

Ultimate Summer Reading List

written by Entropy | June 21, 2014



It's officially the first day of summer. So time to start that summer reading. Not sure where to start? We've got your summer reading list covered.



I'm OK, I'm Pig!

by Kim Hyesoon (Translated by Don Mee Choi)

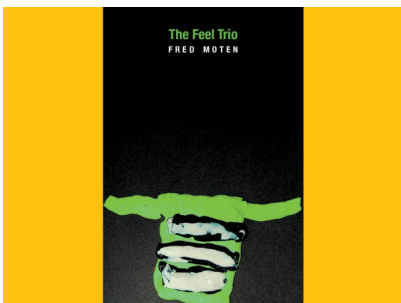
[Bloodaxe Books](#)

Miraculous weaponry! Miraculous translations! This kind of undomesticated engagement and lawlessness and risk and defiance and somatic exorbitance posits a world and a relation to the world where everything excluded is included – the animal and the vegetal, the molten and the mineral, the gaseous and the liquid, not to mention shame, disgust, failure, terror, raunch... Kim Hyesoon's new book is armament and salve, shield and medicinal chant. It's here to protect us' – CHRISTIAN HAWKEY

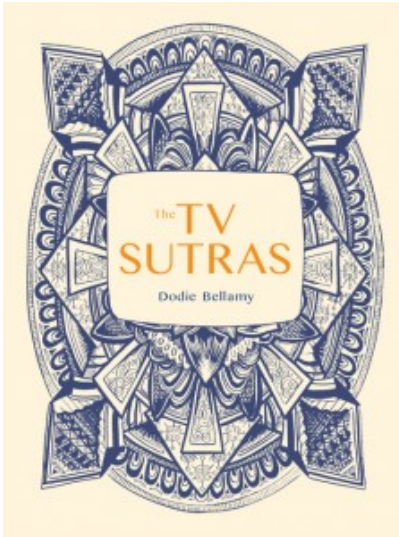
The Feel Trio

by Fred Moten

[Letter Machine Editions](#)



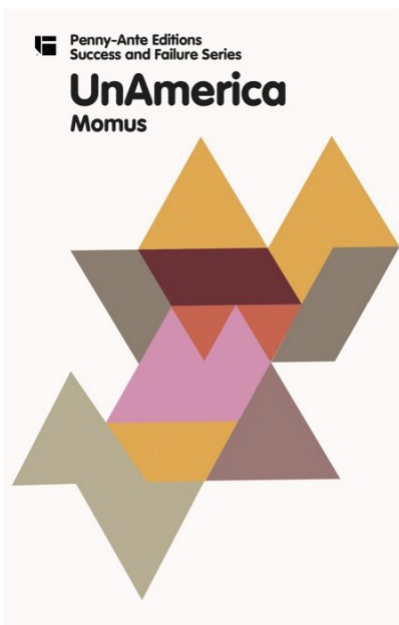
The Feel Trio is Cecil Taylor, Tony Oxley and William Parker. Or is it that The Feel Trio are Cecil Taylor, Tony Oxley and William Parker? See, that's the amazing problem and chance, right there! In the wake and air and light of The Feel Trio, what it bears and what propels them, which is everything in particular, The Feel Trio tries to put some things together. Alabama runs through those things like nobody's business. I kept trying to visit the uncounted space James Brown forms around the one.



The TV Sutras
by Dodie Bellamy

[Ugly Duckling Presse](#)

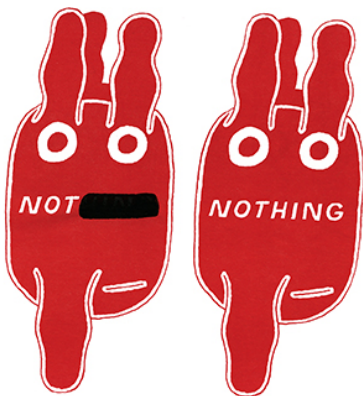
In *The TV Sutras* she is in top form, hilarious and enlightening as an anarchist bodhisattva moonlighting as a performance artist. I gorge on Bellamy's genius.
—WAYNE KOESTENBAUM



UnAmerica
by Momus

[Penny-Ante Editions](#)

A delirious cousin to Kathy Acker's *Pussy*, *King of the Pirates* and reminiscent of Philip K. Dick's *Valis* and *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* by C.S. Lewis, Momus' new novel *UnAmerica* remodels a classic, charmingly naive sixth century Christian tale—*The Voyage of Saint Brendan*—for the twenty-first century. Reworking the Irish monastic Wonder Voyage formula, Momus adds anachronistic brio and slapstick humor to the genre's wooden-faced didacticism.



