College, he is the director of the Robert B. Silvers Foundation.

LIVING PICTURES
POLINA BARSKOVA
A new translation from the Russian by Catherine Ciepiela
An NYRB Classics Original

Living Pictures refers to the parlor game of tableaux vivants, in which people dress up in costume to bring scenes from history back to life. It’s a game about survival, in a sense, and what it means to be a survivor is the question that Polina Barskova explores in the scintillating literary amalgam of Living Pictures. Barskova, one of the most admired and controversial figures in a new generation of Russian writers, first made her name as a poet; she is also known as a scholar of the catastrophic siege of Leningrad in World War II. In Living Pictures, Barskova writes with caustic humor and wild invention about traumas past and present, historical and autobiographical, exploring how we cope with experiences that defy comprehension. She writes about her relationships with her adoptive father and her birth father; about sex, wanted and unwanted; about the death of a lover; about the death of a lover; about Turner and Picasso; and, in the final piece, she mines the historical record in a chamber drama about two lovers sheltering in the Hermitage Museum during the siege of Leningrad who slowly, operatically, hopelessly, stage their own deaths.

Living Pictures introduces a startlingly daring and original new voice from world literature.

Polina Barskova published her debut when she was only eight years old. She has lived in the United States since 1998. She studied classical philology in St. Petersburg and Slavic studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Barskova currently teaches at Hampshire College in Amherst. Apart from her extensive poetic work—eight volumes of poetry published since 1991—she dedicates her work as a literary scholar and editor to the poets of the siege of Leningrad.

Catherine Ciepiela is a professor of Russian at Amherst College and translator of Russian literature. She is the author of The Same Solitude, a nonfiction work about the epistolary romance between Marina Tsvetaeva and Boris Pasternak, which received the AATSEEL Prize for Best Book of Literary/Cultural Criticism in 2007 and was named an Outstanding Academic Title by Choice.
Diana Athill’s childhood in the Norfolk countryside was idyllic. At the age of fifteen, she fell in love with a young undergraduate. They became engaged and traveled to Oxford. Then everything fell apart in the cruelest possible way.

In this classic modern memoir, Athill dissects the terrible consequences of loss and her struggle to rebuild a personality destroyed by sadness. Yet for all its unhappiness, Instead of a Letter remains a story of hope, written with the frank intelligence and lack of self-pity that have become the hallmarks of her writing.

Diana Athill (1917–2019) helped André Deutsch establish the publishing company that bore his name and worked as an editor for Deutsch for four decades. Her distinguished career as an editor is the subject of her memoir Stet. She is the author of seven further volumes of memoirs—Instead of a Letter; After a Funeral; Yesterday Morning; Make Believe; Somewhere Towards the End; Alive, Alive Oh!; A Florence Diary—and a collection of letters, Instead of a Book. Her only novel, Don’t Look at Me Like That, was first published in 1967. In January 2009, she won the Costa Biography Award for Somewhere Towards the End and was presented with an Order of the British Empire.

“Don’t Look at Me Like That evokes a London of rain; grimy bedsits, plush, hushed restaurants, illicitness and despair...Athill skillfully blends diffidence and pathos to produce a story at once all-too familiar and unique.” —Catherine Taylor


As Meg’s independence grows, Dick suddenly appears in London for work. A connection to her past, Meg and Dick’s friendship flourishes, blurring the lines of loyalty between what is and what was in a way that changes life for these three friends forever.

As sharp and startling now as when it was written, this unflinching and candid book of love and betrayal encapsulates Diana Athill’s gift of storytelling at its finest.
Up until the age of forty, the thirteenth-century Persian sage Rumi was chiefly known as a preacher and a man of serious and sober views. At that point, however, an encounter with the poet Shams of Tabriz left him utterly transformed. Rumi became a poet himself, a poet in single-minded pursuit of ecstatic illumination and liberation whose poetry is meant to induce a similar revelation in his audience, bringing them to a condition of serenity, compassion, and oneness with the divine. Rumi’s poetry is a masterpiece of world literature to which readers in many languages continue to return for inspiration and succor as well as aesthetic delight. This new translation preserves the radical intelligence and the ecstatic drama of poems that are as full of individual character as they are of visionary wisdom.

Marilyn Hacker, one of America’s finest contemporary poets, praises Haleh Liza Gafori’s new translations of Rumi as “the work of someone who is at once an acute and enamored reader of the original Farsi text, a dedicated miner of context and backstory, and, best of all, a marvelous poet in English.”

Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (1207–1273) was a thirteenth-century Sufi mystic born in the Balkh, in present-day Afghanistan. Considered the greatest poet of the Persian language, he also occasionally wrote in Turkish, Greek, and Arabic. His major works include the Masnavi, a six-volume collection of mystical teachings written in rhyming couplets, and the Diwan-e Shams-e Tabrizi, a collection of lyric poetry dedicated to his spiritual mentor. Haleh Liza Gafori is a poet, translator, vocalis, and educator. Her poetry has been published by Columbia University Press, Rattapallax Press, Beyond Borders, and Howl. In addition to the poems of Rumi, Gafori has translated the work of Hafez and contemporary Iranian poets. She has also released music as Haale and as The Mast. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

The late paintings of Philip Guston have had a profound influence on painters today. As time has passed and Guston’s star has risen, it has been forgotten how scandalous and crude these paintings, with their cartoonish imagery and curiously faltering application of paint, were initially deemed to be. The 1970 show at the Marlborough Gallery in which Guston, abandoning the delicate abstract expressionist style for which he was known, revealed his new style was critically savaged. In the aftermath of this drubbing, Guston retreated to his studio in Woodstock, New York—in part to nurse his wounds but, more important, to go on painting exactly as he saw fit.

