

GRAYWOLF PRESS



Winter 2019



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Cover art: Gail Schneider, *Right Ear*

A play about the imagined fault line between
black and white lives by Claudia Rankine,
author of *Citizen: An American Lyric*

The White Card

A Play

CLAUDIA RANKINE

Claudia Rankine's first published play, *The White Card*, poses the essential question, Can American society progress if whiteness remains invisible?

Composed of two scenes, the play opens with a dinner party thrown by Virginia and Charles, an influential Manhattan couple, for up-and-coming artist Charlotte. Their conversation about art and representations of race spirals toward the devastation of Virginia and Charles's intentions. One year later, the second scene brings Charlotte and Charles into the artist's studio, and their confrontation raises both the stakes and the questions of what—and who—is actually on display.

Rankine's *The White Card* is a moving and revelatory distillation of racial divisions as experienced in the white spaces of the living room, the art gallery, the theater, and the imagination itself.

“The White Card stages a conversation that is both informed and derailed by the black/white American drama. The scenes in this one-act play, for all the characters’ disagreements, stalemates, and seeming impasses, explore what happens if one is willing to stay in the room when it is painful to bear the pressure to listen and the obligation to respond.”
—Claudia Rankine

“Playwright and poet Claudia Rankine steps boldly into the breach to begin a conversation and challenges us to stay in the room in *The White Card*, her groundbreaking piece of theater. . . . By the end of the play, there is a sense that the characters have been altered by their raw, highly-charged encounters with each other.”
—*Broadway World*

“An intense and achingly relevant play. . . . Rankine observes the details of white complacency with piercing vision.”
—WBUR



Drama, 80 pages, 5½ x 8

Paperback, \$16.00

March

978-1-55597-839-6

Ebook Available

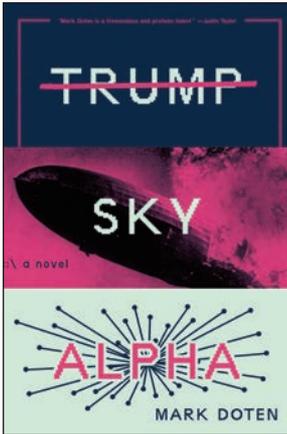
Brit., trans., audio, 1st ser., dram.:
Aragi, Inc.

ALSO AVAILABLE

Don't Let Me Be Lonely, Poetry/Essay,
Paperback (978-1-55597-407-7),
\$16.00

Citizen, Poetry/Essay, Paperback
(978-1-55597-690-3), \$20.00

CLAUDIA RANKINE is the author of five works of poetry, including *Citizen: An American Lyric*, a *New York Times* best seller and winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award. She is a MacArthur Fellow and Iseman Professor of Poetry at Yale University.



Fiction, 192 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

February

978-1-55597-828-0

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., 1st ser., audio, dram.:
The Clegg Agency

ALSO AVAILABLE

The Infernal, Fiction, Paperback
(978-1-55597-701-6), \$18.00

MARK DOTEN is the author of *The Infernal*. One of *Granta's* Best of Young American Novelists of 2017, he is the literary fiction editor at Soho Press and teaches in Columbia University's graduate writing program. He lives in Brooklyn.

A novel on the political madness of our
time and the internet's deep workings,
by the author of *The Infernal*

Trump Sky Alpha

A Novel

MARK DOTEN

Twice a week, the president pilots his ultraluxury airship *Trump Sky Alpha* (seats start at \$50,000), delivering, as he travels between DC, NYC, and Mar-a-Lago, a streaming YouTube address to the nation, in which he trumpets his successes and blasts his enemies—until the day his words plunge the world into nuclear war. One year later, with 90 percent of the world's population destroyed, a journalist named Rachel has taken refuge in the Twin Cities Metro Containment Zone. Rachel goes on assignment to document the final throes of humor on the internet in those moments before the end, hoping along the way to discover the final resting place of her wife and daughter.

What she uncovers, hidden amid spiraling memes and Twitter jokes in a working archive of the internet's remnants, are references to a little-known book that inspired a shadowy hacktivist group called the Aviary. Their role in the downfall of the internet, and the enigmatic presence of a figure known only as Birdcrash, take on immense and terrifying dimensions as Rachel ventures further into the ruins of the internet. Mark Doten, a satirist of unparalleled vision, brilliantly details how the internet has infiltrated every aspect of our lives, laying the groundwork for the tumult of our current political moment, and, in the kaleidoscopic, queer, all-consuming, parallax swirl of *Trump Sky Alpha*, for the future headed our way.

