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**FOR SUBMISSION INQUIRIES, CONTACT:**

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**SAVE 40%**  
ON ALL BOOKS IN THIS CATALOG BY USING DISCOUNT CODE 6CW20

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Cover image: iStock.com / CSA Images.
Midwestern Strange
Hunting Monsters, Martians, and the Weird in Flyover Country

B.J. HOLLARS

A little bit *X-Files*, a little bit *Ghostbusters*, and a whole lot of *Sherlock Holmes*, *Midwestern Strange* chronicles B.J. Hollars’s exploration of the mythic, lesser-known oddities of flyover country, from bipedal wolf sightings to run-ins with pancake-flipping space aliens. The goal is not to confirm or debunk these mysteries, however. Instead, he seeks out these unexplained phenomena to understand how they complicate our worldview and to discover what “truths” might be gleaned by reexamining the facts in our “post-truth” era.

“What happens when a professor ventures out to discover the unusual? Werewolves, UFOs, and mysterious creatures become his field of study, the road becomes his classroom, and this book becomes your guide to adventure.” —Chad Lewis, author of *Minnesota Road Guide to Mysterious Creatures*

“In this intriguing travelogue of marvels, B.J. Hollars encounters werewolves, giant turtles, Mothmen, flying saucers, and other phantoms that haunt the landscape of flyover country. The real wonders in this extraordinary book, however, are the fascinating people that Hollars meets along the way. *Midwestern Strange* has something for those who want to believe as well as for those who are looking to find the human heart at the center of these charming tales of the unknown.” —Gregory L. Reece, author of *Creatures of the Night* and *Weird Science and Bizarre Beliefs*

“Crazy tales, from the turtle the size of a dining room table, which turned an Indiana family’s life upside down, to stories of pancake-flipping visitors from outer space. Hollars meets some fascinating people in this quirky account that contends with the ways such oddities retain cultural footholds.” —Marjie Ducey, *Omaha World-Herald*

2019 • 224 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½ • 15 photographs, 1 illustration
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1560-4
Bury My Heart at Chuck E. Cheese’s
Tiffany Midge

Foreword by Geary Hobson

Bury My Heart at Chuck E. Cheese’s is a powerful and compelling collection of Tiffany Midge’s musings on life, politics, and identity as a Native woman in America. Artfully blending sly humor, social commentary, and meditations on love and loss, Midge weaves short, stand-alone musings into a memoir that stares down colonialism while chastising hipsters for abusing pumpkin spice. Midge ponders Standing Rock, feminism, and a tweeting president, all while exploring her own complex identity and the loss of her mother. Employing humor as an act of resistance, these slices of life and matchless takes on urban-Indigenous identity disrupt the colonial narrative and provide commentary on popular culture, media, feminism, and the complications of identity, race, and politics.

“A cornucopia of literary brilliance. The Standing Rock Sioux writer’s wickedly funny autobiography offers laugh-out-loud passages alongside compassionate profiles, bitter sarcasm, and heartbreaking chronicles. . . . Every entry is so well-crafted that the only disappointment you’ll find is when you realize you’ve read them all. Then again, this is a book that demands to be reread.”—Ryan Winn, Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education

“Midge is a wry, astute charmer with an eye for detail and an ear for the scruffy rhythms of American lingo.”—Sarah Vowell, author of Lafayette in the Somewhat United States

“If you’re wondering why the presence of Andrew Jackson’s portrait in the Oval Office is offensive, this is your book.”—Kirkus

“[Midge’s] no-b.s., take-no-prisoners approach is likely to resound with twenty-something readers, but the older crowd ought to give Midge a look, too.”—Joan Curbow, Booklist

2019 • 216 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$24.95 • hardcover • 978-1-4962-1557-4
Out of the Crazywoods
CHERYL SAVAGEAU

*Out of the Crazywoods* is the riveting and insightful story of Abenaki poet Cheryl Savageau's late-life diagnosis of bipolar disorder. Without sensationalizing, she takes the reader inside the experience of a rapid-cycling variant of the disorder, providing a lens through which to understand it and a road map for navigating the illness. The structure of her story—impressionistic, fragmented—is an embodiment of the bipolar experience and a way of perceiving the world. Grounded in Abenaki culture, Savageau questions cultural definitions of madness and charts a path to recovery through a combination of medications, psychotherapy, and ceremony.

“With lyrical language and powerful episodic storytelling Cheryl Savageau brings luminous clarity to her experience of navigating the Crazywoods. She draws us into an inner world, both mythic and mystifying, of being bipolar, which at times reflects the dynamic intricacy of New England’s recovering forestland but also illuminates the ongoing activity and struggle of alnôbawôgan, being and becoming human.”—Lisa Brooks, author of *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*

“Savageau's luminous prose ripples, soars, and shines with grounded honesty, some biting humor, and richly textured sensory detail (some quite synesthetic). This is a compelling work of complex embodiment, complicated relations (with self and other), and careful narrative. It demonstrates how one writes identity and, too, how identity can be (well) written.”—Brenda Jo Brueggemann, editor of *Disability Studies Quarterly*

“Abenaki poet and memoirist Cheryl Savageau’s stunning collection of braided vignettes, leads us through the chaos many of us know, toward tenuous, hard-won places of compassion, joy, and possibility.”—Deborah A. Miranda, author of *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir*

May 2020 • 256 pp. • 6 x 9
$29.95 • hardcover • 978-1-4962-1903-9
American Indian Lives
Borderline Citizen
*Dispatches from the Outskirts of Nationhood*

**ROBIN HEMLEY**

What does it mean to be a citizen of the world in the twenty-first century? Robin Hemley wrestles with this question in *Borderline Citizen* as he takes the reader on a singular journey through the hinterlands of national identity. Part travelogue, part memoir, part reportage, *Borderline Citizen* redefines the notion of nationhood through an exploration of the arbitrariness of borders and what it means to belong to one nation, no nation, or several nations.

“In vividly rendered essays, Hemley takes us to some of history’s oddest bits of territory, showing how human lives are shaped (and often distorted) by arbitrary political boundaries. With superb storytelling, he explores the meanings of nationalism, sovereignty, citizenship, and the loyalties of the human heart.” —Corey Flintoff, former NPR foreign correspondent

“In these days of ultranationalism comes a surprising antidote in Robin Hemley’s cabinet of curiosities, *Borderline Citizen*, his account of his journeys to the ‘bits and bobs’ of national territories stranded by accidents of geography, history, and stubbornness. Hemley is a delightful guide, but there are serious questions for him to explore here as well—and lessons for all the mainlands and mother countries about the meaning and price of national identity. Quite possibly the most original travel book published in years.” —Jeff Sharlet, author of *The Family* and *This Brilliant Darkness*

March 2020 • 216 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½ • 3 photographs, 3 maps
$21.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-2041-7

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**AMERICAN LIVES**

**TOBIAS WOLFF, SERIES EDITOR**

The singular American life is a source of endless diversity, and the methods of telling this life are as important as the details themselves. The American Lives series, called “splendid” by *Newsweek*, features works of creative or literary memoir that, whether evoking moments of death or disease, in family or marriage, history, politics, religion, or culture, provide glimpses into individual American lives. Taken together, these stories coalesce into a richly textured and colorful portrait of our contemporary culture.
How to Survive Death and Other Inconveniences
SUE WILLIAM SILVERMAN

Many are haunted and obsessed by their own eventual deaths, but perhaps no one as much as Sue William Silverman. This thematically linked collection of essays charts Silverman’s attempt to confront her fears of that ultimate unknown. Her dread was fomented in part by a sexual assault, hidden for years, that led to an awareness that death and sex are in some ways inextricable, an everyday reality many women know too well.

