Coffee House Press began as a small letterpress operation in 1972 and has grown into an internationally renowned non-profit publisher of literary fiction, essay, poetry, and other work that doesn’t fit neatly into genre categories.

Coffee House is both a publisher and an arts organization. Through our Books in Action program and publications, we’ve become interdisciplinary collaborators and incubators for new work and audience experiences. Our vision for the future is one where a publisher is a catalyst and connector.

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After the Winter
A novel by Guadalupe Nettel
Translated by Rosalind Harvey

In Havana, Paris, and New York City, Claudio and Cecilia succumb to our implacable movement toward love.

Claudio’s apartment faces a wall. Rising from bed, he sets his feet on the floor at the same time, to ground himself. Cecilia sits at her window, contemplating a cemetery, the radio her best companion. In parallel and entwining stories that move from Havana to Paris to New York City, no routine, no argument for the pleasures of solitude, can withstand our most human drive to find ourselves in another and fall in love. And no depth of emotion can protect us from love’s inevitable loss.

“This taut, atmospheric novel is an ode to the complicated heartbreak of loving what will forever be just out of reach.”
—LAURA VAN DEN BERG

PRAISE FOR GUADALUPE NETTEL:

“Nettel offers her keen attention and sympathy to any living thing struggling to get by.”
—NEW YORK TIMES

GUADALUPE NETTEL was voted one of the thirty-nine most important Latin American writers under the age of thirty-nine at the Bogotá Hay Festival in 2006. She has lived in Montreal and Paris and is now based in Mexico City. Her previous books include Natural Histories and The Body Where I Was Born.

ROSALIND HARVEY is an award-winning literary translator and a teaching fellow at the University of Warwick. She has worked on books by Guadalupe Nettel, Elvira Navarro, Enrique Vila-Matas, and Héctor Abad Faciolince, among others.
When Samuel Johnson dies, he finds himself in the body of the man who killed him, unable to leave this plane or return to the son he left behind. Moving from body to body as each one expires, he inhabits a series of lives as stymied, in many ways, as his own. As Samuel Johnson migrates between men and women, young and old, he offers us a watchful consideration of the ways experience is mediated, the unstoppable drive for human connection, and the struggle to be more fully alive in the world.

“John Donne once proclaimed, ‘I sing the progress of a deathless soul.’ Well, so does Martin Riker. His Samuel Johnson’s Eternal Return is a masterpiece of metempsychosis. That it also warbles and bellows so brilliantly about fatherhood and husbandhood, about the religious life and the mediated life, is an indication of Riker’s range, which is as rolling-field-expansive as his empathy.”

—JOSHUA COHEN,
AUTHOR OF MOVING KINGS

MARTIN RIKER grew up in central Pennsylvania. He worked as a musician for most of his twenties, worked in nonprofit literary publishing for most of his thirties, and has spent the first half of his forties teaching in the English department at Washington University in St. Louis. In 2010, he and his wife, Danielle Dutton, cofounded the feminist press Dorothy, a Publishing Project. His fiction and criticism have appeared in publications including the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, London Review of Books, the Baffler, and Conjunctions. This is his first novel.
In relationships, there’s always you, me, and an interstitial presence—another person, a former self, a future lover.

Old relationships, past selves, hopes for the future—two people are never alone in a love story. In ten short fictions, May-Lan Tan unspools worlds within worlds, the possibilities we seek out again and again, and the seemingly endless churn through self-invention and self-annihilation that is our search for connection. Sleeping with your sister’s husband’s brother, betraying bandmates, contriving to strike up a friendship with your boyfriend’s ex—Tan makes visible how all our dead ends are really mirrors, proxies for something else, and reflections that keep us from seeing our way forward.

“There’s plenty of darkness and a sprinkling of magic, and these strange, flinty, cigarette-stained narratives speed by, offering lots of surface tension and compelling deeper passions.”

—THE GUARDIAN

“Tan is a cinematic writer in the same way some directors are literary—think David Lynch at his most Guignol.”

—TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

MAY-LAN TAN studied fine art at Goldsmiths and works as a ghostwriter. Her stories have appeared in Zoetrope: All-Story, the Atlas Review, the Reader, and Areté. She lives in Berlin.