RAY JOHNSON

NOT NOTHING
by Ray Johnson

[Siglio Press](#)

Make room for Ray Johnson, whose place in history has been only vaguely defined. Johnson's beguiling, challenging art has an exquisite clarity and emotional intensity that makes it much more than simply a remarkable mirror of its time, although it is that, too. — ROBERTA SMITH



Wet Land
by Lucas de Lima

[Action Books](#)

Lucas de Lima's stunning book affected me so profoundly at all the stages of reading it, encountering it—before it was a book and afterwards, when it was. In the work of this extraordinary writer, the fragment is not an activity of form. It's an activity of evisceration. — BHANU KAPIL



Sorrowtoothpaste Mirrorcream
by Kim Hyesoon (Translated by Don Mee Choi)

[Action Books](#)

Her poems are not ironic. They are direct, deliberately grotesque, theatrical, unsettling, excessive, visceral and somatic. This is feminist surrealism loaded with shifting, playful linguistics that both defile and defy traditional roles for women. — PAM BROWN



Backup Singers
by Sommer Browning

[Birds, LLC.](#)

With *BACKUP SINGERS* Browning follows up her sold out debut, *Either Way I'm Celebrating*, with an even rawer and starker, and again darkly humorous navigation of friendship, marriage, and motherhood. The result is a more overtly political assessment of the absurd deficit between what we're confronted with and what we're equipped with to deal with those confrontations: "It's a girl, / and the wires she needs // open her hands / before they're fists."

EDOUARD LEVÉ WORKS

l'auteur a eu l'idée, mais qu'il n'a
pas réalisées.
but not realized by its author."

«Un livre décrit des oeuvres dont
l'auteur a eu l'idée, mais qu'il n'a
pas réalisées.»

"A book describes works conceived of
but not realized by its author."

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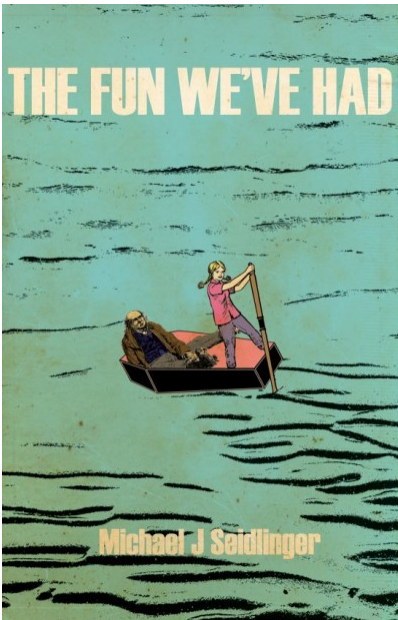
"A book describes works conceived of
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TRANSLATED BY JAN STEYN

Works

by **Edouard Levé** (Translated by **Jan Steyn**)
[Dalkey Archive](#)

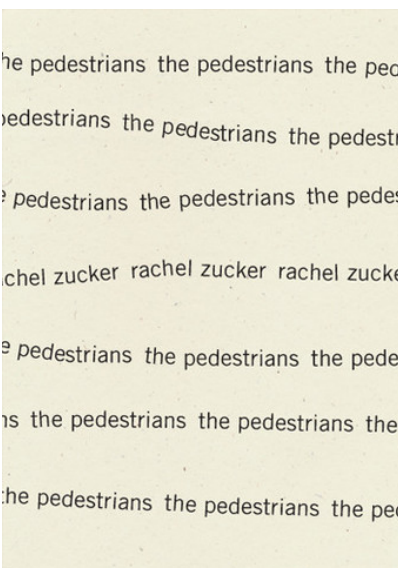
This is fiction, but it is fiction of a sort that raises some very serious questions about the possibility of cordoning off actual realities from imagined ones (...) Dizzying and disturbing in a way that is quite unlike anything else i have ever read.
– THE MILLIONS