Through gallows humor, vivid realism, and fantastical speculation, How to Survive Death and Other Inconveniences explores this fear of death and the author’s desire to survive it. From cruising New Jersey’s industry-blighted landscape in a gold Plymouth to visiting the emergency room for maladies both real and imagined to suffering the stifling strictness of an intractable piano teacher, Silverman guards her memories for the same reason she resurrects archaic words—to use as talismans to ward off the inevitable. Ultimately, Silverman knows there is no way to survive death physically. Still, through language, commemoration, and metaphor, she searches for a sliver of transcendent immortality.

“A joyously unconventional memoir written at least in part as a hedge against mortality. It will shake loose memories, invite you to ponder, and, maybe best of all, make you laugh. This is a marvelously written, imaginative, and seriously funny book.”—Abigail Thomas, New York Times best-selling author of What Comes Next and How to Like It

“With true originality and wit, Silverman takes readers on a wild ride through time, memory, pleasure, and trauma. What remains is a deeply human portrait of one woman’s resilience and the power of her spirit. I couldn’t put it down.”—Christina Haag, New York Times best-selling author of Come to the Edge: A Love Story

March 2020 • 222 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1409-6
The Virgin of Prince Street
Expeditions into Devotion
SONJA LIVINGSTON

The Virgin of Prince Street chronicles Sonja Livingston’s quest to explore devotion and spirituality in her life, offering an intimate and unusually candid view into Livingston’s relationship with the swiftly changing Catholic Church and into her own changing heart. Livingston’s meditations on quirky rituals and fading traditions thoughtfully and dynamically interrogate traditional elements of sacramental devotion, especially as they relate to shifting concepts of religion, relationships, and the sacred.

“In these lyrical sojourns Sonja Livingston contemplates the riches of the Catholic tradition along with its ongoing tribulations. In doing so the essayist discovers that devotion in imperfect circumstances is, in fact, the only devotion ever possible and has the extraordinary capacity to transform the human heart. Livingston’s essays illuminate while infusing nuance and generosity into an increasingly polarized religious landscape.”—Richard Rohr, author of Falling Upward

“Sonja Livingston’s honest account of a halting return to the Catholic Church, and to its rich traditions of ritual and symbol, will speak to spiritual seekers of all stripes. Her reverence for every image, every phrase, and every idea in this book makes The Virgin of Prince Street its own act of devotion.”—Valerie Sayers, author of The Powers and Brain Fever

“Livingston’s essays are light-hearted, witty, told in a comforting, sisterly voice, someone you can trust, someone who speaks her mind, someone who explores those things lost and found.”—Debbie Hagan, Brevity

2019 • 184 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1717-2
The Distance Between
_A Memoir_
TIMOTHY J. HILLEGONDS

At eighteen years old, after being expelled from high school, Timothy J. Hillegonds took a one-way flight from Chicago to Colorado in hopes of leaving his mounting rage, frustration, and rap sheet behind. Instead, on arriving, he jumped into a turbulent relationship with a single mother. Fueled by vodka, crystal methamphetamine, and poverty, their relationship became volatile and violent. Within months, Hillegonds’s girlfriend was pregnant with his child. More than just a harrowing story of addiction and abuse, _The Distance Between_ explores and reckons with absent fathers, fatherhood, violence, male adolescent rage, and Hillegonds’s own toxic masculinity.

“If more men were capable of this kind of humility and vulnerability, who knows what changes we might see in our definitions of masculinity?”—Ryan Smernoff, _Los Angeles Review of Books_


“With earnest, unflinching prose and piercing detail, Hillegonds chronicles a turbulent past defined by a toxic mixture of rage, recklessness, and addiction. His willingness to peel back the layers of vulnerability and shame to reveal the man he once was is a stirring testament to the man he is now.”—Melanie Brooks, author of _Writing Hard Stories: Celebrated Memoirists Who Shaped Art from Trauma_

_The Distance Between_ is a bracingly honest account of a boy’s search for manhood through the wilds of addiction, violence, and early fatherhood. This story gutted me. Hillegonds’s debut announces that he’s a writer to watch.”—Hope Edelman, author of _Motherless Daughters: The Legacy of Loss_

2019 • 280 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$20.00 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1668-7
Meander Belt

Family, Loss, and Coming of Age in the Working-Class South

M. RANDAL O’WAIN

M. Randal O’Wain offers a reflection on how a working-class boy from Memphis, Tennessee, came to fall in love with language, reading, writing, and the larger world outside the American South. This memoir examines what it means for the son of a carpenter to value mental rather than physical labor and what this does to the boy’s relationship with his family, whose livelihood and sensibility are decidedly blue collar. Straining the father-son bond further, O’Wain leaves home to find a life outside Memphis. O’Wain assembles a portrait of his roots and family and ultimately discovers that his working-class upbringing is not so antithetical to the man he has become.

“A tour de force of white working-class identity married to a writer’s imaginative hunger for words. What makes this book remarkable is the narrator’s steely tension between his innate desire for unknown worlds and the pullback to the roughed up Wild West of Memphis, where a hardworking but wounded father has planted the seeds of loyalty.” —Patricia Foster, author of All the Lost Girls

“In and through the struggles he and his family experience, O’Wain reveals the insidious effects of class and status on the most intimate aspects of American life. Meander Belt combines riveting storytelling with implicit emotional, psychosocial analysis; the result is the rarest of all books—a deeply thoughtful page-turner.” —Alan Shapiro, author of Reel to Reel

“For all their poignant intimacy, the essays in Meander Belt are somehow also achingly universal, a self-portrait made up of wisdom and vulnerability that tells the story of a family, a place, and a culture.” —John D’Agata, author of About a Mountain

2019 • 216 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1331-0
The Twenty-Seventh Letter of the Alphabet

A Memoir

KIM ADRIAN

In this clear-sighted memoir, Kim Adrian attempts to organize her unruly past—warped by violence, addiction, and mental illness—by cataloging memories, dim recollections, and family lore in the form of a glossary.

“[Adrian’s] glossary, in making a place for everything, has provided a way through this harrowing tale of the toll of generational trauma. That she has managed this with generosity, honesty, and insight shows she has become a real writer after all.”—Los Angeles Review of Books

2018 • 304 pp. • 6 x 9
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0197-3

A Certain Loneliness

A Memoir

SANDRA GAIL LAMBERT

Sandra Gail Lambert probes the intersection of disability, queerness, and female desire in this frank and funny memoir of her lifelong struggle with isolation and independence after contracting polio as a child. Frustrations, slapstick moments, and grand triumphs are all couched in the long history of humanity’s relationship to the natural world.