Ross Feld, a young poet, novelist, and critic, was one of the few reviewers of Guston’s show to write favorably about it. Guston responded with a grateful note and a new friendship was soon born. Feld became an inveterate visitor to the painter’s and an inspiration to his work. Guston in Time, written not long before Feld’s early death from cancer, is a portrait of Guston the man; of his wife, Musa, a major figure not only in his life but in his work; and a reckoning with his supremely individual achievement as an artist. Feld’s slim and resonant book is a work of art in its own right.

A retrospective of Guston’s work, Philip Guston Now, will be on view at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, from May 1 to September 11, 2022; at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, from October 23, 2022, to January 15, 2023; at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., from February 26 to August 27, 2023; and at the Tate Modern, London, from October 3, 2023 to February 4, 2024.

“Before Joan Didion, there was Eileen Chang. A slender, dramatic woman with a taste for livid details and feverish colors, Chang combined Didion’s glamor and sensibility with the terrific wit of Evelyn Waugh. She could, with a single phrase, take you hostage.” —Jamie Fisher, *The Millions*

This new collection of work by the great Eileen Chang includes previously untranslated stories and essays from throughout her career, starting with her glamorous debut in 1940s Shanghai and continuing through the trials of her Cold War migration to Hong Kong and the U.S. East Coast and her last years as a bus-riding flaneuse on the highways and byways in Los Angeles.

“Classmates Then All Successful Now,” one of Chang’s finest stories, reprises the whole journey through multiple, sometimes nested time frames, while in “Flowers Adrift, Blossoms Afloat,” a young woman peers into the darkness of a covered bridge that crosses between her Chinese homeland and British Hong Kong and sees a “time travel tunnel”—a fitting image, too, for this collection’s half-century stretch of exquisite mindscapes from a world-class author.

Karen S. Kingsbury is a translator of Chinese literature. She previously translated other works by Eileen Chang, including *Half a Lifelong Romance* and *Love in a Fallen City*. She is a professor of humanities and Asian studies at Chatham University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Jie Zhang is Associate Professor of Chinese at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. Her research interests include late imperial Chinese fiction and drama, modern and contemporary Chinese literature, and Chinese-language film.

“Original, memorable and unlike anything else that has come from the era. A fine contribution to Chinese letters in translation.” —*Kirkus Reviews*

Eileen Chang is one of the most celebrated and influential modern Chinese novelists and cultural critics of the twentieth century. First published in 1945, and just as beloved as her fiction in the Chinese-speaking world, *Written on Water* collects Chang’s reflections on art, literature, war, urban culture, and her own life as a writer and woman, set amid the sights and sounds of wartime Shanghai and Hong Kong. In a style at once meditative and vibrant, Chang writes of friends, colleagues, and teachers turned soldiers or wartime volunteers, and her own experiences as a part-time nurse. She also reflects on Chinese cinema, the aims of the writer, and the popularity of the Peking Opera. Chang engages the reader with her sly and sophisticated humor, conversational voice, and intense fascination with the subtleties of everyday life. In her examination of Shanghainese food, culture, and fashions, she not only upends prevalent attitudes toward women, presenting a portrait of a daring and cosmopolitan woman bent on questioning pieties and enjoying the pleasures of modernity, even as the world convulses in war and a revolution looms.

Eileen Chang (1920–1995) was a Chinese writer, born into an aristocratic family in Shanghai. She studied literature at the University of Hong Kong until the Japanese attack on the city in 1941 forced her to return to occupied Shanghai, where she was able to publish the stories and essays—collected in two volumes, *Romances* and *Written on Water*—that soon made her a literary star. After moving to the United States in the 1950s, Chang wrote the novels *Naked Earth* (available from NYRB Classics) and *The Rice Sprout Song*, as well as essays and stories in Chinese and scripts for Hong Kong films. She is also the author of the NYRB Classics *Love in a Fallen City* and *Little Reunions*. Andrew F. Jones is a literary translator and professor of Chinese at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of three books on modern Chinese music and was a recent Guggenheim fellow.
“Hardwick has a gift for coming up with descriptions so thoughtfully selected, so exactly right, that they strike the reader as inevitable.” —Anne Tyler

The Uncollected Essays of Elizabeth Hardwick is a companion collection to The Collected Essays of Elizabeth Hardwick, which proved a revelation of what, for many, had been an open secret: that Elizabeth Hardwick was one of the great American literary critics and an extraordinary stylist in her own right. The pieces in The Uncollected Essays, none previously featured in volumes of Hardwick’s work, makes it clear that her powers as an essayist extended far beyond literary criticism, as she brings an admirable intensity of attention to host of subjects, from New York City to Faye Dunaway, Wagner’s Parsifal to Leonardo da Vinci’s inventions, the pleasures of summertime to grits soufflé. In the thirty-five essays Alex Andriesse has gathered here, we see Hardwick’s passion for people and places, her politics, her thoughts on feminism, and her ability, especially from the 1970s on, to write well about seemingly anything.

Elizabeth Hardwick (1916–2007) was born in Lexington, Kentucky, and educated at the University of Kentucky and Columbia University. A recipient of a Gold Medal from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, she was the author of three novels, a biography of Herman Melville, and four collections of essays. She was a co-founder and advisory editor of The New York Review of Books and contributed more than one hundred reviews, articles, reflections, and letters to the magazine. NYRB Classics publishes Sleepless Nights, a novel; Seduction and Betrayal, a study of women in literature; and The Collected Essays of Elizabeth Hardwick.

Alex Andriesse’s essays and poems have appeared in Granta, Review of Contemporary Fiction, and Literary Imagination. His translations include Roberto Bazlen’s Notes Without a Text and Other Writings and François-René de Chateaubriand’s Memoirs from Beyond the Grave: 1768–1800, which is also available from NYRB Classics.