The Fun We've Had
by **Michael J Seidlinger**

[Lazy Fascist Press](#)

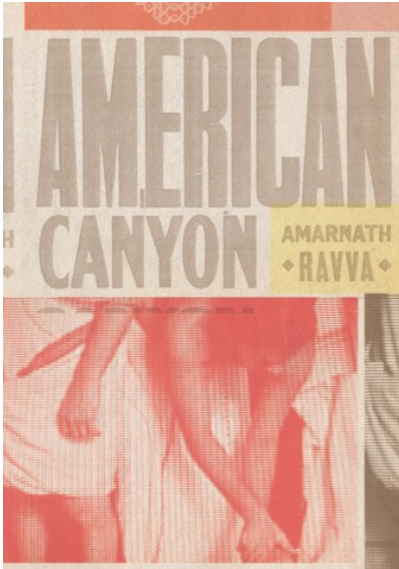
Michael Seidlinger is a homegrown Calvino, a humanist, and wise and darkly whimsical. His invisible cities are the spires of the sea where we all sail our coffins in search of our stories." – STEVE ERICKSON



The Pedestrians
by **Rachel Zucker**

[Wave Books](#)

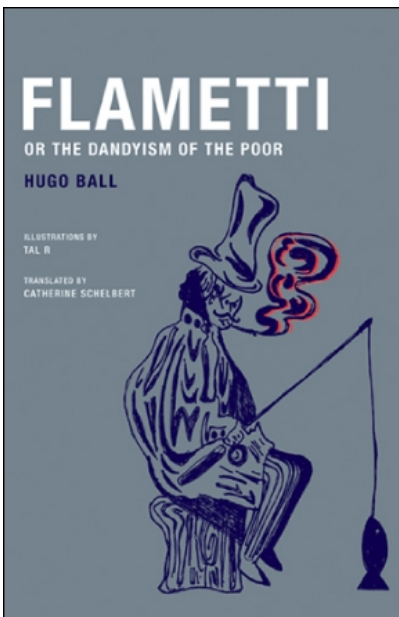
[Zucker's] best writing is nothing if not uncomfortable. If you know that discomfort already, you might see yourself in the best parts of Zucker's poems. – STEPHEN BURT



American Canyon
by Amarnath Ravva

[Kaya Press](#)

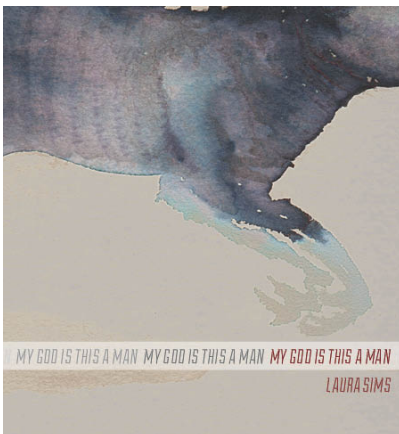
"A mesmerizing and elegiac meditation on identity, nationality, and desire. Ravva coils narratives of India and the American West in on each other, telling a family history that is both fragmented and tender. A phenomenal debut." –COLIN DICKEY



FLAMETTI, OR THE DANDYISM OF THE POOR
by Hugo Ball (Translated by Catherine Schelbert)

[Wakefield Press](#)

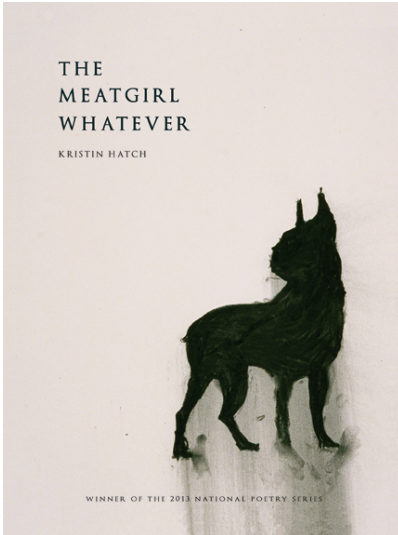
The idea of the Cabaret Voltaire grew out of literary thoughts as well as the slum atmosphere of the music-hall performers, the singers, the magicians, fire-eaters, and others portrayed by Ball in his novel Flametti. –RICHARD HUELSENBECK



my god is this a man
by Laura Sims

[Fence Books](#)

The poems in Sims' third collection engage the escarpment of the page itself: walled-off phrases set against spare lines on largely empty pages, a proto-graphical representation of thought itself. The result are poems of psychic fragmentation: relationship as crime-scene, the folk ballad re-writ for our new cult of mass-shootings, "the quiet and unmeaning" of a natural world wrought horrific...