“[Lambert] shares thoughts, feelings, and impressions with grace and acute self-awareness. Readers will come away with a clear-eyed portrait of the author through the stories of her joys, sorrows, and intimate impressions. A powerful testimony to the determination and strength necessary to persevere despite assumptions, scrutiny, and societal stigmatization.”—Kirkus

2018 • 168 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0786-9

Island in the City

A Memoir

MICAH MCCRARY

Island in the City considers three places Micah McCrary has called home—Normal, Illinois; Chicago; and Prague—to reflect on how these surroundings have shaped his identity.

“A slim yet potent and intimately ruminative debut memoir on travel, maturity, and culture.”—Kirkus

“McCrary dares over and over again to articulate the consequences of race, place, and the perils of having a sensitive and very particular sentence. Daring nonfiction is never quite normal; it is always an island in a city of conventional thought. McCrary’s work gives the reader this refuge and this challenge.”—David Lazar, author of I’ll Be Your Mirror: Essays and Aphorisms

2018 • 168 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0786-9

This Fish Is Fowl

Essays of Being

XU XI

In This Fish Is Fowl Xu Xi offers the transnational and feminist perspective of a contemporary “glocalized” American life, one with many Asian characteristics.

“Broad-ranging, introspective, and honest essays that reveal a fine writer’s experiences, mind, and heart.”—Kirkus

“Part breezy, leaping memoir, part social commentary, this book adds a crucial chapter to the old story of national identity.”—Susanne Antonetta, author of Make Me a Mother

2019 • 320 pp. • 6 x 9 • 11 photographs
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0682-4
Disparates

Essays

PATRICK MADDEN

Patrick Madden’s disparate essays are frivolous and lively, aiming to make readers laugh while they think about such abstract subjects as happiness and memory and unpredictability. Madden takes sidelong swipes at weighty topics via form with wildly meandering essays, some with cameos from guest artists, some abandoned, and some in borrowed forms. Disparates reflects the current zeitgeist by taking on important issues with a touch of cleverness, a dash of humor, and a little help from one’s friends.

“The overall effect is that of a perforated, collaborative self, manifesting exactly the kind of generosity and playfulness we could use a lot more of in literary nonfiction.”—Ander Monson, author of I Will Take the Answer

“Disparates is a generous romp of a book. Patrick Madden’s essays open windows onto glee and silliness as well as grief and love. . . . After reading Disparates, I feel changed, alive to surprise, comforted, dazzled.”—Joni Tevis, author of The World Is On Fire

“You cannot help but read Madden’s essays and grin at his deadpan maniacal love for detail and life and kids and anecdotes and wrinkles in the fabric of nominal reality. The guy is obsessed with nominal reality and all the shimmers and windows in it. A terrific essayist, and even better, wholly and utterly unique.”—the late Brian Doyle, author of One Long River of Song

April 2020 • 208 pp. • 6 x 9 • 23 photographs, 25 illustrations, 5 word search puzzles
$22.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0244-4
All I Feel Is Rivers
Dervish Essays
ROBERT VIVIAN

All I Feel Is Rivers is a collection of a new hybrid writing that, though spiritually akin to prose poems, retains an essayistic form. After several life-changing trips to Turkey, Robert Vivian’s fascination with Rumi, the Sufi mystic, poet, and founder of the religious order that performs the now-famous dervish dance, seeped into his writing. These dervish essays reflect the dynamic movement and ancient symbolism of the whirling ritual dance with their wild lyricism, sometimes breathless cadences, and mesmerizing unspooling.

“Line by line, image by image, essay by spiraling essay, Vivian awakens us to the grace of the infinite moment: the shaft of morning light, the teaspoon of honey, the spider on the north-facing wall. All I Feel Is Rivers is a wondrous, transcendent book. Let its currents take you.” —Harrison Candelaria Fletcher, author of Presentimiento: A Life in Dreams

“This is the work of a Sufi master of rapturous prose, who dances until his feet do not touch the ground.” —David Wojahn, author of From the Valley of Making: Essays on the Craft of Poetry

“These essays are an exhilarating achievement.” —Barbara Hurd, author of Listening to the Savage: River Notes and Half-Heard Melodies

“The dervish dance spins us, via Vivian, into yes. Yes to the world. Yes to joy. Yeses as homages to what brings us peace: rain, rivers, vodka, Mandelstam. Yes to the letter O. Yes to sorrow too, and oh yes, to ‘this book of flesh turned on its back . . . to gaze up . . . stars wheeling in the wake of so much dark silence.’” —Nance Van Winckel, author of Our Foreigner

March 2020 • 126 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-2033-2
Apple, Tree
*Writers on Their Parents*
EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY LISE FUNDERBURG

*Apple, Tree* features a slate of compelling essayists who eloquently consider a trait they’ve inherited from a parent, exploring how it affects the lives they lead today, how it shifts their relationships, and how it changes their sense of self. Topics include vanity, rebellion, psychics, grudges, boredom, luck, and liver spots. Together, these all-new essays form a prismatic meditation on how we make fresh sense of ourselves and our parents when we see the traces of them that live on in us.

Complete list of contributors: Karen Grigsby Bates, S. Bear Bergman, Kate Carroll de Gutes, Leland Cheuk, Lolis Eric Elie, Carolyn Ferrell, John Freeman, Lauren Grodstein, Jane Hamilton, Susan Ito, Mat Johnson, Donna Masini, Daniel Mendelsohn, Marc Mewshaw, Laura Miller, Kyoko Mori, Ann Patchett, Dana Prescott, Lizzie Skurnick, Avi Steinberg, Angelique Stevens, Clifford Thompson, Shukree Hassan Tilghman, Sallie Tisdale, and Laura van den Berg.

“*Apple, Tree* is a sweet, smart collection, and—it has to be said—a perfect gift for a parent you love.”—Lily Meyer, NPR

“These essays, in addition to being resonant in their own right, will also move readers to recollect stories of their own parents.”—Publishers Weekly, starred review

“An unflinching exploration of the complicated geography of families. At once heartfelt and searching, these affecting stories remind us that parental likenesses once shunned can surprise, move, and reconnect us in unexpected ways.”—Andrea Barnet, author of *Visionary Women*

“This topic [of parental influence] is given its rich and thoughtful due in *Apple, Tree: Writers on Their Parents*, an engrossing anthology of twenty-five delightfully diverse personal essays.”—Laurie Hertzel, (Minneapolis) *Star Tribune*

2019 • 232 pp. • 6 x 9 • 2 photographs
$24.95 • hardcover • 978-1-4962-1209-2

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S. BEAR BERGMAN • LAUREN GRODSTEIN
MAT JOHNSON • LAURA MILLER • ANN PATCHETT
DANIEL MENDELSOHN • JANE HAMILTON

LIZZIE SKURNICK • LAURA VAN DEN BERG
AVI STEINBERG • CLIFFORD THOMPSON
The Enjoy Agenda
At Home and Abroad
RICK BAILEY

Rick Bailey writes with humor and wit about how his life experiences reflect the issues and conflicts of contemporary American life: environmental change, life in digital times, and the vicissitudes of arriving at ripe old age.