In 1917, after the entry of America into World War I, E. E. Cummings, a recent graduate of Harvard College, volunteered to serve on an ambulance corps in France. He arrived in Paris with a new friend, William Slater Brown, and they set about living it up in the big city before heading off to their assignment. Once in the field, they wrote irreverent letters about their experiences, which attracted the attention of the censors and ultimately led to their arrest. They were held for months in a military detention camp, sharing a single large room with a host of fellow detainees. It is this experience that Cummings relates in lightly fictionalized form in The Enormous Room, a book in which a tale of woe becomes an occasion of exuberant mischief. A free-spirited novel that displays the same formal swagger as his poems, a stinging denunciation of the stupidity of military authority, and a precursor to later books like Catch-22 and MASH, Cummings’s novel is an audacious, uninhibited, lyrical, and lasting contribution to American literature.

E. E. Cummings (1894–1962) was a renowned poet, novelist, playwright, and painter best known for the unique syntax and orthography that he employed in his written work. During World War I, while serving in the ambulance corps in France, he was arrested by the French military on suspicion of espionage due to perceived antwar sentiments in his letters home. He was freed after several months and soon returned to the United States, where he was drafted into the army and served on a base in Massachusetts until the end of the war. The Enormous Room was published four years later.

Nicholas Delbanco is the author of more than thirty books of fiction and nonfiction, including, most recently, the memoir Why Writing Matters, the essay collection Curiouser and Curiouser, and the novel The Years. He is the Robert Frost Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of English Language and Literature at the University of Michigan. He lives in Cape Cod and New York City.
Bambi first came out in Vienna a hundred years ago, the work of Felix Salten, a Viennese litterateur, journalist, and man about town, and was an immediate success with readers. An English translation soon appeared with an introduction by the Nobel Prize winner John Galsworthy and was widely and well reviewed. Later Walt Disney made his famous movie of the book, and as a consequence Salten’s intimate, delicate, poetic, and gripping tale of forest life, a book that captures both the calm and the disquiet of the animal world, has come to be thought of as a children’s book. Bambi is certainly a book that children can enjoy, but it is also a moving and lasting contribution to the literature of the natural world. In Damion Searls’s new translation the fawn Bambi and his mother, the groves and thickets of the forest, the open and dangerous space of the great field, the ever-present threat of the human—the whole intricate weave of life and death that Salten handles so deftly—all come alive for a new generation of readers. Paul Reitter’s afterword discusses the surprising political readings to which Salten’s fable of the woods was subjected.

Felix Salten (1869–1945) began his career as a writer by penning poetry and criticism for the Viennese press. He published his first collection of short stories in 1900, and by the end of his life, he had produced numerous novels, stage and screenplays, librettos, essay collections, and travel books. Bambi is his most famous work.

Damion Searls is a translator from German, French, Norwegian, and Dutch and a writer in English. He has translated and contributed to a number of NYRB Classics. His own books include What We Were Doing and Where We Were Going, The Inkblots, and The Philosophy of Translation.

Paul Reitter teaches in the German department at the Ohio State University. He is the co-editor of two NYRB Classics, Friedrich Nietzsche’s Anti-Education and Max Weber’s Charisma and Disenchantment.

Telluria is set in the future, when a devastating holy war between Europe and Islam has succeeded in returning the world to the torpor and disorganization of the Middle Ages. Europe, China, and Russia have all broken up. The people of the world now live in an array of little nations that are like puzzle pieces, each cultivating its own ideology or identity, a neo-feudal world of fads and feuds, in which no one power dominates. What does, however, travel everywhere is the appetite for the special substance tellurium. A spike of tellurium, driven into the brain by an expert hand, offers a transforming experience of bliss; incorrectly administered, it means death.

The fifty chapters of Telluria map out this brave new world from fifty different angles, as Vladimir Sorokin, always a virtuoso of the word, introduces us to, among many other figures, partisans and princes, peasants and party leaders, a new Knights Templar, a harem of phalluses, and a dog-headed poet and philosopher who feasts on carrion from the battlefield. The book is an immense and sumptuous tapestry of the word, carnivalesque and cruel, and Max Lawton, Sorokin’s gifted translator, has captured it in an English that carries the charge of Cormac McCarthy and William Gibson.

Vladimir Sorokin is the author of numerous novels, plays, short stories, and film scripts. His work has been translated throughout the world. NYRB Classics published a translation of his first novel, The Queue, in 2008, and a translation of his Ice Trilogy in 2011. In future seasons, NYRB Classics will publish his novels Blue Lard and The Norm, as well as a collection of stories, Red Pyramid. In 2001, he received the Andrei Biely Prize for outstanding contributions to Russian literature. His most recent book published in English is The Blizzard. He lives in Moscow.

Max Lawton is a novelist, musician, and translator. He has translated several works by Vladimir Sorokin, including the short story “White Square,” which was published in the winter 2020 issue of n+1. He lives in New York City.
**The Bible and Poetry**

MICHAEL EDWARDS

A new translation from the French by Stephen E. Lewis

An NYRB Classics Original

The Bible is full of poems. It includes the Psalms and the Song of Songs of course, but poetry plays an immense part in the prophets and shows up in the books of the Old Testament. The New Testament, for its part, reverberates with allusions to the poetry of the Old Testament and concludes with Revelation, a visionary poem, while Jesus, seeking to open his listener’s eyes to the kingdom of heaven, describes it with the poetic epithet of “a treasure hid in a field,” while the son of God is the “true vine,” “the light of the world,” “the good shepherd,” “the way, the truth, and the life.” The Bible, in other words, asks to be read poetically throughout, and yet readers have rarely considered the implications of that, much less heeded its call.

In *The Bible and Poetry*, the poet and scholar Michael Edwards seeks to transform how the Bible and Christianity are understood, arguing that poetry is not an ornamental or accidental feature of the Bible but is central to its meaning. The creative use of words that is poetry is the necessary medium of the Creator’s word, and belief emerges not from precepts and propositions but out of the lived experience—this is what the Bible offers above all—of the power of that word.