The Meatgirl Whatever
by Kristin Hatch

[Fence Books](#)

The poems in Kristin Hatch's debut collection ooze with the viscus of shattered reality. Bodily, almost animalistic, they flirt with apocalypse, accumulate like diary entries from a madman's kitchen where knife blades hover near the jugular."



PATTER
by Douglas Kearney

[Red Hen Books](#)

For a couple struggling with infertility, conception is a war against their bodies. Blood and death attend. But when the war is won, and life stares, hungry, in the parents' faces, where does that violence, anxiety, and shame go? The poems in *Patter* re-imagine miscarriages as minstrel shows, magic tricks, and comic strips; set Darth Vader against Oedipus's dad in competition for "Father of the Year;" and interrogate the poet's family's stint on reality TV.



Nochita
by Dia Felix

[City Lights](#)

In *Nochita*, Dia Felix builds an extraordinarily rich and inventive language to carry the kaleidoscopic point of view of her young protagonist. What a pleasure to open a book and find such exuberant and committed artistry. A stunning debut. □—JANET FITCH



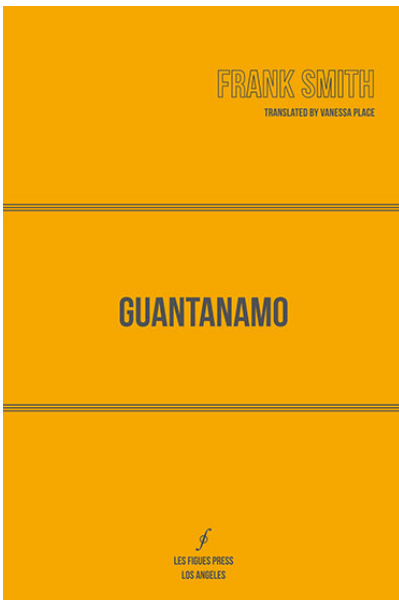
Running through Beijing

by Xu Zechen

[Two Lines Press](#)

“Running through Beijing is clean and fast, deeply felt and very smart: a profoundly engaging story about a certain kind of honor, and a certain kind of thief, and a life that feels hidden in plain sight.”

– ROY KESEY



Guantanamo

by Frank Smith (Translated by Vanessa Place)

[Les Figs Press](#)

A mutant offspring of Kafka, Lyotard, and William Carlos Williams, Frank Smith’s volume haunts the precincts of a world-class ethical blight. Poignant, disturbing, and skillfully translated by a leading voice in contemporary thought, *Guantanamo* remains the name of pernicious irresolution and offshore strike back. –AVITAL RONEILL

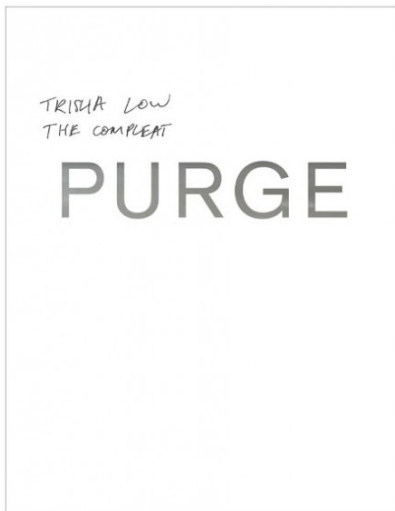


The Ants

by Sawako Nakayasu

[Les Figs Press](#)

We have plenty to learn from the numerous ants. Sawako Nakayasu—writer, antologist, Baudelaire’s sister—turns daily life inside out and upside down then puts it into perfect little boxes. Here we follow the lines of black legged, syntactical units—the words—as they cross and they tickle the heart of the matter with us. –JOHN GRANGER