EMILY BOOKS is a publishing project and e-book subscription service that champions transgressive, genre-blurring writing by (mostly) women. Its founders are Ruth Curry and Emily Gould.

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Savage Conversations
Fiction by LeAnne Howe

The 1862 mass execution of thirty-eight Dakota nightly haunts Mary Todd Lincoln, institutionalized and alone with her ghosts.

November 1873. Mary Todd Lincoln is confined to the Bellevue Place Sanitarium for insanity, where she talks to the Savage Indian and the sentient Rope, both reminders of her husband’s decision to hang thirty-eight Dakota in 1862 Mankato, the largest mass execution in U.S. history. Part theater of the absurd, part highly stylized biography, part historical archive, this daring cross-genre narrative traces the limits of one woman’s sanity, the betrayals of a family, and the contradictions and crimes on which the U.S. is founded.

PRAISE FOR LEANNE HOWE:

“How does she do it? Cross Rocky Horror Picture Show with War and Peace in a voice that sings America’s song as deeply as the best musical poetry of Walt Whitman? But no, Howe’s voice is so utterly unique, comparisons can’t do her justice.” —SUSAN POWER

“Let her lead you into history, intrigue, comedy and comic insight, even mystery, yes, as she impels you and other readers toward decolonization with attitude! A very fine and fulfilling read.” —SIMON J. ORTIZ

LEANNE HOWE is a poet, fiction writer, filmmaker, and playwright and a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Howe worked as a newspaper journalist for twelve years before earning an MFA from Vermont College. Her honors include a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers Circle of the Americas, an American Book Award, and a United States Artists Ford Fellowship. She is the Eidson Distinguished Professor in American Literature at the University of Georgia.
An Orphanage of Dreams
Stories by Sam Savage

Piquant, elegiac, surreal short portraits of animals, human and otherwise, sketching a vision of life as a measure of loss.

Sam Savage’s final book is a collection of stripped down visitations, flash fictions of smoke breaks and long drives and friends who finally stop showing up. The acid tang of disappointment is here, and sparks of biting insight, in portraits of people and animals, in all our absurdity and failed attempts at meaning. As Sam says, “What a life.”

PRAISE FOR SAM SAVAGE:

“Savage’s is a book of the heart as much as the head. Which is itself an accomplishment of no small note: to recognize the arbitrary, degraded thing that is memory, and allow it its loveliness for all of that.”

—NEW YORK TIMES

“Savage’s lean, meditative novels, so meticulously pitched and poised, eschew the bloated excess and garish dazzle that can mar those from writers half his age.”

—STAR TRIBUNE

SAM SAVAGE is the best-selling author of Firmin: Adventures of a Metropolitan Low-life, The Cry of the Sloth, Glass, The Way of the Dog, and It Will End with Us. A native of South Carolina, Savage holds a PhD in philosophy from Yale University. He was a finalist for the Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers Award, the PEN/New England Award, and the Society of Midland Authors Award. Savage resides in Madison, Wisconsin.

ALSO AVAILABLE:
- The Cry of the Sloth
  - $14.95 • Trade Paper
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Since When
A memoir by Bill Berkson

Frank O’Hara, Marilyn Monroe, John Cage, Allen Ginsberg—champagne-soaked postwar Manhattan and bohemian 1960s San Francisco come alive in Berkson’s memoirs.

Bill Berkson was a poet, art critic, bon vivant, and joyful participant in the best of postwar and bohemian American culture. Since When gathers the ephemera of a life well lived, a collage of boldface names, parties, exhibitions, and literary history from a man who could write “of [Truman Capote’s Black and White] ball, which I attended as my mother’s escort, I have little recollection” and reminisce about imagining himself as a character from Tolstoy while tripping on acid at Woodstock. Gentle, witty, and eternally generous, this is Bill, and a particular moment in American history at its best.

“Imagine an ideal friend, someone of good character, honorable, congenial, smart, well-read, judicious, articulate, self-aware, open-minded, and socially graceful, a gifted writer at the center of New York’s and the Bay Area’s artistic communities for sixty years. That ideal friend is Bill Berkson, and in this marvelous book he tells the true and fascinating story of his life and times.”