Michael Edwards is an Anglo-French poet and scholar. Born in Barnes, London, he is the author of twenty books and the first English person ever to have been elected to the Collège de France and to the Académie française.

Stephen E. Lewis is a professor of English at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, and a translator of French literature.

**Memoirs from Beyond the Grave: 1800–1815**

FRANÇOIS-RÉNE DE CHATEAUBRIAND

A new translation from the French by Alex Andriesse

An NYRB Classics Original

“The best autobiography ever written.... The old viscount could write one hell of a sentence. It’s an incredible book.” —Paul Auster, *The Book of Illusions*

In 1800, François-René de Chateaubriand sailed from the cliffs of Dover to the headlands of Calais. He was thirty-one and had been living as a political refugee in England for most of a decade, at times in such extreme poverty that he subsisted on nothing but hot water and two-penny rolls. Over the next fifteen years, his life was utterly changed. He published *Atala, René*, and *The Genius of Christianity* to acclaim and epoch-making scandal. He strolled the streets of Jerusalem and mapped the ruins of Carthage. He served Napoleon in Rome, then resigned in protest after the Duc d’Enghien’s execution, putting his own life at tremendous risk.

*Memoirs from Beyond the Grave: 1800–1815*—the second volume in Alex Andriesse’s new and complete translation of this epic French classic—is a chronicle of triumphs and sorrows, narrating not only the author’s life during a tumultuous period in European history but the “parallel life” of Napoleon. In these pages, Chateaubriand continues to paint his distinctive self-portrait, in which the whole history of France swirls around the sitter like a mist of dreams.

François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848) was born in Saint-Malo, on the northern coast of Brittany, the youngest son of an aristocratic family. Long recognized as one of the first French Romantics, Chateaubriand was also a historian, diplomat, and staunch defender of the freedom of the press. He is best remembered for his posthumously published *Memoirs from Beyond the Grave* (an NYRB Classic).

Alex Andriesse’s essays and poems have appeared in *Granta, Review of Contemporary Fiction*, and *Literary Imagination*. His translations include Roberto Bazlen’s *Notes Without a Text* and Other Writings and François-René de Chateaubriand’s *Memoirs from Beyond the Grave: 1768–1800*, which is also available from NYRB Classics. He lives in the Netherlands.
Ivan Turgenev’s *Fathers and Children* is a masterpiece not only of the nineteenth century but of the whole of Russian literature, a book full to bursting with life. It is a novel about the relationships between the young and the old; about love, families, politics, religion; about strong beliefs and heated disagreements, illness and death. It is about the clash between liberals and conservatives, revolutionaries and reactionaries. At the time of its publication in 1862, the book aroused indignation in its critics who felt betrayed by Turgenev’s refusal to let his novel serve a single ideology; it also received a spirited defense by those who saw in his diffuse sympathies a greater service to art and to humanity. *Fathers and Children* is not a practical manifesto but a lasting work of art and a timely book for our present age, newly and ably translated by Nicolas Pasternak Slater and Maya Slater.

**Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev** (1818–1883) was born into a wealthy family of the Russian landed gentry and educated in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Berlin. He made his name as a writer with *A Sportsman’s Sketches*, an unvarnished picture of Russian country life that is said to have influenced Tsar Alexander II’s decision to liberate the serfs. In later years, Turgenev lived in Europe, returning only rarely to his native country. He was the author of poems, stories, plays, and six novels, the most celebrated of which include *Fathers and Children*, *Rudin*, and *On the Eve*.

**Nicolas Pasternak Slater** is a translator of Russian literature. He has translated work by Anton Chekhov, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Leo Tolstoy, Mikhail Lermontov, Teffi, his uncle Boris Pasternak, and many others.

**Maya Slater** is the author of the novel *Mr. Darcy’s Diary* and a senior research fellow at Queen Mary University of London. She was a lecturer on French literature at London University for more than three decades.

Now recognized as one of the giants of postwar American fiction, William Gaddis shunned the spotlight during his life, which makes this collection of his letters a revelation. Beginning in 1930, when Gaddis was at boarding school, and ending in September 1998, a few months before his death, these letters function as a kind of autobiography and are all the more valuable because he was not an autobiographical writer. Here we see him forging his first novel, *The Recognitions*, while living in Mexico; fighting in a revolution in Costa Rica; and working in Spain, France, and North Africa. Over the next twenty years he struggles to find time to write the National Book Award–winning *J R* amid the complications of work and family; deals with divorce and disillusionment before reviving his career with *Carpenter’s Gothic*; then teaches himself enough about the law to indite *A Frolic of His Own*, which earned him another National Book Award. Returning to a topic he first wrote about in the 1940s, he finishes his last novel, *Agapē Agapē*, as he is dying.


**Steven Moore** is the author of the two-volume survey *The Novel: An Alternative History*, and has written and edited several books on the works of William Gaddis. He served as the managing editor of Dalkey Archive Press and the *Review of Contemporary Fiction* from 1988 to 1996. He lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.
The Hive
Camilo José Cela
A new translation from the Spanish by James Womack
An NYRB Classics Original

The Hive is set over the course of a few days in the Madrid of 1943, not long after the end of the Spanish Civil War, when the regime of General Francisco Franco was at its most oppressive. The book includes more than three hundred characters whose comings and goings it tracks to hypnotic effect. Scabrous, scandalous, and profane, this virtuosic group portrait of a wounded and sick society was first published in Buenos Aires in 1951 because in Spain it could not be published at all. This new translation by James Womack is the first in English to present Cela’s masterpiece in uncensored form.