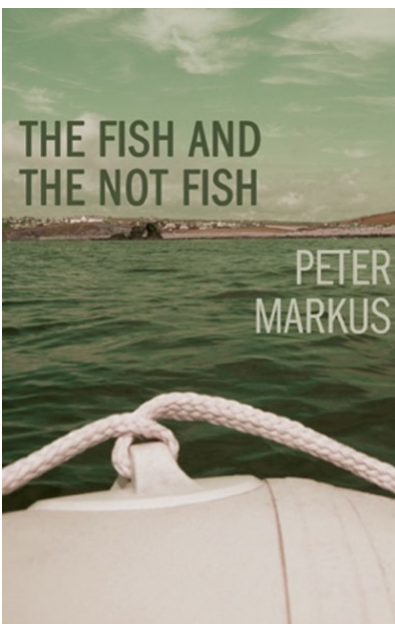


The Compleat Purge

by Trisha Low

[Kenning Editions](#)

Trisha Low is just another feminist, confessional writer trying to find a good way to deal with all her literary dads. She siphons the remix culture of social media into the binge and purge cycle of an engrossing read, with the emphasis on gross. She reads the diaries of teenage girls, their blog comments and love letters; she dresses like one in performance then throws up fake blood on herself. She once surveyed the reactions of Catholic fathers to scripted confessionals she made regarding rough sex with men, secretly recorded the conversations, and transcribed the tapes.

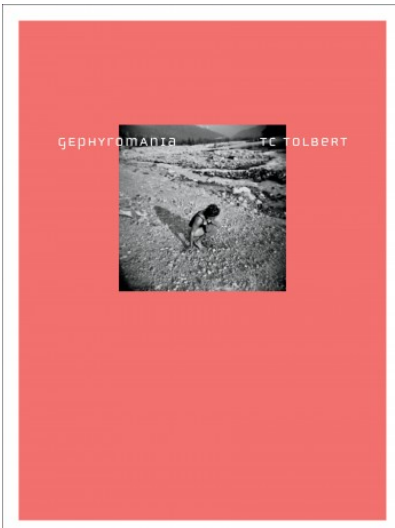


The Fish and the Not Fish

by Peter Markus

[Dzanc Books](#)

The world of the child is a world where things aren't what they always seem to be. In *The Fish and the Not Fish*, Peter Markus brings us back inside that not-so-simple space and its slippery way of seeing and saying, a place that is primal and mythic in its re-making.



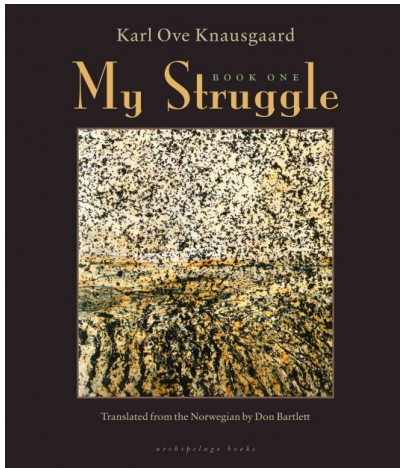
Gephyromania

by TC Tolbert

[Ahsahta Press](#)

Gephyromania teaches us that to unmake a body, language, and thereby a world is as meaningful (perhaps more so) than building—and that unmaking is, oxymoronically, a form of creation. This collection presses hard and urgently against the throat of mainstream western notions of what it means to inhabit a gendered body. A truly necessary book!

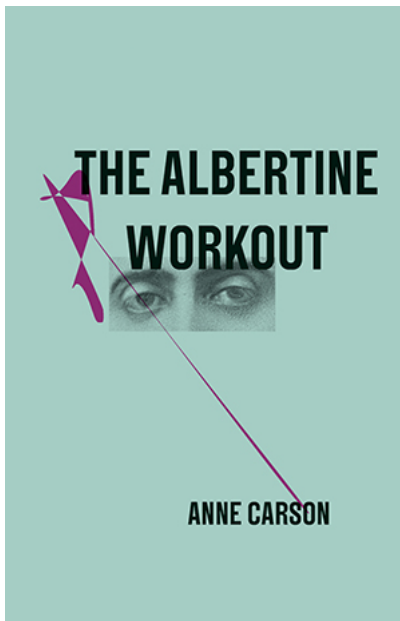
—DAWN LUNDY MARTIN



My Struggle, Volumes I – III
by Karl Ove Knausgaard

[Archipelago Books](#)