Praise for *The Infernal*

"Doten's debut is the most audaciously imaginative political novel I've ever read. . . . The sheer poundage of originality is remarkable."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

"Thrilling inventiveness and wild, dark humor. . . . Every bit as harrowing to consider as the inane and bloodthirsty era it depicts." —*The Believer*

An eerie, watery reimagining of the Oedipus myth set on the canals of Oxford, from the author of *Fen*

Everything Under

A Novel

DAISY JOHNSON

The dictionary doesn't contain every word. Gretel, a lexicographer by trade, knows this better than most. She grew up on a houseboat with her mother, wandering the canals of Oxford and speaking a private language of their own invention. Her mother disappeared when Gretel was a teen, abandoning her to foster care, and Gretel has tried to move on, spending her days updating dictionary entries.

One phone call from her mother is all it takes for the past to come rushing back. To find her, Gretel will have to recover buried memories of her final, fateful winter on the canals. A runaway boy had found community and shelter with them, and all three were haunted by their past and stalked by an ominous creature lurking in the canal: the bonak. Everything and nothing at once, the bonak was Gretel's name for the thing she feared most. And now that she's searching for her mother, she'll have to face it.

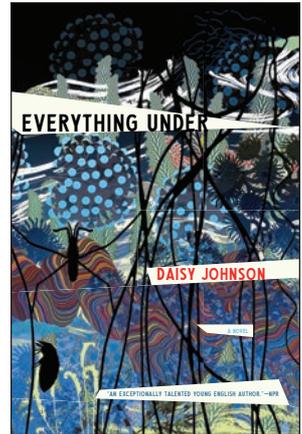
In this electrifying reinterpretation of a classical myth, Daisy Johnson explores questions of fate and free will, gender fluidity, and fractured family relationships. *Everything Under*, a debut novel whose surreal, watery landscape will resonate with fans of *Fen*, is a daring, moving story that will leave you unsettled and unstrung.

Praise for *Fen*

"Dazzling . . . one hell of an experience." —NPR.org

"*Fen* blew my mind. Daisy Johnson is a new goddamn swaggering monster of fiction." —Lauren Groff

"Johnson has a marshy imagination and wind-whipped prose. . . . The privations of rural teenage existence yield wild and elemental bewitchments." —*The New York Times Book Review*



Fiction, 272 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

January

978-1-55597-826-6

Ebook Available

Brit.: Random House Group Ltd
Trans., dram.: Eve White Literary
Agency

1st ser., audio: Graywolf Press

ALSO AVAILABLE:

Fen, Fiction, Paperback
(978-1-55597-774-0), \$16.00

DAISY JOHNSON is the author of the short story collection *Fen*. She is the winner of the *Harper's Bazaar* Short Story Prize, the A. M. Heath Prize, and the Edge Hill Short Story Prize. She currently lives in Oxford, England, by the river.

An Excerpt from *The Collected Schizophrenias*

Schizophrenia terrifies. It is the archetypal disorder of lunacy. Craziness scares us because we are creatures who long for structure and sense; we divide the interminable days into years, months, and weeks. We hope for ways to corral and control bad fortune, illness, unhappiness, discomfort, and death—all inevitable outcomes that we pretend are anything but. And still, the fight against entropy seems wildly futile in the face of schizophrenia, which shirks reality in favor of its own internal logic.

People speak of schizophrenics as though they were dead without being dead, gone in the eyes of those around them. Schizophrenics are victims of the Russian word *гибель* (*gibel*), which is synonymous with “doom” and “catastrophe”—not necessarily death nor suicide, but a ruinous cessation of existence; we deteriorate in a way that is painful for others. Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas defines “schizophrenic presence” as the psychodynamic experience of “being with [a schizophrenic] who has seemingly crossed over from the human world to the non-human environment,” because other human catastrophes can bear the weight of human narrative—war, kidnapping, death—but schizophrenia’s built-in chaos resists sense. Both *gibel* and “schizophrenic presence” address the suffering of those who are adjacent to the one who is suffering in the first place.