Camilo José Cela (1916–2002) won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1989. Though he wrote prolifically and audaciously in a number of different genres, he is best known for The Hive, which was published in Argentina in 1951 after being banned in Franco’s Spain. In addition to his writing, Cela produced drawings and paintings and also appeared in several films.

James Womack is a poet and a translator from Russian and Spanish. His most recent poetry collection, Homunculus, was published by Carcanet Press in the UK in 2020. His translations include Manuel Vilas’s Heaven and a collection of poetry by Vladimir Mayakovsky. He is an editor at Calque Press and teaches at Cambridge University.

After
Vivek Narayanan

After is a collection of poems inspired by Valmiki’s Ramayana, one of Asia’s foundational epic poems and a story cycle of formative historical importance all across South and Southeast Asia.

On the Indian subcontinent, the Ramayana is central not only to religion and folklore but to the conduct of life. People take its characters as models of vice and virtue, courage and devotion, and politicians have been known to take advantage of the veneration in which the book is held. In the West, too, the Ramayana has long been recognized as one of the essential classics of world literature, on par with the tale of Gilgamesh, the Homeric epics, Virgil, and Dante, even as its stories remain comparatively unfamiliar.

In After, Vivek Narayanan brings the resources of contemporary English poetry to bear on the Ramayana. In a work that bears comparison with Christopher Logue’s and Alice Oswald’s distinctive reshapings of Homer, and Anne Carson’s Autobiography of Red, Narayanan allows the ancient voice of the poem to confront and engage with modern experience, initiating a transformative conversation across time.

Vivek Narayanan is one of the best-known Indian poets writing in English. His books of poetry include Universal Beach and Life and Times of Mr S. He has been a Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University and a Cullman Fellow at the New York Public Library. A full-length collection of his poems in Swedish translation was published in 2015 by the legendary Stockholm-based Wahlström & Widstrand. He currently teaches creative writing at George Mason University and is a member of the editorial board at Poetry Daily, where he helps to select poems and writes short essays about world poetry.
Poet, prodigy, precursor, punk: the short, precocious, uncompromisingly rebellious career of the poet Arthur Rimbaud is one of the legends of modern literature. By the time he was twenty, Rimbaud had written a series of poems that are not only masterpieces in themselves but that forever transformed the idea of what poetry is. Without him, surrealism is inconceivable, and his influence is palpable in artists as diverse as Henry Miller, John Ashbery, Bob Dylan, and Patti Smith. In this essential volume, renowned translator Mark Polizzotti offers authoritative and inspired new versions of Rimbaud’s major poems and letters, including generous selection of *Illuminations* and the entirety of his lacerating confession *A Season in Hell*—capturing as never before not only the meaning but also the daredevil attitudes and incantatory rhythms that make Rimbaud’s works among the most perpetually modern of his or any other generation.

Born in northeastern France, *Arthur Rimbaud* (1854–1891) is widely considered the quintessential French poet. His escape at age sixteen to join the Paris Commune and his tumultuous affair with Paul Verlaine (culminating in a gunshot wound in a Brussels hotel) are the stuff of literary legend. His writings and actions over a mere five years revolutionized attitudes toward art, life, and sexuality. Rimbaud abandoned poetry at the age of twenty, and in his final decade he struggled to find success as a trader and gun-runner in Africa. He died of cancer at thirty-seven, having seen almost none of his work in print.

**Mark Polizzotti** has translated more than fifty books from the French, including works by Gustave Flaubert, Patrick Modiano, Marguerite Duras, André Breton, and Raymond Roussel. He is the recipient of numerous prizes and the author of eleven books, including *Revolution of the Mind: The Life of André Breton*, *Highway 61 Revisited*, and *Sympathy for the Traitor: A Translation Manifesto*. His essays and reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New Republic*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *ARTnews*, *The Nation*, *Parnassus*, *Bookforum*, and elsewhere. He lives in New York.

“My poems are flecks of salt clinging ambivalently to a horse’s back,” Wang Yin writes. This is the first comprehensive collection of this important Chinese poet’s work to appear in English, translated by Andrea Lingenfelter. Readers can follow the full arc of his career, from the early, surrealist, and Deep Image–influenced work of the 1980s, when he made his debut as a post-Misty poet, through the turn toward the rawer, more immediate poetry of the nineties, and on to the existential and ineffable weavings of his more recent work. Wang’s sensibility is both cosmopolitan and lyrical, and his poetry has a subtlety and beauty that contrasts with the often physically painful imagery with which he depicts psychological reality, a reality expressed as various states of mind struggling against the suppression of memory. Shanghai winters, a winter in Katowice, a summer day with ghosts, blue shadows, petals in the darkness, an “empty lane lit up by moonlight”—the poems of this extraordinary volume illuminate the inner life as a singular encounter between physical and spiritual realms.

**Wang Yin** is a poet, art journalist, and photographer. His poetry has appeared in several publications, including *Granta*, *Continent*, and *Tendency*. His 2015 poetry collection, *Limelight*, was awarded the Jiangnan Poetry Award and the Dong Dang Zi Poetry Award. Born in Shanghai, Wang now lives and works in Paris.