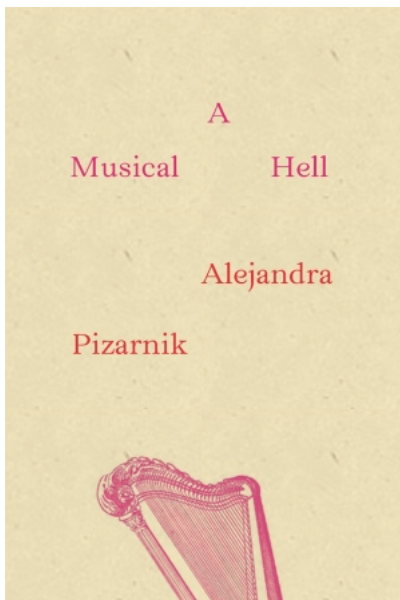
What's notable is Karl Ove's ability, rare these days, to be fully present in and mindful of his own existence. Every detail is put down without apparent vanity or decoration, as if the writing and the living are happening simultaneously. There shouldn't be anything remarkable about any of it except for the fact that it immerses you totally. You live his life with him. – ZADIE SMITH



The Albertine Workout
by Anne Carson

[New Directions](#)

The Albertine Workout contains fifty-nine paragraphs, with appendices, summarizing Anne Carson's research on Albertine, the principal love interest of Marcel in Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*.



A Musical Hell
by Alejandra Pizarnik (Translated by Yvette Siegert)

[New Directions](#)

– The flower of distance is blooming. I want you to look through the window and tell me what you see: inconclusive gestures, illusory objects, failed shapes.... Go to the window as if you'd been preparing for this your entire life.



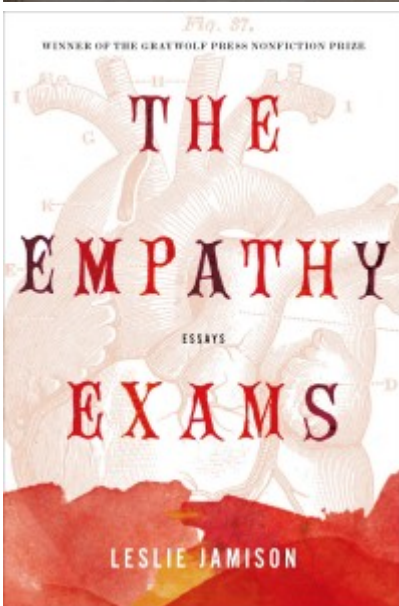
Memento Mori
by Muriel Spark
[New Directions](#)

In late 1950s London, something uncanny besets a group of elderly friends: an insinuating voice on the telephone reminds each: *Remember you must die*. Their geriatric feathers are soon thoroughly ruffled, and many an old unsavory secret is dusted off.



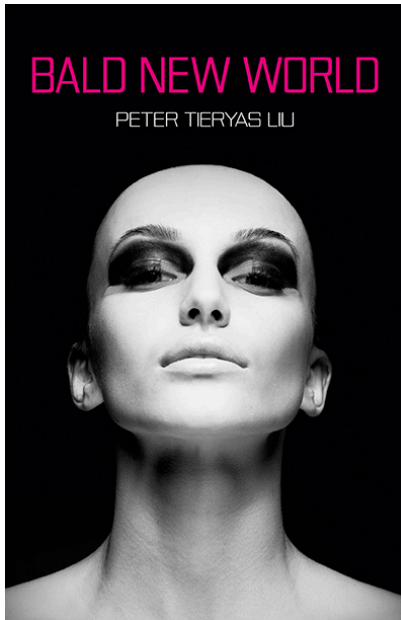
Something Wrong With Her
by Cris Mazza
[Jaded Ibis Press](#)

“Stunningly honest and formally audacious... Mazza’s decision to let speak a “character” that other memoirists would have had remain silent indicates what a vital expansion *Something Wrong with Her* is for the field of memoir.” –The Brooklyn Rail



The Empathy Exams: Essays
by Leslie Jamison
[Graywolf Press](#)

Beginning with her experience as a medical actor, paid to act out symptoms for medical students to diagnose, Leslie Jamison’s visceral and revealing essays ask essential questions about our basic understanding of others: How should we care about one another? How can we feel another’s pain, especially when pain can be assumed, distorted, or performed? Is empathy a tool by which to test or even grade each other? By confronting pain—real and imagined, her own and others’—Jamison uncovers a personal and cultural urgency to *feel*.