Because the schizophrenic does suffer. I have been psychically lost in a pitch-dark room. There is the ground, which may be nowhere other than immediately below my own numbed feet. Those foot-shaped anchors are the only trustworthy landmarks. If I make a wrong move, I’ll have to face the gruesome consequence. In this bleak abyss the key is to not be afraid, because fear, though inevitable, only compounds the awful feeling of being lost.

Powerful, affecting essays on mental illness,
winner of the Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize
and a Whiting Award

The Collected Schizophrenias

Essays

ESMÉ WEIJUN WANG

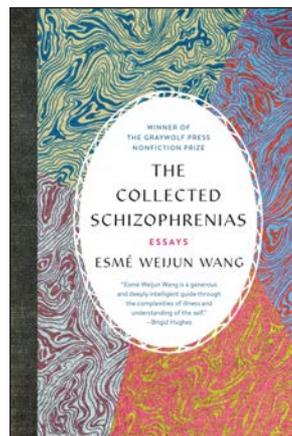
An intimate, moving book written with the immediacy and directness of one who still struggles with the effects of mental and chronic illness, *The Collected Schizophrenias* cuts right to the core. Schizophrenia is not a single unifying diagnosis, and Esmé Weijun Wang writes not just to her fellow members of the “collected schizophrenias” but to those who wish to understand it as well. Opening with the journey toward her diagnosis of schizoaffective disorder, Wang discusses the medical community’s own disagreement about labels and procedures for diagnosing those with mental illness, and then follows an arc that examines the manifestations of schizophrenia in her life. In essays that range from using fashion to present as high-functioning to the depths of a rare form of psychosis, and from the failures of the higher education system and the dangers of institutionalization to the complexity of compounding factors such as PTSD and Lyme disease, Wang’s analytical eye, honed as a former lab researcher at Stanford, allows her to balance research with personal narrative. An essay collection of undeniable power, *The Collected Schizophrenias* dispels misconceptions and provides insight into a condition long misunderstood.

“Esmé Weijun Wang is a generous and deeply intelligent guide through the complexities of illness and understanding of the self.”

—Brigid Hughes, Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize judge

“Revelatory dispatches from an under-mapped land. . . . [Wang’s] work changes the way we think about illness—which is to say that it changes us.”

—Citation for the Whiting Award



Nonfiction, 224 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

February

978-1-55597-827-3

Ebook Available

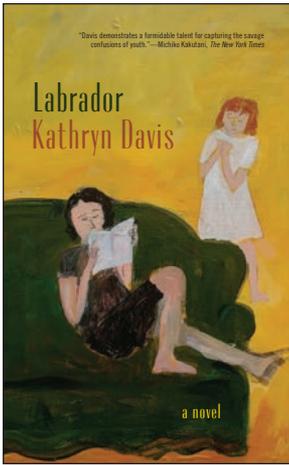
Brit.: Graywolf Press

Audio: Brilliance

Trans., 1st ser., dram.: The Wylie Agency

The Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize is funded in part by endowed gifts from the Arsham Ohanessian Charitable Remainder Unitrust and the Ruth Easton Fund of the Edelstein Family Foundation.

ESMÉ WEIJUN WANG is the author of *The Border of Paradise*. She received the Whiting Award in 2018 and was named one of *Granta*'s Best of Young American Novelists of 2017. She holds an MFA from the University of Michigan and lives in San Francisco.



Fiction, 232 pages, 5 x 8

Paperback, \$16.00

March

978-1-55597-830-3

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., 1st ser., audio, dram.:

The Wylie Agency

Back in print, Kathryn Davis's riveting debut about the indelible pacts and hidden hatreds of sisterhood

Labrador

A Novel

KATHRYN DAVIS

Labrador is the story of two unforgettable sisters. Willie, the elder, is willful, beautiful, and wayward; to Kitty, the younger, she is the radiant center around which everything revolves. Kitty, too, is willful, but in the brooding manner of the inveterate loner. She is the one who is visited by an angel, Rogni, who reshapes her beliefs by telling her eerie, enigmatic fables that defy time and place, parables about bears, martyrs, and imprisoned daughters that seem to contain warnings about betrayals and violence to come. In the pared down landscape of the far north, where the girls' grandfather has his home, Kitty escapes the orbit of her sister and begins to come to terms with the demons—and the enchantments—that have been her birthright from the start.