“Rick Bailey re-creates for us what Virginia Woolf calls moments of being, those bright bursts of beauty, loss, communion, and bewilderment that constitute a life. I defy you to read one of these deliciously addictive essays without gulping down the entire book.”
—Eileen Pollack, author of The Only Woman in the Room

“Rick Bailey’s essays overflow with warmth, humor, truth. . . . The Enjoy Agenda offers keen observations, nuggets of wisdom, stories of the heart.”—Christine Rhein, poet and the author of Wild Flight

2019 • 224 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1469-0

Wilderness of Hope
Fly Fishing and Public Lands in the American West
QUINN GROVER

Wilderness of Hope explores one fly angler’s relationship with the public lands and public waterways of the American West and how those public resources complicate and enrich a conception of wildness.

“Quinn Grover’s Wilderness of Hope provides a life compass for those of us who pursue wild and native trout on our public lands and waters. He preserves our capacity for wonder by weaving together the fabric of family and fishing friends, wilderness, and the importance of preserving and protecting our public lands and resources for future generations.”
—Craig Mathews, author of The Yellowstone Fly-Fishing Guide

2019 • 248 pp. • 6 x 9
$26.95 • hardcover • 978-1-4962-1180-4
Outdoor Lives Series

Be with Me Always
Essays
RANDON BILLINGS NOBLE

Be with Me Always is a collection of essays that explore hauntedness by considering the way our pasts cling to our imaginations. Randon Billings Noble considers ways she has been haunted in essays both pleasant and bitter, traditional and lyrical, and persistently evocative and unforgettable.

“Essayist Noble has a focused, tight style, often employing the technique of looking at somewhat discrete items (or memories) and seeking connections among them. . . . Unique eyes look at familiar things and somehow make them seem both odder and more familiar.”—Kirkus

2019 • 186 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½ • 1 illustration, 1 table
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0504-9
Sweep Out the Ashes
A Novel
MARY CLEARMAN BLEW

Diana Karnov came to Versailles to uncover secrets. Teaching college history in remote northern Montana offers the opportunity to put distance between herself and her overbearing great-aunts and to uncover information about her parents, especially the father she can’t even remember.

At first overwhelmed by the brutal winter, Diana throws herself into exploring mysteries her aunts refuse to explain. Eventually, she befriends several locals, including a student, Cheryl Le Tellier, and her brother, Jake. As Diana’s relationship with Jake deepens, he discusses his Métis heritage and culture, exposing the enormous gaps in her historical knowledge. Astounded, Diana begins to understand that American narratives, what she learns about her father, and the capacity for women to work and learn is not as set and certain as she was taught. Mary Clearman Blew deftly balances these 1970s pressure points with multifaceted characters and a layered romance to deliver an instant Western classic.

“Sweep Out the Ashes ingeniously weaves surprising narrative strands into a single powerhouse story. It’s a brand-new kind of western novel, and if ever there was a serious page-turner, it’s this book.”—David Huddle, author of The Faulkes Chronicle

“Smart, witty, hard-hitting, tender, and compelling. . . . Much more than a saga about women struggling for their rightful place in the world, though, this book stages a fascinating love story, a fresh look at ethnic relations, and an exciting exploration of history and its surprising revelations. It’s a damned good read.”—Joy Passanante, author of Through a Long Absence: Words from My Father’s Wars

“Sweep Out the Ashes is a poignant and often funny portrayal of ignorance and growth. Blew invites readers to discover that this conglomeration of people we call a nation is far richer than we thought, and maybe more promising.”—Kent Meyers, author of Twisted Tree

2019 • 276 pp. • 5 1/2 x 8 1/2
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1642-7
Of Fathers and Fire
*A Novel*
STEVEN WINGATE

When Richie Thorpe and his ragtag religious community arrive in the High Plains town of Suborney, Colorado, seventeen-year-old Tommy Sandor is captivated by the group. His mother, Connie, grows frantic as Tommy is drawn in, since Tommy’s actual father is Thorpe—not a New York saxophonist, as she’s always claimed. She knows Thorpe has come for his son, and though she has witnessed Thorpe’s mysterious powers, the desperation to protect her lie, her son, and their life begets a venom with an elemental power that threatens the whole town.

“Wingate writes fearlessly about the good, the bad, and the ugly in people and life in rural America. He is unafraid in his exploration of religion and the role it plays, for better and worse, in the lives of people searching for meaning.” —Shelly Weinstein, *Shelf Awareness*

“Deeply felt, subtly innovative, utterly compelling, Steven Wingate’s *Of Fathers and Fire* is an excellent novel by a talented novelist.” —Robert Olen Butler, author of the Pulitzer Prize–winning *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain*

“Steven Wingate has a rare feel for American landscapes and for our recent past. . . . [His] keen sense of language houses an equally keen compassion for human plights.” —Elizabeth Kostova, author of *The Historian*

“A magical and deeply satisfying novel.” —Margot Livesey, author of *Mercury*

2019 • 320 pp. • 5 ⅛ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1186-6

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**FLYOVER FICTION**

**RON HANSEN, SERIES EDITOR**

The books in the Flyover Fiction series are set on the Great Plains, a region located in the center of the country and referred to either sentimentally as the Heartland or dismissively as flyover country, a region more clearly defined by what it is not than by what it is. Books in this series actively engage—through plot, character, setting, or theme—with what it means to inhabit this region.
Ruby Dreams of Janis Joplin
A Novel
MARY CLEARMAN BLEW

When Ruby joins a band and leaves her small hometown, she doesn’t expect to return—especially not bruised and disillusioned. Mary Clearman Blew deftly braids Ruby’s memories of the past with her present to explore isolation, community, abuse, and our capacity to confront the past and heal.

“Ruby Dreams demonstrates that you can go home again and that home can lead to health. But the return is harrowing.”—O. Alan Weltzien, Western American Literature

“This is a stunning narrative told in vivid detail with the insights of someone who has been there. You will not be able to put it down.”—Annick Smith, coeditor of Wide Open

“What makes the novel unforgettable is how Ruby Gervais rescues herself. . . . Only Mary Clearman Blew could have found the words, the songs, the friends, and the lost family that enable Ruby to survive and make a little dignity for herself along the way.”—David Huddle, author of The Story of a Million Years

2018 • 246 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0758-6

Glory Days
MELISSA FRATERRIGO

• Named a Top Fall 2017 Indie Fiction book by Library Journal
• Named a Best Fiction Book of 2017 by Chicago Review of Books

The novel Glory Days combines gritty realism with magical elements as Melissa Fraterrigo masterfully interweaves a slate of arresting characters from a small, former farming town in Nebraska who must grapple with loss, life, and death.