Bald New World
by Peter Tieryas Liu

[Perfect Edge Books](#)

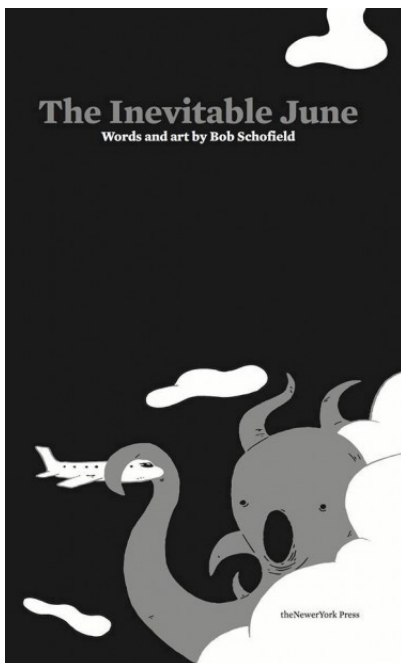
Bald New World is a hypnotic, surreal, and insightful novel, blending *Blade Runner* and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* to create a dark, funny, and captivating story. One of the best books I've read this year. – RICHARD THOMAS



Tweaky Village
by Kevin Killian

[Wonder](#)

The winner of the first Wonder Prize, Kevin Killian's *Tweaky Village* is a book of poems from a dreamy Oz of delirium and nostalgia, memory and desire. Killian pays homage to the Iraq War dead, George Kuchar, old Hollywood, Kylie Minogue, friends, lovers and almost lovers: "Five years in / to a war that never ends, / I heard telephones, opera house, favorite melodies." Voices from the past—Tim Dlugos, David Bowie, Abraham Lincoln—fade in and out like overheard conversation, half-remembered a dozen years later.



The Inevitable June
by Bob Schofield

[theNewYork](#)

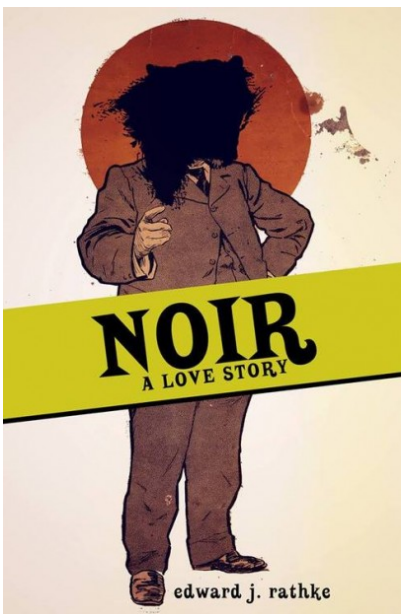
This morning I'm stuffed in my bathtub excited for Bob Schofield's, *Inevitable June*, because he is the future of American Surrealism. – TJ Lyons



ULTRAMEGAPRAIRIELAND
by Elisabeth Workman

[Bloof Books](#)

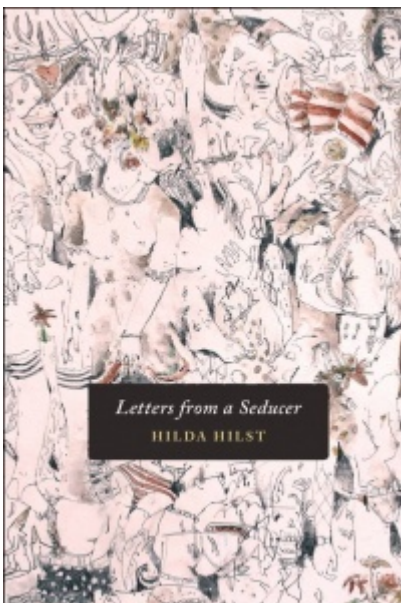
Once upon a time, ancient glaciers oozed light through the general living room of America, scraping the terrain into the sweeping prairies of the Midwest, a superlatively grassy expanse in which American bison cavorted with dangerous electric fish-goats and no one got hurt. That was a long time ago. Then one day we woke up and it was everywhere: ULTRAMEGAPRAIRIELAND.