In her first novel, Kathryn Davis conjures a bewitching tale of the rifts and reparation that occur between two girls who are nothing alike but have only each other to turn to, all the while destabilizing our assumptions about what a coming-of-age story is supposed to be. In *Labrador* one can find the origins of Davis's hallmark lyricism and startling narrative swerves, her layered atmospherics, her fierce intelligence and wit, and above all the wild and transformative qualities of her imagination.

"A disturbing yet lyrical portrait of two sisters and the peculiar dream world they inhabit. . . . Davis demonstrates a formidable talent for capturing the savage confusions of youth."

—Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

"A mysterious, magical book, brimming with haunting images."

—*Publishers Weekly*



© Anne Davis

A spellbinding novel about transience and mortality, by one of the most original voices in American literature

The Silk Road

A Novel

KATHRYN DAVIS

The Silk Road begins on a mat in yoga class, deep within a labyrinth on a settlement somewhere in the icy north, under the canny guidance of Jee Moon. When someone fails to arise from corpse pose, the Astronomer, the Archivist, the Botanist, the Keeper, the Topologist, the Geographer, the Iceman, and the Cook remember the paths that brought them there—paths on which they still seem to be traveling.

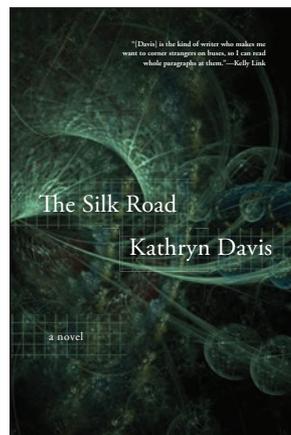
The Silk Road also begins in rivalrous skirmishing for favor, in the protected Eden of childhood, and it ends in the harrowing democracy of mortality, in sickness and loss and death. Kathryn Davis's sleight of hand brings the past, present, and future forward into brilliant coexistence; in an endlessly shifting landscape, her characters make their way through ruptures, grief, and apocalypse, from existence to nonexistence, from embodiment to pure spirit.

Since the beginning of her extraordinary career, Davis has been fascinated by journeys. Her books have been shaped around road trips, walking tours, hegiras, exiles: and now, in this triumphant novel, a pilgrimage. *The Silk Road* is her most explicitly allegorical novel and also her most profound vehicle; supple and mesmerizing, the journey here is not undertaken by a single protagonist but by a community of separate souls—a family, a yoga class, a generation. Its revelations are ravishing and desolating.

Praise for Kathryn Davis

“Davis writes with a stunning visual brilliance, creating fractured worlds that are both extraordinary and routine.” —*The Boston Globe*

“Davis belongs to a rare tribe of writers who successfully fuse relationships with metaphysics.” —*Slate*



Fiction, 144 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Hardcover, \$24.00

March

978-1-55597-829-7

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., 1st ser., audio, dram.:
The Wylie Agency

ALSO AVAILABLE

Duplex, Fiction, Paperback
(978-1-55597-691-0), \$16.00

KATHRYN DAVIS is the author of seven novels, most recently *Duplex*. She is the senior fiction writer on the faculty of the Writing Program at Washington University.

An Excerpt from *Deaf Republic*

Our country woke up next morning and refused to hear soldiers.

In the name of Petya, we refuse.

At six a.m., when soldiers compliment girls in the alley, the girls slide by, pointing to their ears. At eight, the bakery door is shut in soldier Ivanoff's face, though he's their best customer. At ten, Momma Galya chalks NO ONE HEARS YOU on the gates of the soldiers' barracks.

By eleven a.m., arrests begin.

Our hearing doesn't weaken, but something silent in us strengthens.

—from “Deafness, an Insurgency, Begins”

Advance Praise for *Deaf Republic*

“Pulse-quickenning, glinting like unburied ore, grounded equally in the imaginative, political, moral, and personal realms, *Deaf Republic* is a thunderclap book. American poetry needs what Ilya Kaminsky's performative, possibility-enlarging, boundlessly surprising pages bring to it. Or at least, I do.” —**Jane Hirshfield**

“*Deaf Republic* is a stunning and prescient drama, like the best books of Márquez and Kundera. Not many American poets, not many poets anywhere, are engaged in this kind of work. I think that *Deaf Republic* will be a splendid, groundbreaking moment. Reading this book, my overwhelming sense is admiration and pleasure.” —**Kwame Dawes**