**Andrea Lingenfelter** is a poet, scholar of Chinese literature, and translator of contemporary Chinese-language fiction. Her translation of poetry by Zhai Yongming, *The Changing Room*, won a 2012 Northern California Book Award, and she was a 2008 recipient of the PEN Translation Fund grant and a 2014 National Endowment for the Arts Translation Grant awardee. She has also translated Hon Lai-chu’s *The Kite Family*, Li Pik-wah’s *Farewell My Concubine*, and Mian Mian’s *Candy*. She teaches at the University of San Francisco.
NACHOEM WIJNBERG
A new translation from the Dutch by David Colmer

The Dutch poet Nachoem Wijnberg is one of the most inventive, surprising, entertaining, and thought-provoking poets writing today. He is also remarkably productive, so that up to now only a small portion of his extensive body of work has appeared in English translation and none of it in America. This new selection of poems draws on all nineteen volumes Wijnberg has published to date and also includes uncollected work, constituting an indispensable introduction to this wry, off-kilter, spellbinding modern master. Wijnberg, not only a poet but a professor of business studies—hence his persistent concern with questions of value, real and false—writes only in the plainest language while displaying a formidable erudition. His poems engage economics, philosophy, and history; he writes Chinese poems and Jewish poems and classic songs; he tells stories that may or may not be parables; he writes from where the mind meets the heart. “Tell all the truth but tell it slant,” Emily Dickinson enjoins. Wijnberg for his part has said, “Alienation is the last thing I am trying to achieve. The world is strange enough as it is and my poems help in dealing with that strangeness by bringing it close and as far as possible trying to understand it.”

Nachoem Wijnberg is a poet and fiction writer. He is the author of a handful of novels and several poetry collections, including Divan van Ghalib, Het leven van, and Liedjes. He is the recipient of both the Ida Gerhart Poetry Prize and the P. C. Hooft Award. He is also an accomplished economist and lectures on business administration at the University of Amsterdam.

David Colmer is a translator of Dutch literature based in Amsterdam. He has translated more than sixty book-length works, including work by Gerbrand Bakker, Dimitri Verhulst, Anna Enquist, Annie M. G. Schmidt, and many others. He is the recipient of several prizes, among them the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize for Bakker’s The Detour and the Vondel Translation Prize for Verhulst’s The Misfortunes.

BUNGLETION GREEN AND THE MYSTIC COMMANDOS
JAY JACKSON

In 1942, almost a year after America entered the Second World War, Jay Jackson—a former railroad worker and sign painter, now working as a cartoonist and illustrator for the legendary Black newspaper the Chicago Defender—did something unexpected.

He took the Defender’s stale and long-running gag strip Bungleton Green and remade it into a gripping, anti-racist science-fiction adventure comic. He teamed the bumbling Green with a crew of Black teens called the Mystic Commandos, and together they battled the enemies of America and racial equality in the past, present, and future. Nazis, segregationist senators, Benedict Arnold, fifth columnists, eighteenth-century American slave traders, evil scientists, and a nation of racist Green Men all faced off against the Mystic Commandos and Green, who in the strip’s run would be transformed by Jackson into the first-ever Black superhero.

Never before collected or republished, Jackson’s stories are packed with jaw-dropping twists and breathtaking action, and present a radical vision of a brighter American future.

Jay Jackson (1905–1954) was a prolific artist and cartoonist whose work appeared for many years in the Black newspaper the Chicago Defender, among numerous other publications. Before he began his cartooning career, he hammered spikes for a railroad, labored in a steel mill, started a short-lived sign-painting business, and even had a brief career as an amateur boxer. In the late 1940s, Jackson moved with his family from Chicago to Los Angeles, where he resided for the remainder of his life.

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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 Elephant and The Projector, 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, designed and edited by Seth and with an introduction by Jeet Heer, Elephant and The Projector stand 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 daring graphic novels—Elephant, The Projector, The Park, and The Cage—all published in the 1970s, when he 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.

Nicole Claveloux’s short stories—originally published in the late 1970s and never before collected in English—are among the most beautiful comics ever drawn: whimsical, intoxicating, with the freshness and splendor of dreams. In hallucinatory color or elegant black-and-white, she brings us into lands that are strange but oddly recognizable, filled with murderous grandmothers and lonely city dwellers, bad-tempered vegetables and walls that are surprisingly easy to fall through. In the title story, written with Edith Zha, a new houseplant becomes the first step in an epic journey of self-discovery and a witty fable of modern romance—complete with talking shrubbery, a wised-up genie, and one very depressed bird.

This selection, designed and introduced by Daniel Clowes, presents the full achievement of an unforgettable, unjustly neglected master of French comics.

Nicole Claveloux has contributed to the French comics magazines Métal Hurlant (Heavy Metal) and Ah! Nana, and drew a popular comic strip called Grabote. Championed by Harlin Quist, she has also illustrated a number of successful children’s books, including an award-winning version of Alice in Wonderland. New York Review Comics will be publishing a new collection of her work, Dead Season and Other Stories, in 2022.

Donald Nicholson-Smith has translated a number of books for both NYRB Classics and New York Review Comics, including Yvan Alagbé’s Yellow Negroes and Other Imaginary Creatures. Born in Manchester, England, he is a longtime resident of New York City.

Daniel Clowes is a cartoonist, illustrator, and screenwriter. In 1989 he created the influential comic book series Eightball, which includes the celebrated issues Like a Velvet Glove Cast in Iron, Caricature, and Ghostworld. He lives in Oakland, California.
NEW AND SELECTED STORIES
CRISTINA RIVERA GARZA
A new translation from the Spanish by Sarah Booker
Additional translations by Lisa Dillman, Francisca González Arias, and Alex Ross

“One of Mexico’s greatest living writers,” wrote Jonathan Lethem in 2018 about Cristina Rivera Garza, “we are just barely beginning to catch up to what she has to offer.” In the years since, Rivera Garza’s work has received widespread recognition: She was awarded a MacArthur Genius Grant for fiction that “interrogates culturally constructed notions of language, memory, and gender from a transnational perspective,” and was a finalist for the 2020 National Book Critics Circle Award for Criticism. Yet we have still only started to discover the full range of a writer who is at once an incisive voice on migration, borders, and violence against women, as well as a high stylist in the manner of Lispector or Duras.

New and Selected Stories now brings together in English translation stories from across Rivera Garza’s career, drawing from three collection spanning over 30 years and including new writing not yet published in Spanish. It is a unique and remarkable body of work, and a window into the ever-evolving stylistic and thematic development of one of the boldest, most original and affecting writers in the world today.