“A stunning tour de force centered in a small cattle ranching town.”—Foreword starred review

“A quiet Midwestern ghost story with prose as clear and cold as the Nebraska plains in winter.”—Chicago Review of Books

“If Willa Cather and Cormac McCarthy had a love child, she would be a writer such as Fraterrigo.”—Booklist

“Astonishing writing about a world that deserves greater attention in contemporary literature.”—Library Journal, starred review

2017 • 180 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0132-4
**Over Seas of Memory**
*A Novel*

MICHAËL FERRIER

TRANSLATED BY MARTIN MUNRO
FOREWORD BY PATRICK CHAMOISEAU

In this novel based loosely on the author’s life, the narrator recounts his journey following the footsteps of his Mauritius-born grandfather, Maxime, who abruptly boarded a boat bound for Madagascar in 1922 and never returned. Ferrier narrates a tale of discovery interwoven with the colorful story of Maxime’s life in Madagascar. *Over Seas of Memory* weaves personal stories with the island’s history, including its period at the center of what was termed “Project Madagascar,” the Nazi plan to relocate Europe’s Jewish population to the island.

“Remarkable… Michaël Ferrier explodes all boundaries, all borders, geographical and mental… This very topical book is essential reading.” — *Le Populaire*

“Driven by a conviction to record the reality of a world made from diversity.” — *Le Point*

“A singularly intelligent novel.” — *Art Press*

“Replendent.” — *Le Monde*

2019 • 228 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1320-4

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**Not a Clue**
*A Novel*

CHLOÉ DELAUME

TRANSLATED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY DAWN M. CORNELIO

Chloé Delaume’s novel enacts a life-size game of Clue in which six psychiatric patients are suspects in the murder of Dr. Black. In addition to the stories of these possible assassins, including what has brought them to the hospital, *Not a Clue* is a clever, humorous exploration of life’s unrelenting compromises and an astute commentary on the current state of literary production and consumption.

“Like a lace maker, [Delaume] stitches together words, tears apart adjectives, tugs on adjectives, swells with parenthetical asides, and drenches her prose with equal doses of references to mythology as to pop songs.” — *Le Monde*

“With dazzling virtuosity, with its pirouettes, winks, and dizzying mirrored reflections, the final third of the novel in particular brings to mind both baroque esthetics and *The Lady from Shanghai’s* hall of mirrors. The whole thing is as exhilarating as it is moving.” — *Benzine Magazine*

2018 • 246 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½ • 1 illustration, 1 table
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0089-1
Nebraska
Poems
Kwame Dawes

Kwame Dawes is not a native Nebraskan. Born in Ghana, he later moved to Jamaica, where he spent most of his childhood and early adulthood. In 1992 he relocated to the United States and eventually found himself an American living in Lincoln, Nebraska.

In Nebraska, this beautiful and evocative collection of poems, Dawes explores a theme constant in his work—the intersection of memory, home, and artistic invention. The poems, set against the backdrop of Nebraska’s discrete cycle of seasons, are meditative even as they search for a sense of place in a new landscape. While he shovels snow or walks in the bitter cold to his car, he is engulfed with memories of Kingston, yet when he travels, he finds himself longing for the open space of the plains and the first snowfall. With a strong sense of place and haunting memories, Dawes grapples with life in Nebraska as a transplant.

Excerpt from “Sandoz Revisited”

The daughter will outgrow his will, outgrow his power to hold, outgrow his capacity for blood; and so, without fanfare, with the calculation of a prospector; she leaves at the end of harvest, for the city at the eastern edge of the state; and from there, she enacts her vengeance with stories blustery as the wind hurtling over the prairie, loaded with the echo of chanting, the stick and leather of drums; the hint of bloodletting, the language of a lamenting tribe; and the old man dies alone in February, the house covered in snow; the body preserved for a spring burial; in the everlasting light of a new season.
Founded in 1997, the Backwaters Press has published award-winning books by some of America’s finest writers. The University of Nebraska Press acquired the Backwaters Press in 2018, with its impressive backlist in poetry and prose that contributes to the cultural landscape of our state and region. As a general interest imprint of UNP, the Backwaters Press continues to plant its roots firmly in the Great Plains, delighting readers with literature of enduring value and consequence. UNP is proud to announce that titles under the Backwaters Press imprint will be available as ebooks as well.

The Backwaters Prize in Poetry is an international poetry book competition. One poetry manuscript is selected each year by a committee of preliminary judges and one final judge for inclusion in this series. The selected volume is published by the University of Nebraska Press.

Submission guidelines for the prize series can be found online at nebraskapress.unl.edu/the-backwaters-press-prize/. For additional inquiries about the prize, please contact Emily Wendell at ewendell2@unl.edu.
Skin Memory
JOHN SIBLEY WILLIAMS

A stark, visceral collection of free verse and prose poetry, Skin Memory scours a wild landscape haunted by personal tragedy and the cruel consequences of human acts in search of tenderness and regeneration. In this book of daring and introspection, John Sibley Williams considers the capriciousness of youth, the terrifying loss of cultural identity and self-identity, and what it means to live in an imperfect world.

“Throughout the pages of this mesmerizing book John allows us time to ponder about the concepts he places into poems—grief, loss, death and dying, identity, tragedy, awakening to some greater aura of being. The poems are grounded in reality, all the more available to enter our philosophy into the stages John creates. . . . There is no doubt that John Sibley Williams is a major voice in poetry today.”
—San Francisco Review of Books

“Both physically and psychologically, Williams recognizes the haunting interconnectedness of all things, the ever-evolving nature of the world and the scars we trade with it. While dissecting humanity’s cruelty toward nature and itself, he yet invokes a tenderness, a final hope that maybe we can still bend our swords into plowshares.”—Michael Prihoda, After the Pause

“This collection is one that seeps far beneath your skin and memory—and stays there.”
—Noreen Ocampo, Counter Clock

“[Skin Memory] plunges readers into the heart of a seething memory-scape where everything feels fraught and perilous, but darkly gorgeous, too.”—Danielle Vermette, Oregonian

2019 • 96 pp. • 6 x 9
$15.95 • paperback • 978-1-935218-50-0
Not Your Mama’s Melting Pot
 BENJAMÍN NAKA-HASEBE KINGSLLEY

“From jump, there was such sonic, emotional, and intellectual drive to these poems, that I couldn’t resist—why would I want to—the pull of Benjamín Naka-Hasebe Kingsley’s vision and sensibility. Verve and élan are words I might use, but they lack sufficient verve and élan. And if I wrote, ‘his future is bright,’ I’d be wrong—his future is here, and this book is as much fire as I can ask for.” —Bob Hicok, author of Hold

“At turns mixing and remixing form, lineage, and landscape, Benjamín Naka-Hasebe Kingsley’s debut unveils a world of tender witness, beginning with the street, moving through history, and ending with reclamation of wild possibility. Here is a collection itchy to witness all the lives that have formed it. Brotherhood. Family stories. Hard music, rhythm. The lines bob, weave, and juke. They gap. Restless, this is the stuff of multitudinous life. Dense, replete with daring imagery, elegiac, celebratory, urgent, this astonishing collection startles you with its virtuosity and refuses to be binned down.” —Cathy Linh Che, author of Split

2018 • 116 pp. • 6 x 9
$16.00 • paperback • 978-1-935218-49-4

Stunt Heart
 MARY JO THOMPSON

In Stunt Heart, Mary Jo Thompson’s debut collection, a female gaze locates the ironies inside the subjects of marriage and death, loneliness and love, speaking and silence.