“I read *Deaf Republic* with feverish excitement and deepening wonder. There is rage in these pages, urgency and force and also a great, redeeming beauty. Ilya Kaminsky's lines buzz with a kind of electric freshness; reading them is like laying your hand on the live wire of poetry. He's the most brilliant poet of his generation, one of the world's few geniuses.” —**Garth Greenwell**

Praise for Ilya Kaminsky

“Ilya Kaminsky proceeds like a perfect gardener—he grafts the gifts of the Russian newer literary tradition on the American tree of poetry and forgetting.” —**Adam Zagajewski**

“Kaminsky is more than a promising young poet; he is a poet of promise fulfilled. I am in awe of his gifts.” —**Carolyn Forché**

Ilya Kaminsky's astonishing parable in poems asks us, What is silence?

Deaf Republic

Poems

ILYA KAMINSKY

Deaf Republic opens in a time of political unrest in an occupied territory. Though it is uncertain of where we are or when, in what country or during what conflict, we recognize that it could be Russia, or more likely the United States, as well it could be the distant past, but it is happening right now.

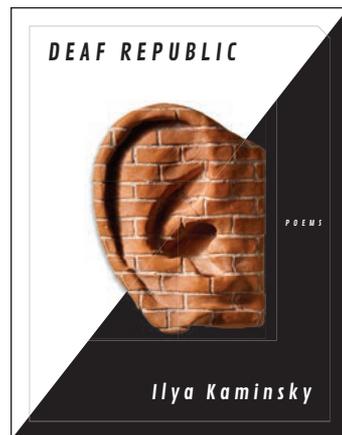
Lyrical and propulsive and exquisitely made, the poems unfold episodically like a play, its powerful narrative provoked by a tragic opening scene. When soldiers breaking up a protest kill a deaf boy, Petya, the gunshot becomes the last thing the citizens hear—in that moment, all have gone deaf. Inside this literal and metaphorical silence, their dissent becomes coordinated by sign language. The story then follows the private lives of townspeople encircled by public violence: a newly married couple, Alfonso and Sonya, expecting their child; the brash Momma Galya, instigating the insurgency from her puppet theater; and Galya's girls, heroically teaching signs by day and by night luring soldiers one by one to their deaths behind the curtain.

At once a love story, an elegy, and an urgent plea, *Deaf Republic* confronts our time's vicious atrocities and our collective silence in the face of them. This terrifying, beautiful, and supremely original book could have only been written by Ilya Kaminsky, who with this long-awaited new work affirms his place as one of our most dazzling and important poets.



© Cybele Knowles, 2013, courtesy of
The University of Arizona Poetry Center

ILYA KAMINSKY was born in the former Soviet Union and is now an American citizen. He is the author of a previous poetry collection, the award-winning *Dancing in Odessa*, and coeditor of *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry*. He was a 2014 finalist for the Neustadt International Prize for Literature, and has received numerous honors, including a Whiting Award, a Lannan Literary Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. His work has been translated into more than twenty languages.



Poetry, 80 pages, 7 x 9

Paperback, \$16.00

March

978-1-55597-831-0

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., audio, dram.:

Graywolf Press

1st ser.: Author c/o Graywolf Press

A brilliant second collection by
Sally Wen Mao on the violence of the spectacle

Oculus

Poems

SALLY WEN MAO

In *Oculus*, Sally Wen Mao explores exile not just as a matter of distance and displacement, but as a migration through time and a reckoning with technology. The title poem follows a girl in Shanghai who uploaded her suicide onto Instagram. Other poems cross into animated worlds, examine robot culture, and haunt a necropolis for electronic waste. A fascinating sequence speaks in the voice of international icon and first Chinese American movie star Anna May Wong, who travels through the history of cinema with a time machine, even past her death and into the future of film, where she finds she has no progeny. With a speculative imagination and a sharpened wit, Mao powerfully confronts the paradoxes of seeing and being seen, the intimacies made possible and ruined by the screen, and the many roles and representations that women of color are made to endure in order to survive a culture that seeks to consume them.