Cristina Rivera Garza is the author of numerous works of fiction and nonfiction, including The Taiga Syndrome, available from Dorothy, a publishing project. Originally written in Spanish, her books have been translated into English, French, Italian, Portuguese, Korean, and more. Born in Mexico in 1964, she has lived in the United States since 1989, and is currently a distinguished professor in Hispanic studies and the director of creative writing at the University of Houston.

Sarah Booker is a literary translator and doctoral candidate in Hispanic Literature at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, where she studies contemporary Latin American narrative and translation studies. Her translations include Cristina Rivera Garza’s The Iliac Crest and Grieving: Dispatches from a Wounded Country and Mónica Ojeda’s Jawbone.

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REVENGE OF THE SCAPEGOAT
CAREN BEILIN

“Animated with the moxie and wit of Acker and Tillman, Caren Beilin is one of the most bizarre and fearless writers of her generation. Revenge of the Scapegoat is a surreal take on the tendency people have to damage those we claim to love and the way parental cruelty renders the world unrecognizable.”
—Catherine Lacey

In the tradition of Rabelais, Swift, and Burroughs—the tradition of biting satire that joyfully embraces the strange and fantastical—and drawing upon documentary strategies from Sheila Heti, Caren Beilin offers a tale of familial trauma that is also a broadly inclusive skewering of academia, the medical industry, and the contemporary art scene.

One day Iris, an adjunct at a city arts college, receives a terrible package: recently unearthed letters that her father had written to her in her teens, in which he blames her for their family’s crises. Driven by the raw fact of receiving these devastating letters not once but twice in a lifetime, and in a panic of chronic pain brought on by rheumatoid arthritis, Iris escapes to the countryside—or some absurdist version of it. Nazi cows, Picassos used as tampons, and a pair of arthritic feet that speak in the voices of Flaubert’s Bouvard and Pécuchet are standard fare in this beguiling novel of odd characters, surprising circumstances, and intuitive leaps, all brought together in profoundly serious ways.

Caren Beilin is the author most recently of a nonfiction book, Blackfishing the IUD, and a memoir, Spain. She teaches creative writing at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and lives in Vermont.

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As a trainee doctor, A. J. Lees was enthralled by his mentors: esteemed neurologists who combined the precision of mathematicians, the scrupulosity of entomologists, and the solemnity of undertakers in their diagnoses and treatments. For them, there was no such thing as an unexplained symptom or psychosomatic problem—no difficult cases, just interesting ones—and it was only a matter of time before all disorders of the brain would be understood in terms of anatomical, electrical, and chemical connections.

Today, this kind of “holistic neurology” is on the brink of extinction as a slavish adherence to protocols and algorithms—plus a worship of machines—runs the risk of destroying the key foundational clinical skills of listening, observation, and imagination that have been at the heart of the discipline for more than 150 years.

In this series of brilliant, insightful, and autobiographical essays, Lees takes us on a kind of Sherlock Holmes tour of neurology, giving the reader insight into—and a defense of—the deep analytical tools that the best neurologists still rely on to diagnose patients: to heal minds and to fix brains.

A. J. Lees is a professor of neurology at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the American Academy of Neurology Lifetime Achievement Award, the Association of British Neurologists’ Medal, the Dingebauer Prize for outstanding research, and the Gowers Medal. He is one of the three most highly cited Parkinson’s disease researchers in the world and is the author of several books, including the Notting Hill Editions titles Mentored by a Madman and Brazil That Never Was.

Only two species of mammal have a post-reproductive life that lasts longer than their reproductive life: killer whales, whose elders are able to sniff out food supplies over vast oceanic distances to keep their pods fed, and Homo sapiens. While the evolutionary purpose of the killer whale’s extensive life seems clear, what is the point of ours?

This was a question that intrigued the psychoanalyst Carl Jung, who observed that if a culture is to maintain its deepest, profoundest roots while moving forward to embrace the challenges of historical and technological change, it needs to find an equilibrium between the energy, vigor, and creativity of those in the ego-driven first half of life and the experience, dignity, and wisdom of those in the second. But to make it to that second half of life, we need to traverse the dreaded middle years, when so many of us find ourselves discontented with our jobs, unhappy in our relationships, and lamenting our fetishized youths.

In this highly readable and groundbreaking new book, the psychoanalyst Andrew Jamieson examines the Jungian concept of the midlife crisis to show how it is an essential evolutionary and social rite of passage that we all must proceed through—a set of challenges that we either take advantage of or ignore, depending on whether our complex or neurosis blocks this developmental impulse.

Drawing on history, psychology, science, and literature, Jamieson shows just how ubiquitous, and crucial, the “midlife crisis” is, and the devastating consequences for society at large if we continue to regard it as something we can, and should, avoid.

Andrew Jamieson has worked in the music business in the UK for more than forty years. After coming out the other side of his own midlife transition, he retrained and is now a practicing psychotherapist. He lives in Bath, Somerset, UK.
It’s spring! Warm and green, the great outdoors beckons, especially when you’ve built a fort to play in with your friends. *Our Fort* is the story of three friends who set out one day to visit their secret fort at the edge of the woods. The weather looks fine, but no sooner have they left home and walked into the hills than the sun disappears behind the clouds. Crows fly by, calling, and the wind begins to blow. Suddenly the day turns into night. It’s a storm! Will the friends make it to shelter? Will their fort survive the storm? Marie Dorléans’s illustrations capture the sensory pleasures of nature, as well as its capriciousness, while her story reminds us of the simple joy of being with friends and sharing a great adventure.

**Marie Dorléans** studied art and art history at the School of Decorative Arts in Strasbourg, France. She graduated in 2010 and has worked as a children’s book illustrator since then. Her previous book, *Night Walk*, won the Prix Landerneau for best children’s book.

