

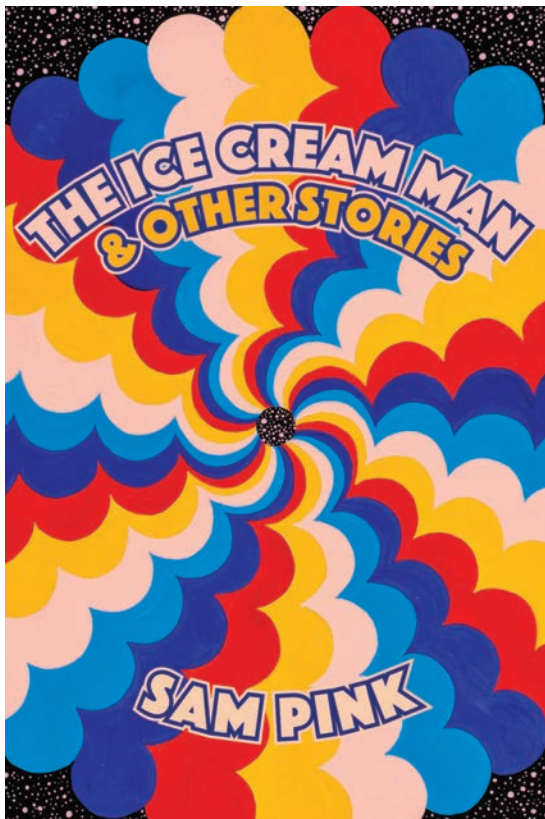
SOFT SKULL PRESS

**NEW TITLES AND
SELECTED BACKLIST**



SPRING 2020

SOFT SKULL



MARCH • Fiction • Trade Paperback Original • \$16.95
 9781593765934 • 288 pages • 5.5" x 8.25" • Ebook
 Available • World Rights: Soft Skull Press

Praise for Sam Pink

"Pink's best writing . . . wins him fierce and cultish admiration. Part of this, I think, he owes to his chosen subject. For all the attention political theorists and commentators have lately devoted to a definition of the working class, not much fiction chronicles the sheer weirdness of working-class life and labor today."
 —*The New Republic*

"I love the pulse of Sam Pink's sentences, the way they can hold the gorgeous and the grisly and the hilarious all at the same time."
 —*Laura van den Berg, author of The Third Hotel and Find Me*

"Sam Pink is the most important writer in America. This isn't hyperbole. In a world of literary Bing Crosbys, Sam Pink is our Little Richard."
 —*Scott McClanahan, author of The Sarah Book and Hill William*

THE ICE CREAM MAN AND OTHER STORIES

SAM PINK

"Pink is a keen observer of the culture of minimum-wage jobs and low-rent studio apartments that is the reality of life for all those who don't find a cog space in today's hyper-capitalist economy."

—*The Guardian*

It was maybe the first job I'd ever had where people were happy to see me.

An odd feeling indeed, to wield this kind of power.

To be this kind of force.

As near to magical as any mortal should stride.

A technician of unspeakable joy.

Braving the neon mountains to return with blue raspberry concentrate.

Tearing out sundae cone fangs from the mouths of snow beasts.


And so on.

Cone dealer, sunshine stealer, alleyway counselor, lunch lady to the homeless, friend to the dead, maker of sandwiches. Metal wrangler. Stag among stags. And so it goes—another journey through time spent punched in. A life's work of working for a living. Blood, death, and violence. Dirty dishes, dead roaches, and sparkler-lit nights. Nights ahead and no real fate. So open your mouths because the forecast calls for sprinkles. Thirteen delights, scooped and served. Let it melt down your hand. Let the sun burn your face. It's the ice cream man, and other stories.