**I've tried so hard to erase myself.
That iconography—my face
in Technicolor, the manta ray
eyelashes, the nacre and chignon.
I'll bet four limbs they'd cast me as another
Mongol slave. I will blow a hole
in the airwaves, duck lasers in my dugout.
I'm done kidding them. Today I fly
the hell out in my Chrono-Jet.
To the future, where I'm forgotten.
—from "Anna May Wong Fans Her Time Machine"**

Praise for *Mad Honey Symposium*

"These visionary poems are not only astute records of experience, they are themselves dazzling, verbal experiences."
—Terrance Hayes



Poetry, 136 pages, 7 x 9

Paperback, \$16.00

January

978-1-55597-825-9

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., audio, dram.:

Graywolf Press

1st ser.: Author c/o Graywolf Press

SALLY WEN MAO is the author of a previous poetry collection, *Mad Honey Symposium*. Her work has won a Pushcart Prize and fellowships at Kundiman, George Washington University, and the New York Public Library Cullman Center.

A brilliant work of historical excavation
with profound echoes in an age redolent with
violence and xenophobia

The House of the Pain of Others

Chronicle of a Small Genocide

JULIÁN HERBERT

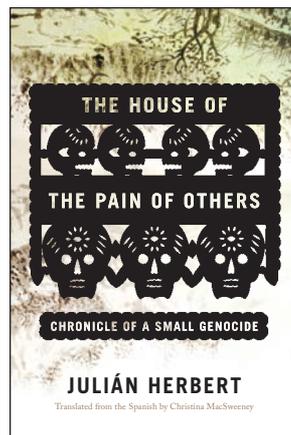
TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY
CHRISTINA MACSWEENEY

Early in the twentieth century, amid the myths of progress and modernity that underpinned Mexico's ruling party, some three hundred Chinese immigrants—close to half of the Cantonese residents of the newly founded city of Torreón—were massacred over the course of three days. It is considered the largest slaughter of Chinese people in the history of the Americas, an attempted extermination that was followed by denial or empty statements of regret. The massacre reverberated briefly before fading from collective memory. More than a century later, the facts continue to be elusive, mistaken, and repressed.

“And what do you know about the Chinese people who were killed here?” Julián Herbert asks anyone who will listen. An exorcism of persistent and discomfiting ghosts, *The House of the Pain of Others* attempts a reckoning with the 1911 massacre. Blending reportage, personal reflection, essay, and academic treatise, Herbert talks to taxi drivers and historians, travels to the scene of the crime, and digs deep into archives that contain conflicting testimony. Looping, digressive, and cinematic, this *crónica* vividly portrays the historical context as well as the lives of the perpetrators and victims of the “small genocide.” It is a distinctly twenty-first-century sort of western, a tremendous literary performance that extends and enlarges the accomplishments of a significant international writer.

“An ambitious chronicle that describes a traumatic chapter in the country's history, a reality in dialogue with the present that allows [Herbert] to launch grenades at themes like migration, sinophobia, injustice, racism, and envy.”

—Juan Carlos Talavera, *Excelsior* (Mexico)



Nonfiction, 304 pages, 5½ × 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

April

978-1-55597-837-2

Ebook Available

Brit., 1st ser., audio: Graywolf Press
Trans., dram.: Penguin Random
House Grupo Editorial

ALSO AVAILABLE

Tomb Song, Fiction, Paperback
(978-1-55597-799-3), \$16.00

JULIÁN HERBERT was born in Acapulco in 1971. He is a writer, musician, and teacher, and is the author of *Tomb Song* as well as several volumes of poetry and two story collections. He lives in Saltillo, Mexico.

An Excerpt from *The Gulf*

“This was a bad idea,” she told Eric over Skype, her laptop screen angled to show a recently scrubbed fridge and towering pile of manuscripts. “Here is what you should do: sell this place for the land, then refund all these application fees.”

Eric Osborne—her best friend, ex-fiancé, and business partner—had recently abandoned her for the United Arab Emirates, where he had a semester-long gig teaching fiction. Marianne pictured him lazily eating figs and pomegranates, sunning himself next to a pool uncontaminated by algae or raccoons.

Skype’s slight delay, made worse by the way the internet here cut in and out, gave Eric’s normally calm and reassuring voice an annoyed and impatient edge. “Everything is mortgaged, we need to make money with what we have. Plus.” The screen froze for a moment. “Where will you go?”

“Maybe Dubai,” she said, squinting at the screen. The room behind Eric’s head glowed with an opulent golden light. There was a bookcase behind him filled with leather-bound volumes, and a sparkling chandelier. What kind of a fool did Eric think she was? “Do you know what I found in that minifridge behind me?”