Noir: A Love Story
by Edward J Rathke

[Civil Coping Mechanisms](#)

"I used to hate my real name. I used to hate it so much. I hated the way it looked on paper and I hated the way it sounded, rolling round my ear, those two stupid hard consonants just a few letters apart. I've made a thousand names for myself over the years and most of them nothing like mine. I lived in worlds that only existed inside my head and I made me new. For a long time I hated my face too and I avoided mirrors like they were plagued and I stopped remembering properly what I look like, and this problem persists." – Edward J Rathke



Letters from a Seducer
by Hilda Hilst (Translated by John Keene)

[Nightboat Books](#)

The first English-language translation of the second volume in Hilda Hilst's dynamic and unnerving erotic-pornographic trilogy.

Hervé Guibert
THE MAUSOLEUM OF LOVERS
Journals 1976-1991

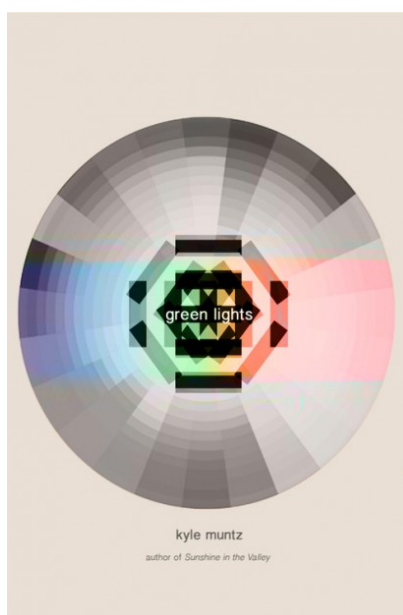


The Mausoleum of Lovers Journals 1976–1991
by Hervé Guibert (Translated by Nathanaël)

[Nightboat Books](#)

The long-awaited English-language translation of Hervé Guibert's arresting journals.

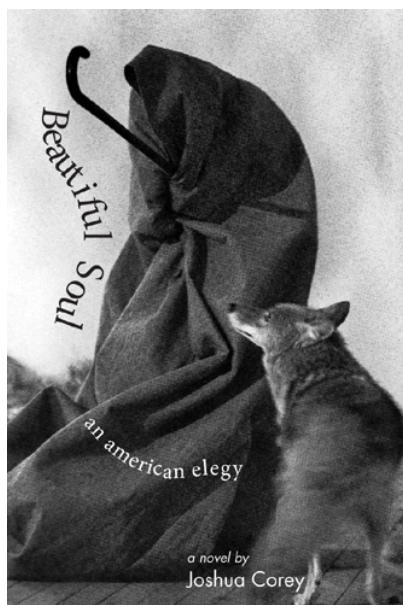
TRANSLATED BY
Nathanaël



Green Lights
by Kyle Muntz

[Civil Coping Mechanisms](#)

Green Lights is a surreal fable set in a neighborhood that goes on forever, where the light is always changing color. It's the story of two people in love, a friend with a problem, and an old man who eats children; but also one about perception, the gaps between universes, and the struggle to find happiness in a dangerous, sometimes incomprehensible world.



Beautiful Soul: An American Elegy
by Joshua Corey

[Spuyten Duyvil](#)

Joshua Corey's *Beautiful Soul* offers a swirling, shadowy cosmos lit by intelligence, urgency, and heart. Its swirl is cinematic—"estranged and operatic"—but never at the expense of the body, be it the bitten nipple, or the "bloody middle" of history. I especially admire Corey's conjuring of Ruth: fulcrum of readerly empathy, inheritor of mysterious and difficult histories, navigator of the present's strata, honorary "new reader." Go on her journey with her; "the book is waiting." — MAGGIE NELSON