“I admire the hard precision of these sad and humorous poems whose central concern is the confusion of death with marital love. For me, this theme culminates in the powerful sonnet sequence ‘Thirteen Months’ (published in The Best American Poetry). Here, form imitates feeling as Mary Jo Thompson’s sonnets expand and contract like a stunt heart beating. I also admire the patient work of language throughout this collection—language that is always striving toward truth and the controlled magic of poem-making.” —Henri Cole

“When the heat of the passionate tongue encounters, by winter’s laws, the frozen surface of life’s betrayals, a ‘smarting / mouth,’ bleeding, freed, cooled by snow—speaks with a colder, finer precision. This is Thompson’s own metaphor for the self that survives by speech—hers with eloquent mockery, rueful playfulness, candor, sheer nerve, words that ‘make / that long run / down black keys . . .’ such a lively cascade of tempered sound, the heaviness of truth lightened by mastery of style.” —Eleanor Wilner

2017 • 90 pp. • 6 x 9
$16.00 • paperback • 978-1-935218-46-3
Exodus
‘Gbenga Adeoba
Foreword by Kwame Dawes

Winner of the Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poetry, ‘Gbenga Adeoba’s collection Exodus focuses on forms of migration due to the slave trade, war, natural disasters, and economic opportunities. Using the sea as a source of language and metaphor, Adeoba explores themes of memory, transition, and the intersections between the historic and the imagined. With great tenderness and power his poetry of empathy searches for meaning in sharply constructed images, creating scenes of making and unmaking while he investigates experiences of exile and displacement across time and place.

“There is both passion and beauty in Adeoba’s work, framed by what seems an acute sense of the power of language to capture reality. To capture and reveal truth, shrouded in all its scars, alive somehow with hope. History demands that images of drowning surge through Adeoba’s Exodus. The Mediterranean is ‘a grave wide enough for the numbers,’ we too ‘could become a band of unnamed migrants / found floating on the face of the sea,’ and ‘you could find trinket boxes or a girl’s / plastic doll in that rubble. . . . / The tiny things are heavier.’ Yet the poet can still imagine shorebirds’ songs ‘urging men to love again, calling / them to images craving tenderness.’ For poetry too is a tiny thing, and a heavy one.”—Alicia Ostriker, New York state poet laureate and author of Waiting for the Light

March 2020 • 78 pp. • 6 x 9
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-2117-9

AFRICAN POETRY BOOK SERIES
KWAME DAWES, SERIES EDITOR

This series highlights African poetry with a wide-ranging scope from classic works to modern and contemporary voices. Currently there is no press in the United States, or elsewhere, that devotes itself entirely to the publication of African poetry written in English. This series looks to rectify this gap and also collect works of classic African poetry that have otherwise been forgotten.
Sacrament of Bodies
ROME O ROIOGUN

In this groundbreaking collection of poems, *Sacrament of Bodies*, Romeo Oriogun fearlessly interrogates how a queer man in Nigeria can heal in a society where everything is designed to prevent such restoration. With honesty, precision, tenderness of detail, and a light touch, Oriogun explores grief and how the body finds survival through migration.

"Sacrament of Bodies is a very special book. But why? Because Romeo Oriogun has developed a style that is both personal and mythical, because these poems are sensual and spiritual at once, because they give us both a story and a song, a shout and a whisper. 'I have learnt to love every broken thing,' Oriogun tells us. I find that Oriogun’s tension between the high style of a sermon and the earthiness of love songs gives these poems a particularly memorable touch. It is memorable also because it is able to give us a journey (through time, through forgetting, through elegy, through exile) that is both a story of a real man in real time and an incantation, a speaking in tongues. But it is his music that finally sways me, it’s music that lifts it all, that makes out of truth-telling a song. The music works here because Oriogun is a master of incantation: ‘I danced,’ he tells us, ‘as if I knew every song had a door.’ Indeed. I love this beautiful, heart-wrenching, passionate book.”—Ilya Kaminsky, author of *Deaf Republic*

"Romeo Oriogun has wrought complex, elegant poems that wrench beauty from all that would kill us."—Ellen Bass, author of *Indigo* and *Like a Beggar*

March 2020 • 78 pp. • 6 x 9
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1964-0
‘mamaseko

THABILE MAKUE

Named after the poet’s mother, ‘mamaseko is a collection of introspective lyrics and other poems dealing with the intersections of blood relationships and related identities. Thabile Makue questions what it means to be beings of blood—to relate by blood, to live by blood. In her poems Makue looks for traces of shared trauma and pain and asserts that wounds of the blood are healed by the same.

March 2020 • 144 pp. • 6 x 9
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1960-2

Excerpt from “grandmother’s marriage”

you were married to him for 65 years
that’s a long time
sometimes love is a crowded place
a swelled stomach
water in the lungs
a dam and algae
a room waiting to put both of its arms around you
to gather all its walls around you
above you
to consume you in a kiss
to still your breath in a kiss
to unname you in a kiss
to rename you in a kiss
did you love him
sometimes love is an orchestra
after the show
backstage
preparing to get out of performance
but not yet done
still dressed in applause
in well done
more more i want you
Modern Sudanese Poetry

An Anthology

Translated and edited by Adil Babikir

Foreword by Matthew Shenoda, Supervising Editor

Spanning more than six decades of Sudan’s post-independence history, this collection features work by some of Sudan’s most renowned modern poets, largely unknown in the United States. Adil Babikir’s extensive introduction provides a conceptual framework to help the English reader understand the cultural context. Translated from Arabic, the collection addresses a wide range of themes—identity, love, politics, Sufism, patriotism, war, and philosophy—capturing the evolution of Sudan’s modern history and cultural intersections.

“This is an unprecedented accomplishment not only in translation of modern Sudanese poetry but also scholarship on its history, evolution, poetics, and aesthetics. . . . This book is a great addition to the library of Arab poetry in translation that should appeal to scholars and the general public with interest in Arabic poetry.”—Salah M. Hassan, Goldwin Smith Professor of Africana Studies and History of Art and Visual Studies at Cornell University

“Sudanese literature has long been a significant contributor to Arabic and world letters and culture. The thoughtful, provocative introduction in this anthology, combined with the clear-eyed lyric transformation of the poems into English, honor poetry everywhere. Just as in Iraq, Yemen, Morocco, or the United States, the weight of collective history and ethnic and linguistic diversity emerges to forge these Sudanese poems into art, both bound to and liberated from the national frame. Details matter, nuance is essential. And yet the story of Sudanese poetry is the story of poetry all over the world. From blaze to breeze, this is a beautiful book.”—Fady Joudah, Palestinian American physician and author of the poetry collection The Earth in the Attic

2019 • 186 pp. • 6 x 9
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1563-5
The Careless Seamstress
TJAWANGWA DEMA
FOREWORD BY KWAME DAWES
Winner of the Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets, this dazzling debut announces a not-so-new voice: that of the spoken-word poet Tjawangwa Dema. A body of work that examines the nature of power and resistance, The Careless Seamstress shows both startling clarity of purpose and capaciousness of theme. Using gender and labor as their point of departure, these poems are indebted to Dema’s relationship to language, intertextuality, and narrative. It is both assured and inquiring, a quietly complex skein that takes advantage of poetry’s capacity for the polyphonic.