“Trust me,” he said, and the screen froze again. “You wouldn’t. Like it here.”

“A condom,” she said. “Full of sand. I thought it was a penis, and I screamed, and there was no one here to hear me. Also: the applications,” she said, putting her eye up close to the camera so that all he could see of her was a big, staring eye. “They are crazy.”

“How many?”

“One hundred and twenty-three,” she said. “But I haven’t gotten the mail today. Or yesterday.” She groaned and lay back on the bed, remembering the last time she’d neglected the mail. The mailman had simply left a stack of envelopes on the ground.

“There are bound to be some good ones,” he said. “In a sample that large. Some. Interesting ones. Have you read. Them all?”

“Yes,” she said. “No.” The day before she’d tried to read a few, but stopped after coming across a series of poems that had been conceived, both in manuscript length and creativity of the punishments inflicted upon sinners, as a contemporary *Inferno*.

A hilarious sendup of writing workshops,
for-profit education, and the gulf between
believers and nonbelievers

The Gulf

A Novel

BELLE BOGGS

Marianne is in a slump: barely able to support herself teaching, not making progress on her poetry, about to lose her Brooklyn apartment. When her novelist ex-fiancé, Eric, and his venture capitalist brother, Mark, offer her a job directing a low-residency school for Christian writers at a motel they've inherited on Florida's Gulf Coast, she can't come up with a reason to say no.

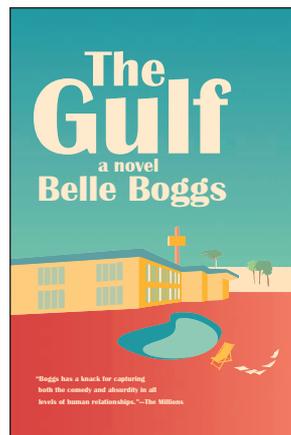
The Genesis Inspirational Writing Ranch is born, and liberal, atheist Marianne is soon knee-deep in applications from writers whose political and religious beliefs she has always opposed, but whose money she's glad to take. Janine is a schoolteacher whose heartfelt poems explore the final days of Terri Schiavo's life. Davonte is a former R & B superstar who hopes to reboot his career with a best-selling tale of excess and redemption. Lorraine and Tom, eccentric writers in need of paying jobs, join the Ranch as instructors.

Mark finds an investor in God's Word God's World, a business that develops for-profit schools for the Christian market, but the strings that come along with their support become increasingly problematic, especially as Marianne grows closer to the students. As unsavory allegations mount, a hurricane bears down on the Ranch, and Marianne is faced with the consequences of her decisions.

With sharp humor and deep empathy, in this timely debut novel Belle Boggs plumbs the troubled waters dividing America.

"Wit and humor abound in *The Gulf*, and so do great wisdom and compassion. With her wonderful short stories and essays, Belle Boggs has established herself as both a stellar writer of fiction and a brilliant voice on important issues within our society; in this fine novel, her many talents come together, delivering a community of memorable characters and a compelling story as suspenseful in its emotional twists and turns as the approaching hurricane."

—Jill McCorkle



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BELLE BOGGS is the author of *The Art of Waiting* and *Mattaponi Queen*. Her stories and essays have appeared in the *Paris Review*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Slate*, and elsewhere. She teaches in the MFA program at North Carolina State University.

Winner of the Walt Whitman Award of the
Academy of American Poets, selected by Joy Harjo

Brute

Poems

EMILY SKAJA

Emily Skaja's debut collection is a fiery, hypnotic book that confronts the dark questions and menacing silences around gender, sexuality, and violence. *Brute* arises, brave and furious, from the dissolution of a relationship, showing how such endings necessitate self-discovery and reinvention.

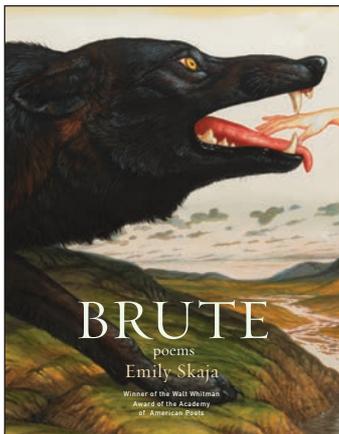
The speaker of these poems is a sorceress, a bride, a warrior, a lover, both object and agent, ricocheting among ways of knowing and being known. Each incarnation squares itself up against ideas of feminine virtue and sin, strength and vulnerability, love and rage as it closes in on a hard-won freedom. *Brute* is absolutely sure of its capacity to insist not only on the truth of what it says but the truth of its right to say it. "What am I supposed to say: I'm free?" the first poem asks. The rest of the poems emphatically discover new ways to answer. This is a timely winner of the Walt Whitman Award, and an introduction to an unforgettable voice.