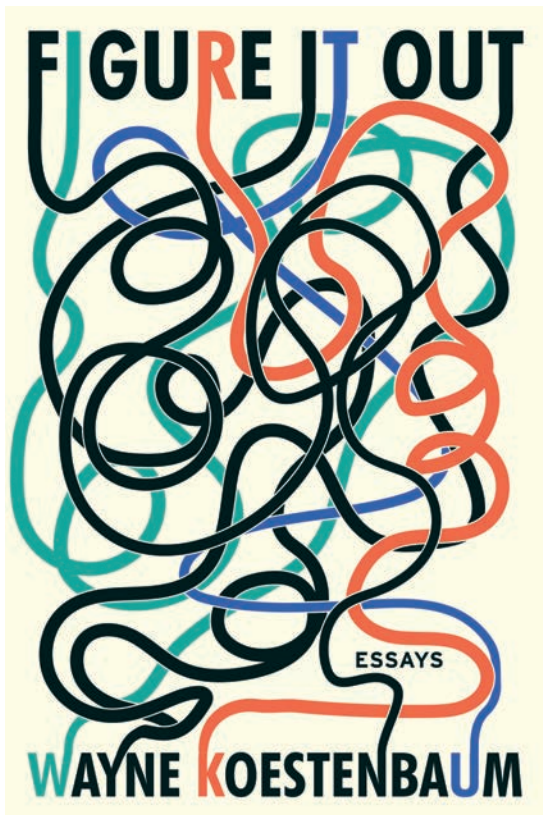


© Devyn Waitt

SAM PINK's books include *Person*, *The No Hellos Diet*, *Hurt Others*, *Rontel*, *Witch Piss*, and *The Garbage Times/White Ibis*. His writing has been published widely in print and on the Internet and translated into other languages. He currently lives in Michigan and sells paintings from [instagram.com/sam_pink_art](https://www.instagram.com/sam_pink_art).

 [sam_pink_art](https://www.instagram.com/sam_pink_art)

 [sampinkisalive](https://twitter.com/sampinkisalive)



MAY • Essays • Trade Paperback Original • \$16.95
9781593765958 • 224 pages • 5.5" x 8.25" • Ebook
Available • North American Rights: Soft Skull Press • All
Other Rights: Janklow & Nesbit

Praise for Wayne Koestenbaum

"Wayne Koestenbaum is one of the most original and relentlessly obsessed cultural spies writing today. His alarmingly focused attention to detail goes beyond lunacy into hilarious and brilliant clarity."

—John Waters

"I'll go wherever putto, poet, painter, and—little did you know—lounge crooner and ivory tinkler Wayne Koestenbaum wants to take me."

—Rachel Kushner

"[Wayne Koestenbaum] is a figure of this time, but he also is a writer and thinker for all time. His career streaks above this genre-obsessed, professionalized-writer moment, and corresponds instead to the history of the polymath, the public intellectual, the drifter, the infinite conversationalist."

—Maggie Nelson

FIGURE IT OUT

Essays

WAYNE KOESTENBAUM

Intimate reflections (on art, punctuation, eyeglasses, color, dreams, celebrity, corpses, porn, and translation) and "assignments" that encourage pleasure, attentiveness, and acts of playful making, from the mischievous, munificent, extraordinary mind of legendary public intellectual Wayne Koestenbaum

Toward what goal do I aspire, ever, but collision? Always accident, concussion, bodies butting together . . . By collision I also mean metaphor and metonymy: operations of slide and slip and transfuse.

In his new nonfiction collection, poet, artist, critic, novelist, and performer Wayne Koestenbaum enacts twenty-six ecstatic collisions between his mind and the world. A subway passenger's leather bracelet prompts musings on the German word for *stranger*; Montaigne leads to the memory of a fourth-grade friend's stinky feet. Koestenbaum dreams about a hand job from John Ashbery, swims next to Nicole Kidman, reclaims Robert Rauschenberg's squeegee, and apotheosizes Marguerite Duras as a destroyer of sentences. He directly proposes assignments to readers: "Buy a one-dollar cactus, and start anthropomorphizing it. Call it Sabrina." "Describe an ungenerous or unkind act you have committed." "Find in every orgasm an encyclopedic richness . . . Reimagine *doing the laundry* as *having an orgasm*, and

reinterpret *orgasm* as not a tiny experience, temporally limited, occurring in a single human body, but as an experience that somehow touches on all of human history." *Figure It Out* is both a guidebook for, and the embodiment of, the practices of pleasure, attentiveness, art, and play.