“Tjawangwa Dema’s poems are as bold, roving, and insistent as they are delicate and incisive. The Careless Seamstress is a ravishing debut.”
—Tracy K. Smith, U.S. poet laureate and author of Wade in the Water: Poems

“With a natural approach to the physicality of her characters’ lives and struggles, Botswana poet Tjawangwa Dema uses her work to explore large questions of gender, identity and labor. The pieces in The Careless Seamstress live at the intersection of these themes, showing how one moment or action brilliantly encapsulates the whole.”—Noah Cruickshank, Shelf Awareness starred review

“This work brings the reader to new places and age-old insights. These are moving, eloquent and compelling poems.”—Eavan Boland, author of A Woman Without a Country: Poems

2019 • 96 pp. • 6 x 9
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1412-6

Your Body Is War
MAHTEM SHIFERRAW
Your Body Is War contemplates the psychology of the female human body, looking at the ways it exists and moves in the world, refusing to be contained in the face of grief and trauma. Bold and raw, Mahtem Shiferraw’s poems explore what the woman’s body must do to survive and persevere in the world, especially in the aftermath of abuse.

“Elegant and heart-wrenching, these poems possess a powerful voice that travels across oceans to reconnect with the language and stories of Ethiopia, Mahtem Shiferraw’s homeland. Your Body Is War speaks poignantly about the inherited historical traumas, the ache and beauty of memory, and the strength it takes to endure the wounds of a nation, of a family, of a conflicted self.”—Rigoberto González, author of What Drowns the Flowers in Your Mouth: A Memoir of Brotherhood

“This is a collection of harrowing, prismatic lyrics made by severances and war and possessed by memory and place. In a language that dilates between the epic and the humble, nearly invisible, Mahtem Shiferraw does not once allow readers to imagine that war is anything but bodied, personal, inherited. Shiferraw’s work is elemental, brilliant, fierce; and with mystery and exactitude, she pushes language past itself and into breathtaking resonances. There are lines I will never forget for their power and for what they reveal.”—Aracelis Girmay, author of The Black Maria

2019 • 90 pp. • 6 x 9
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1413-3
Carrying Water to the Field
New and Selected Poems
JOYCE SUTPHEN
INTRODUCTION BY TED KOOSER

Carrying Water to the Field evokes the author’s deeply personal view of life on a small farm, her coming of age in the late 1960s, and her search for balance in a very modern world. The collection includes forty new poems on the themes of luck, hard work, and the ravages of time.

“Precise in the language of everyday, rich in wisdom and maturity, Joyce Sutphen’s newest collection, her eighth, speaks to her comfort with farm life, travel, aging, the distortions of memory.”—Matt Sutherland, Foreword

“[Joyce Sutphen] shows us the very heart and soul of her working, rooted prairie people, as shy of being caught in a poem as they once were reluctant to be photographed, but perfectly captured for us in this sweeping account of life that is both specific and universal. A stunning collection of poems.”—Anne-Marie Fyfe, author of The House of Small Absences

2019 • 240 pp. • 6 x 9
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1636-6
Regular Haunts
New and Previous Poems
GERALD COSTANZO
INTRODUCTION BY TED KOOSER
Long known as one of the best contemporary poets of satire, Gerald Costanzo focuses specifically on American themes that, though presented as parables, fables, jokes, and put-ons, remain darkly serious in tone. Regular Haunts is a retrospective collection of Costanzo’s work, featuring nearly thirty new poems, along with poems that were written and published between 1968 and 2016.

“This is truly poetry in the American grain. Costanzo looks unflinchingly at our totems, artifacts, and folkways and sets them down just as they are, with a deadly but affectionate irony.”—Carolyn Kizer

“This is the kind of light-filled book we use to see the world more clearly and make our way forward.”—Julie Larios, Numero Cinq

“The complexities and complications of the poet who is among and yet stands back, and who understands the limits of life yet yearns and hungers for everything life has within it, are offered in The Woods Are On Fire, and the pleasures and challenges of great poetry can both be found in this necessary book by Fleda Brown.”—Adrian Koesters, Split Rock Review

“Reading a poem by Brown is a lesson in how to read one’s life, how each small thing, each seemingly casual detail, is in fact connected to perceptions and understandings of profound significance that we can all divine if only we calm our vision enough to fully experience the perishing present.”—World Literature Today

2018 • 156 pp. • 6 x 9
$19.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0586-5

The Woods Are On Fire
New and Selected Poems
FLEDA BROWN
INTRODUCTION BY TED KOOSER
With unadorned clarity of vision, Fleda Brown’s poetic voice gives the reader a haunting glimpse into family dynamics. With topics ranging from molecules to worms to Gilgamesh and the TV show Law and Order, her poetry explores the breadth and depth of our everyday lives. The Woods Are On Fire includes nearly fifty new poems, along with poems selected from seven previous books, showcasing an influential American poet’s work from the last several decades.

“This is the kind of light-filled book we use to see the world more clearly and make our way forward.”—Julie Larios, Numero Cinq

“The complexities and complications of the poet who is among and yet stands back, and who understands the limits of life yet yearns and hungers for everything life has within it, are offered in The Woods Are On Fire, and the pleasures and challenges of great poetry can both be found in this necessary book by Fleda Brown.”—Adrian Koesters, Split Rock Review

“Reading a poem by Brown is a lesson in how to read one’s life, how each small thing, each seemingly casual detail, is in fact connected to perceptions and understandings of profound significance that we can all divine if only we calm our vision enough to fully experience the perishing present.”—World Literature Today

2017 • 300 pp. • 6 x 9
$19.95 • paperback • 978-0-8032-9494-3
Bodies Built for Game
The Prairie Schooner Anthology of Contemporary Sports Writing
EDITED BY NATALIE DIAZ
HANNAH ENSOR, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sport has always been central to the movements of both the nation-state and the people who resist that nation-state. Think of the Roman Colosseum, Jesse Owens's four gold-medal victories in the 1936 Nazi Olympics, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar’s protest at the 1968 Olympics, and the fallout Colin Kaepernick suffered as a result of his recent protest on the sidelines of an NFL game. Sport is a place where the body and the mind are the most dangerous because they are allowed to be unified as one energy.

Bodies Built for Game brings together poems, essays, and stories that challenge our traditional ideas of sport and question the power structures that athletics enforce. What is it that drives us to athletics? What is it that makes us break our own bodies or the bodies of others as we root for these unnatural and performed victories? Featuring contributions from a diverse group of writers, including Hanif Abdurraqib, Fatimah Asghar, Reginald Dwayne Betts, Louise Erdrich, Toni Jensen, Ada Limón, Tommy Orange, Claudia Rankine, Danez Smith, and Maya Washington, this book challenges America by questioning its games.