**& where is that witch girl
unafraid of anything, flea-spangled little yard rat, runt
of no litter, queen, girl who wouldn't let a boy hit her,
girl refusing to be It in tag, pulling that fox hide
heavy around her like a flag? Let me look at her.
Tell her on my honor, I will set the wedding dress on fire
when I'm good & ready or she can bury me in it.**

—from "Brute Strength"

"*Brute*, though a collection of singular poems, is essentially one long, elegiac howl for the end of a relationship. It never lets up—this living—even when the world as we knew it is crushed. So what do we do with the brokenness? We document it, as Emily Skaja has done in *Brute*."

—Joy Harjo, judge's citation for the Walt Whitman Award



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EMILY SKAJA grew up in rural Illinois. She is a graduate of the creative writing MFA program at Purdue University. Her poems have been published in *Best New Poets*, *Blackbird*, *Crazyhorse*, *FIELD*, and *Gulf Coast*. She lives in Memphis.

Now in paperback, the extraordinary poetry collection by Tracy K. Smith, Poet Laureate of the United States

Wade in the Water

Poems

TRACY K. SMITH

In *Wade in the Water*, Pulitzer Prize winner Tracy K. Smith boldly ties America's contemporary moment both to our nation's fraught founding history and to a sense of the spirit, the everlasting. Here, private utterance becomes part of a larger choral arrangement as the collection includes erasures of the Declaration of Independence and correspondence between slave owners, a found poem composed of evidence of corporate pollution and accounts of near-death experiences, a sequence of letters written by African Americans enlisted in the Civil War, and the survivors' reports of recent immigrants and refugees. *Wade in the Water* is a potent and luminous book by one of America's essential poets.

**Even the men in black armor, the ones
Jangling handcuffs and keys, what else**

**Are they so buffered against, if not love's blade
Sizing up the heart's familiar meat?**

We watch and grieve. We sleep, stir, eat.

Love: the heart sliced open, gutted, clean.

**Love: naked almost in the everlasting street,
Skirt lifted by a different kind of breeze.**

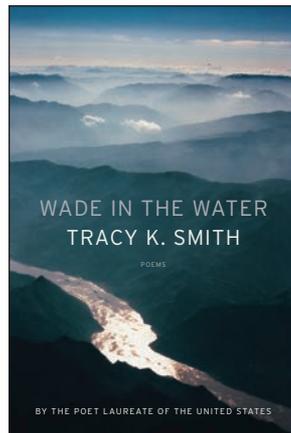
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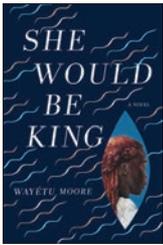
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TRACY K. SMITH is the Poet Laureate of the United States. She is the author of three previous poetry collections, including *Life on Mars*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and the editor of an anthology, *American Journal: Fifty Poems for Our Time*.

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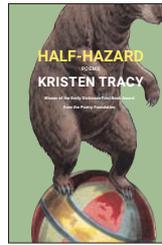


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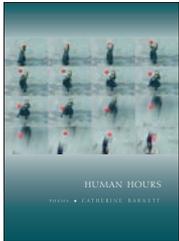


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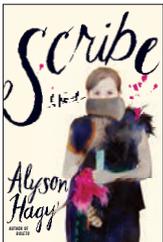


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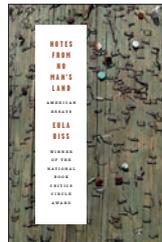


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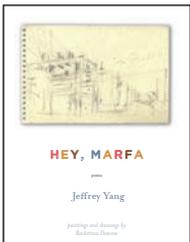


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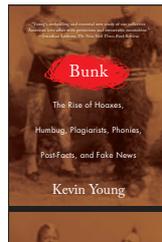


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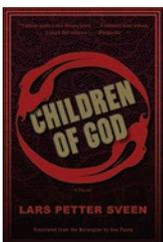


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