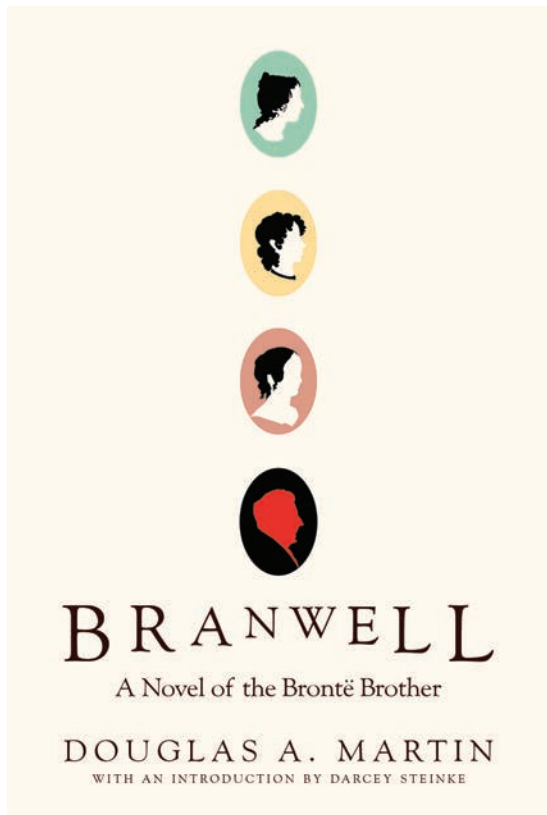


© Ebru Yildiz

WAYNE KOESTENBAUM's twenty books include *Camp Marmalade*, *Notes on Glaze*, *The Pink Trance Notebooks*, *My 1980s & Other Essays*, *Humiliation*, *Andy Warhol*, *Jackie Under My Skin*, and *The Queen's Throat*, a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist. A new edition of his first novel, *Circus; or, Moira Orfei in Aigues-Mortes*, was published in 2019. He is a distinguished professor of English, French, and comparative literature at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York.

🐦 campmarmalade

📷 wayne.koestenbaum



JULY • Fiction • Trade Paperback New Edition • \$16.95
 9781593765972 • 256 pages • 5.5" x 8.25" • Ebook
 Available • World Rights: Soft Skull Press

Praise for *Branwell*

“In *Branwell* . . . Douglas Martin pays homage to this unlikely subject, creating a moving and evocative portrait of a boy doomed to enter history as a sad footnote to his sisters’ lives . . . The prose here is so finely wrought that the novel has an otherworldly feel.”
 —*The Brooklyn Rail*

“Douglas A. Martin has created a gem of a novel with *Branwell: A Novel of the Brontë Brother*, the story of Branwell Brontë and his failure to realize the expectations of others as well as himself. This depiction of the lone Brontë brother is dark and well-told in the magnificent voice of the author. As Branwell descends into addiction and self-destruction, Martin’s fanciful prose depicts the lad’s moods and actions delicately and perceptively, to the very end.”
 —*Largehearted Boy*

“Martin has evocatively captured the sad parameters of Branwell’s world, revealing the pattern of his self-destructive path through life in a way that is painful but also memorable.”
 —*The Irish Times*

BRANWELL

A Novel of the Brontë Brother

DOUGLAS A. MARTIN

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY DARCEY STEINKE

An impressionistic reimagining of the life of the least-known Brontë sibling, Branwell—brother of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne; only son; opium eater; and restless artist. A new edition with an introduction by Darcey Steinke.

They must coax his hidden talent out into full bloom. He must be driven enough, in imagination, talented enough to support them all.

Branwell Brontë—brother of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne—has a childhood marked by tragedy and the weight of expectations. After the early deaths of his mother and a beloved older sister, he is kept away from school and tutored at home by his father, a curate, who rests all his ambitions for his children on his only son. Branwell grows up isolated in his family’s parsonage on the

moors, learning Latin and Greek, being trained in painting, and collaborating on endless stories and poems with his sisters. Yet while his sisters go on to write *Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Agnes Grey*, Branwell wanders from job to job, growing increasingly dependent on alcohol and opium and failing to become a great poet or artist. With rich, suggestive sentences “perfectly fitted to this famously imaginative, headstrong family” (*Publishers Weekly*), *Branwell* is a portrait of childhood dreams, thwarted desire, the confinements of gender—and an homage to the landscape and milieu that inspired some of the most revolutionary works of English literature. A new edition with an introduction by Darcey Steinke.