—RON PADGETT

BILL BERKSON was a poet, critic, teacher, and curator. He collaborated with many artists and writers, including Alex Katz, Philip Guston, and Frank O’Hara, and his criticism appeared in ARTnews, Art in America, and elsewhere. Formerly a professor of liberal arts at the San Francisco Art Institute, he was born in New York in 1939. He died in June 2016.
Mitochondrial Night
Poetry by Ed Bok Lee

Poems that trace paths through time, genealogy, and geography, locating the generational legacy of history.

FROM MITOCHONDRIAL NIGHT:

We’re drumming, he explained, in the tradition of shamans, so the ancestors won’t be so lonely. Because spirits need us more than we need them. And for hours they’ll listen to anyone.

PRAISE FOR ED BOK LEE:

“There is a nomadic beauty to Ed Bok Lee’s Whorled, which pulses with raw political anger and vital lyricism.”
—THE GUARDIAN

“These poems work in powerful concert to give body to an entire world of beauty, terror, loss, grief, and joy. The strength and magnetism of Lee’s voice come from his mind’s profound awareness of a person’s embeddedness in a context simultaneously personal and archetypal; social, historical, political, and cosmic.”
—LI-YOUNG LEE

ED BOK LEE is the author of Whorled, a recipient of the 2012 American Book Award and the Minnesota Book Award in Poetry, and Real Karaoke People, a recipient of the 2006 PEN Open Book Award and the Asian American Literary Award (Members’ Choice). Lee grew up in South Korea, North Dakota, and Minnesota and was educated there, on both u.s. coasts, in Russia, and in Kazakhstan.

ALSO AVAILABLE:
• Whorled
  $16.95 • Trade Paper

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Spectra
Poetry by Ashley Toliver

Generous, penetrating, relentlessly sonic poems that record the creative potential of the body and the boundaries of the self.

FROM SPECTRA:

Dear night possessor: your funeral barge rocked tight in the fisting water makes small winter melodies. The light ends a pattern we learned to stupefy by motion or admitting away. A statutory list puts the blame on the hour. You move as I move, whistling measures in salt grass, patient and guarded processions. At night, the line is a current to wade through: older names sifting past the flotsam, the water rising up to here.

“Reading Spectra makes me feel like Toliver has stitched a new constellation into my mind; she has written that much dark, that much light.”

—HEATHER CHRISTLE, AUTHOR OF HELIOPAUSE

“Toliver’s innovative, open forms and imploring phrases accommodate the linked intricacies of mothering and loss. While reading Spectra I was reminded that feeling one’s way through the unknown can itself become a kind of unparalleled knowing.”

—CLAUDIA RANKINE

ASHLEY TOLIVER is the author of the chapbook Ideal Machine. Her work has been supported by fellowships from Oregon Literary Arts, Cave Canem, and the Academy of American Poets. She received her MFA from Brown University in 2013.
Now in Paperback

Stephen Florida
A novel by Gabe Habash

A troubled college wrestler in North Dakota falls in love and becomes increasingly unhinged during his final season.

PRAISE FOR STEPHEN FLORIDA:

“Habash has created a fascinating protagonist in Stephen, a hard-driven athlete with a convincingly thoughtful mind.”
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“Stephen Florida is brash and audacious; it’s not just one of the best novels of the year, it’s one of the best sports books to come along in quite a while.”
—NPR

“A striking, original, and coarsely poetic portrayal of a young man’s athletic and emotional quest.”
—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, BOXED AND STARRED REVIEW

“[Habash’s] writing is powerful and magnetic, with a quality that suggests it has been worked over to strip it bare of ornamentation but still leave it with a rare beauty that the greatest sportspeople, in a ring, on a court or on a pitch, can achieve.”
—THE GUARDIAN

“Habash writes about the raw physicality of wrestling better than anybody this side of John Irving. . . . A lively, occasionally harrowing journey into obsession.”
—KIRKUS

“Stephen Florida’s grim portrait of ambition led astray captures how competitiveness and masculinity can unravel those who blindly follow its codes.”
—THE ATLANTIC

GABE HABASH is the fiction reviews editor for Publishers Weekly. He holds an MFA from New York University and lives in New York.
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