**Alyson Waters** has translated several works from the French by Albert Cossery, Louis Aragon, René Belletto, and many others and has received a National Endowment for the Arts Translation Fellowship, a PEN Translation Fund grant, and residency grants from the Centre National du Livre and Villet Gillet in Lyon. She teaches literary translation in the French department of Yale University and is the managing editor of *Yale French Studies*. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.
Sneezewort, Baldmoney, Dodder, and Cloudberry are the last gnomes in Britain. Life along the Folly Brook, where the gnomes live companionably with the birds and beasts, is wild and wet, just the way they like it. But one spring day, waking up from a long winter sleep, the gnomes are confronted by an inescapable fact: Their brook is drying up and will soon be uninhabitable.

A sequel to BB’s award-winning *The Little Grey Men*, this novel is about the gnomes’ perilous and daring search for a new home. Warwickshire and the rest of their beloved country has been despoiled by men, and the gnomes must find another place as wild and wet as their home once was.

Part fantasy, part ecological parable, *The Little Grey Men Go Down the Bright Stream* was first published in 1948 and remains as exciting, poignant, and far-seeing as ever.

**BB** (1905–1990) is the pseudonym for the British naturalist, illustrator, and children’s author Denys James Watkins-Pitchford. In 1942, he won the Carnegie Medal for British children’s books. Watkins-Pitchford was born in Lamport, Northamptonshire, where he developed a love of the great outdoors, hunting, fishing, and drawing, all of which influenced his writing. He attended the Northampton School of Art, and while there won a traveling scholarship to Paris, where he attended drawing classes and worked in a studio in Montparnasse. In 1924, he started studying at the Royal College of Art in London, and in 1930 he began working as an assistant art master at Rugby School and started contributing to the *Shooting Times* as an illustrator and a writer. It was during this time that he adopted his nom de plume, BB, which was based on the size of the shot he used when hunting geese. In 1986, he was awarded an honorary master’s by Leicester University and in 1990 was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

London hasn’t been kind to Peter, a lonely boy whose parents are always out at parties, and though Peter would love to have a cat for company, his nanny won’t hear of it. One day, Peter sees a striped kitten in the park across from his house. Crossing the road on his way to the tabby, he is struck by a truck.

Everything is different when Peter comes to: He has fur, whiskers, and claws; he has become a cat himself! But London isn’t any kinder to cats than it is to children. Jennie, a savvy stray who takes charge of Peter, knows that all too well. Jennie schools young Peter in the ways of cats, including how to sniff out a nice napping spot, the proper way to dine on mouse, and the single most important tactic a cat can learn: “When in doubt, wash.” Jennie and Peter will face many challenges — and not all of them are from the dangerous outside world — in their struggle to find a place that is truly home.

**Paul Gallico** (1897–1976) was a popular and prolific sports columnist, screenwriter, and author of books for adults and children. He began his career at the *New York Daily News*, where he soon became famous for his adventures with the star athletes of the day. In 1937 he published the essay “Farewell to Sport” and turned to fiction, publishing stories in publications like *Cosmopolitan*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *The New Yorker*. Among his forty-one books are the novella *The Snow Goose*; *Manxmouse*, often cited by J. K. Rowling as one of her favorite books; *Mrs. ‘Arris Goes to Paris* and its four sequels; and *The Poseidon Adventure*, the basis for the hugely successful 1972 film. From 1950 until his death, Gallico lived outside of the United States, mostly in England, Antibes, and Monaco.
CARBONEL & CALIDOR
BARBARA SLEIGH
Illustrated by Charles Front
Now in paperback

“There is a Nesbit quality about Miss Sleigh’s writing as there is in her manipulation of magic.” —Junior Bookshelf

“There are many kinds of magic…and once magic is in your blood it attracts more magic,” says the royal cat Carbonel at the start of Carbonel & Calidor. Sure enough, Carbonel’s human friends Rosemary and John soon encounter magic in the form of a ring set with a fiery red stone that grants wishes to whoever wears it. And it’s a lucky thing, too, because Carbonel needs Rosemary and John’s help. It seems that his son Calidor has rejected his princely status for the love of a streetwise cat named Wellingtonia (also known as Dumpsie). Even worse, Calidor has apprenticed himself to the witch-in-training Mrs. Dibdin. With all this going on, it’s just a matter of time before Carbonel’s old nemesis Grisana—accompanied by her slyboots daughter Melissa—hatches a plan to take control of Carbonel’s kingdom once and for all.

Barbara Sleigh (1906–1982) was the author of Carbonel: The King of the Cats, The Kingdom of Carbonel, and Carbonel & Calidor. All available from New York Review Books. She worked for the BBC’s Children’s Hour.

Charles Front has illustrated many books, including Never Say Macbeth, The Great White Whale, and The Little Dressmaker.

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Starting on February 1, 2022, New York Review Books will be the distributor of the independent feminist press Dorothy, a publishing project. Dorothy’s complete backlist will be available from New York Review Books and its distributor, Penguin Random House, in the US, Canada, and Open Markets. The full Dorothy list may be viewed at dorothyproject.com. For publicity queries, or to request galleys of Dorothy titles, contact Martin Riker at publisher@dorothyproject.com.

Celia Paul
Rising Cloud and Bird, 2020
Oil on canvas
50.8 x 50.8 cm, 20 x 20 in

Celia Paul
Breaking, Santa Monica, 2019
Oil on canvas
106.7 x 101.6 cm, 42 x 40 in

The catalog cover art appears on the cover of Letters to Gwen John by Celia Paul, page 3. The top half is a detail from Rising Cloud and Bird and the lower half is a detail from Breaking, Santa Monica. Both paintings are provided courtesy of Celia Paul and the Victoria Miro gallery.