2019 • 402 pp. • 6 x 9
$26.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1773-8

Excerpt from “Serena Williams Walks” by Kwame Dawes

This is not poetry—for poetry is a fickle art, and no poet will command a world with the incontrovertible claim of dominance like a racket wielded, a score counted, a foe defeated so thoroughly, so irrevocably—this is poetry in a world where the poem speaks a language of prophetic grace and only fools will question the weight of truth in the calculus of muscle and bone; but that dance, that gleeful dance, kicking up the Wimbledon dust, that Compton, step, that hip-hop bravado, now there is the poem, the sweet laughter of a child arriving at the place she has dreamt of for years—and all we can do is shake a leg and dance.
Extinction Events
Stories
LIZ BREAZEALE

This collection of short stories explores the connections between humans and the natural world by examining the processes and history of our planet. Dark, angry, and apocalyptic, Extinction Events is a compendium of all the ways in which life can be annihilated.

“In Breazeale’s world a climatologist anticipates the destruction of Kiribati, her island home: ‘We won’t let ourselves be eroded. You can’t disappear us.’ These stories pit our most intimate aspirations against cosmic extinctions—truly spellbinding, essential stories of our time.” —Wendell Mayo, author of Survival House

“Extinction Events is a book for our times. Against the backdrop of environmental cataclysms past and future, the stories here bring to life the fractured worlds of artists and scientists, hucksters and hypnotists, all searching for those relationships that can connect and sustain us.” —Lawrence Coates, author of Camp Olvido

“With a bold contemporary relevance, this collection captures the giddy wonder inside our panic. . . . Liz Breazeale stands her characters in the dusty history of the Chicxulub crater as they recite the poetry of humanity’s everyday aches, the breath of the dinosaurs on their necks. In the face of a mandatory evacuation, one is tempted to batten down the hatches and curl up with this marvel of a book.” —Jennifer Murvin, graphic narrative editor of Moon City Review

2019 • 138 pp. • 5 ⅝ x 8 ⅛
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-1562-8
**Better Times**
*Short Stories*
*Sara Batkie*

*Better Times* covers the recent past, our current era, and the world to come. The stories gathered here—whose characters are stymied by loneliness, motherhood, illness, and even cataclysmic climate change—interrogate the idea that so-called better times ever existed, particularly for women.

“Batkie’s stories shrewdly commingle the hopeless and the hopeful. Her women, demoralized by the absence of fathers and husbands, by stunted careers and aimless children, are locked in self-doubt and self-flagellation, though rarely do they lose faith in ‘better times,’ even when they’ve had slim experience of them.”—Mike Peed, *New York Times* Book Review

“Batkie’s stellar debut, all memorably portraying an ineffable yearning from well-drawn characters who may have known or will know better times. . . . In this remarkable collection, Batkie creates strong, evocative imagery with economy and precision. She elevates both the common and uncommon experiences of her characters, resulting in something quite extraordinary.”—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

2018 • 156 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0787-6

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**Black Jesus and Other Superheroes**
*Stories*
*Venita Blackburn*

*Black Jesus and Other Superheroes* focuses a contemporary magical-realist lens on sexuality, race, and family. Venita Blackburn chronicles ordinary people achieving vivid extrasensory perception while under extreme pain. The stories tumble into a universe of the jaded and the hopeful, in which men and women burdened with unwieldy and undesirable superhuman abilities are nonetheless resilient in subtle and startling ways.

“With thoughtful subtext and symbols that address themes of race, sexuality, family, love and (dis)ability, Blackburn’s remarkably short stories are characterized by a wild imagination and beautiful prose.”—*Ms. Magazine*

“Venita Blackburn makes an indelible impression with her first collection of short stories. . . . Whether she embarks on writing novels or sticks with more short work along the line of *Black Jesus and Other Superheroes*, Blackburn is a writer to watch, but more importantly, to read.”—Peter Dabbene, *Foreword* starred review

2017 • 168 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$17.95 • paperback • 978-1-4962-0186-7
One-Hundred-Knuckled Fist
Stories
DUSTIN M. HOFFMAN
• Michigan Notable Books 2017 from the Library of Michigan

Set in the Midwest, One-Hundred-Knuckled Fist tells the stories of blue-collar workers with dark humor and a gritty, experimental style, revealing the reality of the daily grind with striking details.

“A compelling trip through the pressure-cooker world of the blue-collar worker.”—Shelf Awareness

“A thoroughly memorable read.”—Publishers Weekly

2016 • 186 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$19.95 • paperback • 978-0-8032-8854-6

When Are You Coming Home?
Stories
BRYN CHANCELLOR

For the characters in Bryn Chancellor’s stories, home means physical spaces, but also love—familial, romantic, and unrequited. Throughout this book, characters leave and return, trying desperately to find their way home.

“I read Chancellor’s collection with admiration. The care with which she creates these seemingly ordinary lives is evident. She lets her characters live and insists that we care about them.”—Corey Campbell, Center for Literary Publishing

“A knockout! These nine stories turned me into an emotional pinball, zinging from humor to heartbreak and back again. Bryn Chancellor is the real thing, a true artist and one hell of a storyteller.”—Tayari Jones, author of Silver Sparrow

2015 • 136 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$17.95 • paperback • 978-0-8032-7722-9

Now We Will Be Happy
Amina Gautier

• 2015 President’s Book Award from the Florida Authors and Publishers Association
• 2015 USA Book Award in Fiction: African American
• 2016 International Latino Book Award, Most Inspirational Fiction
• 2016 Independent Publisher Book Award Silver winner in Multicultural Fiction

Now We Will Be Happy is a collection of stories about Afro-Puerto Ricans, U.S.-mainland-born Puerto Ricans, and displaced native Puerto Ricans dealing with the difficulties of bicultural identities in a world that wants them to choose only one.

2014 • 140 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$16.95 • paperback • 978-0-8032-5539-5

Domesticated Wild Things, and Other Stories
XHENET ALIU

Connecticut’s rusty underbelly is the wretched, used-up sort of place where you might find Xhenet Aliu’s Domesticated Wild Things: reluctant mothers, delinquent dads, and not-quite-feral children, yet dreamers all. They share a biting humor, an eye for the absurd, and fumbling attempts at connection in this edgy and endearing collection.

“Filled with both humor and compassion these original stories reflect the bog which sucks the hard up and those living on the edge deeper into the quicksand of life.”—Aron Row, San Francisco Book Review

2013 • 156 pp. • 5 ½ x 8 ½
$18.95 • paperback • 978-0-8032-7183-8
Hard Damage
ARIA ABER

Hard Damage charts the intergenerational damage caused by war, environmental loss, and the collective grief of exile. The book revolves around questions of the legitimacy of “inherited exile”: what is one allowed to feel homesick for and why? How is the self complicit in warfare? By challenging the traditional codes of metaphor and myth and by manipulating etymology, syntax, grammar, and different languages, Aria Aber’s lyric poems and essayistic fragments explore the rich complexity of identity.

“Aber is not afraid of erudition or the hard labor of crafting poems that peel open in layers; at times, reading her work reminded me of poets who have worked across similarly broad linguistic topographies: Carolyn Forché, Frank Bidart, Paul Celan, Sylvia Plath, Wallace Stevens, and others. But Aber’s work here is hardly derivative of those masters. She is her own poet, her own voice, and her debut is my favorite volume of poetry this year.”
—Christian Kiefer, Paris Review

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