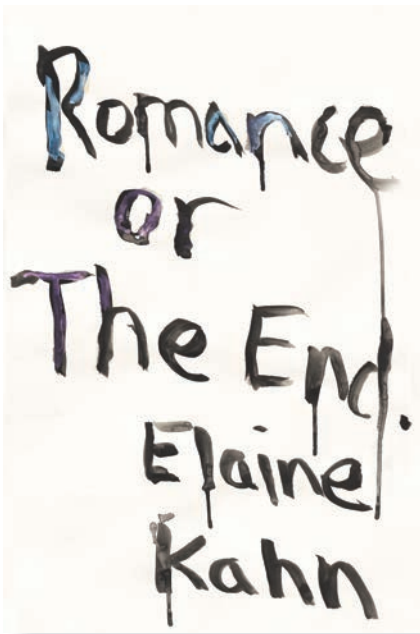


© Kelley Simons & Khader Syed

DOUGLAS A. MARTIN’s first novel, *Outline of My Lover*, was an International Book of the Year in *The Times Literary Supplement*, a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award, and adapted for the multimedia ballet/live film *Kammer/Kammer*. His books of poetry and prose include *In the Time of Assignments*, *Your Body Figured*, and *Acker*. He is coauthor of *The Haiku Year* and coeditor of *Kathy Acker: The Last Interview and Other Conversations*.

73DAM

douglasamartin

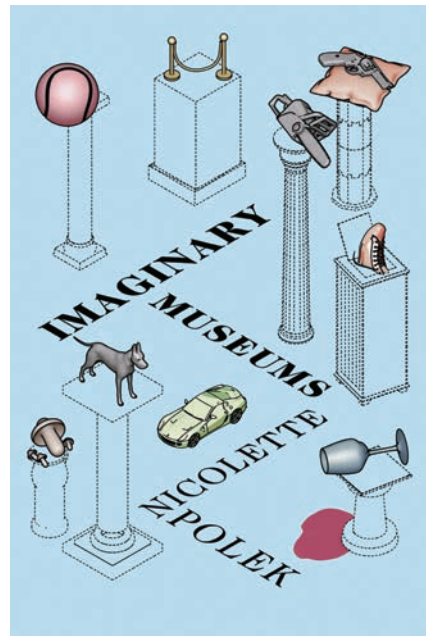


ROMANCE OR THE END: POEMS
Elaine Kahn

Poetry • Paperback • \$16.00 • 9781593765842 • 128 pages
Ebook Available • World Rights: Soft Skull Press

“Elaine Kahn’s poems touch me somewhere deep. I don’t know how or why, but I’m willing to go wherever she wants to take me.”

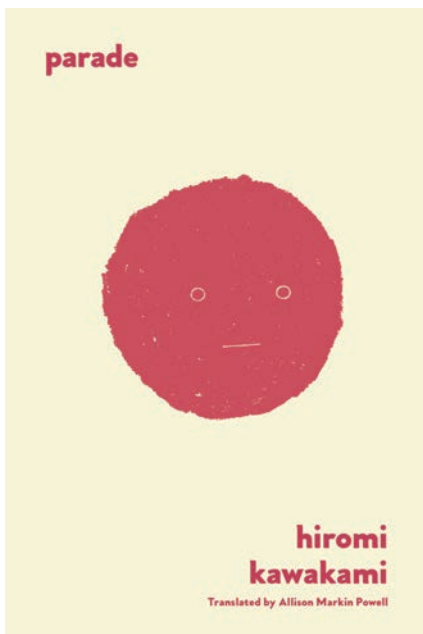
—Kim Gordon



IMAGINARY MUSEUMS: STORIES
Nicolette Polek

Fiction • Paperback • \$15.95 • 9781593765866 • 128 pages
Ebook Available • World Rights: Soft Skull Press

By a winner of the 2019 Rona Jaffe Foundation
Writers’ Award



PARADE: A FOLKTALE
Hiromi Kawakami
Translated from the Japanese
by Allison Markin Powell

Fiction • Paperback • \$11.95 • 9781593765804 • 96 pages
Ebook Available • North American Rights: Soft Skull Press
Rights Sold: UK/Comm (Granta) • All Other Rights: The Wylie Agency

“Kawakami’s compact novel is gentle, charming and smart.”

—Publishers Weekly



EXQUISITE MARIPOSA: A NOVEL
Fiona Alison Duncan

Fiction • Paperback • \$16.95 • 9781593765781 • 192 pages
Ebook Available • World Rights: Soft Skull Press

“Highbrow and lowbrow; about everything and nothing; and wholly of this particular cultural moment—in a good way . . . Duncan has written a sharp and astute work of metafiction. An original, insightful debut that doesn’t quite fit in a box—but checks them all.”

—Kirkus Reviews (starred review)

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