



# Reaktion Books

SPRING / SUMMER CATALOGUE 2025





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Cover: Passenger pigeons (*Ectopistes migratorius*), drawn from nature by John James Audubon, 1827-30, *The Birds of America*, vols I-IV: 1827-38, Archives & Special Collections, University of Pittsburgh Library System, PA.  
Inside front cover: photo by Josh Withers on Unsplash.

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Welcome to Reaktion's books for Spring and Summer 2025.

In *Rough Music: Folk Customs, Transgression and Alternative Britain*, Liz Williams explores British folk rituals past and present, with their compelling mixture of violence, humour and mystery.

*Amazing Worlds of Science Fiction and Science Fact* by Keith Cooper is a superbly entertaining and well-informed exploration of the interaction of scientific understanding with the visionary creative worlds of science fiction, both literary and cinematic.

Cosima Clara Gillhammer's *Light on Darkness* is the untold story of the Christian liturgy and how its rituals have profoundly influenced art, architecture, literature and music.

Sheree Bekker and Stephen Mumford's *Open Play: The Case for Feminist Sport* is an argument for a new vision of fairness in sport, one that will surprise many readers.

In *Illumino*, Michelle P. Brown uncovers the history of medieval Britain through the fascinating stories of twelve illuminated manuscripts that are some of the greatest achievements in world civilization.

*Miracula* is Paul Chrystal's supremely entertaining, and occasionally revolting, account of the weird and wonderful in ancient Greece and Rome, and brings to light the most captivating stories from classical sources, famous and obscure.

We have a great selection of titles coming in our much-lauded history series: *The Fatimids* in *Dynasties*, *Frederick Barbarossa* in *Medieval Lives*, *Alexander the Great* in *Great Lives of the Ancient World* and *Rudolf II* in *Renaissance Lives*.

We hope that you will enjoy our new season's books and Reaktion's great backlist.

David Hayden, *Managing Director*  
Michael R. Leaman, *Publisher*

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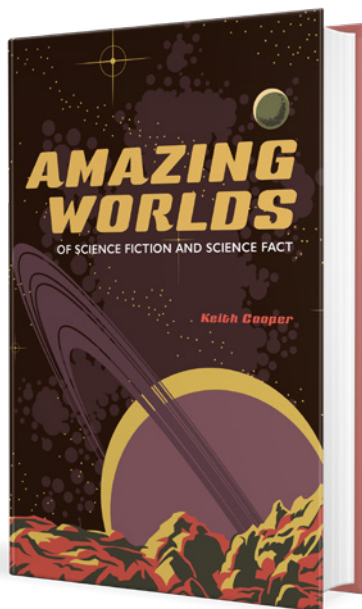
# Amazing Worlds of Science Fiction and Science Fact

Keith Cooper

‘Unpacking science fiction alongside real exoplanet discoveries, Keith Cooper’s *Amazing Worlds* is a captivating, cutting-edge view of worlds beyond our solar system that explores the intersection of fiction and fact. An essential read for anyone fascinated by the cosmos.’ – Sara Seager, Professor of Planetary Science, Physics and Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and author of *The Smallest Lights in the Universe*

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to watch a double sunset on Tatooine, stand among the sand dunes of Arrakis or gaze at the gas-giant planet Polyphemus from the moon Pandora? In *Amazing Worlds of Science Fiction and Science Fact*, Keith Cooper explores the fictional planets from films such as *Star Wars*, *Dune* and *Avatar*, and discusses how realistic they are based on our current scientific understanding and astronomical observations. The real exoplanets astronomers are now discovering are truly stranger than fiction, as the author shows. Featuring insights from over a dozen scientists and award-winning science-fiction authors, including Charlie Jane Anders, Stephen Baxter and Alastair Reynolds, this book is perfect for readers of popular science and fans of science fiction.

Keith Cooper is a science journalist who has written for *New Scientist*, *Physics World*, *Sky and Telescope*, *Space.com* and *Supercluster*, among others. He has edited *Astronomy Now* magazine for nearly twenty years. His books include *The Contact Paradox* (2019).



Surveys the realism of planets in sci-fi films like *Star Wars* and *Dune*

March 2025 • Popular Science/  
Film

ISBN 978 1 78914 994 4

216 × 138 mm • 224 pp

12 colour illustrations

Hardback • £15/\$22.50

ebook 978 1 78914 998 2

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# Open Play

## *The Case for Feminist Sport*

Sheree Bekker and Stephen Mumford

‘*Open Play* challenges the patriarchal system that has dictated women’s participation in sport around the world . . . This book is not just a must-read – it should become foundational in the future of women’s sport from the grassroots to professional levels.’ – Flo Lloyd-Hughes, sports writer and broadcaster

Sheree Bekker and Stephen Mumford argue that the category of ‘women’s sport’ is not the feminist win some would have you believe. Instead, the segregation of women in sport is just one of the many ways in which women are told to expect less from society. Women had to fight to be included in sport in the first place, and are now only included under far less favourable terms than those enjoyed by men.

There are better ways to ensure safety and fairness than segregation by gender. And this matters deeply: ending gender segregation would encourage a more equitable distribution of resources, increase women’s participation in sport and challenge outdated, sexist myths about women and their bodies.

Sheree Bekker is Associate Professor in the Department for Health at the University of Bath. Her work centres on feminist perspectives in sport and she is co-lead of the Feminist Sport Lab.

Stephen Mumford is a philosopher at Durham University. His many books include *Football: The Philosophy Behind the Game* (2019) and *A Philosopher Looks at Sport* (2021), and he is also co-lead of the Feminist Sport Lab.



Ending gender segregation in sport fosters equity, challenges sexism and boosts participation

February 2025 • Sport/Gender Studies

ISBN 978 1 83639 053 4

216 × 138 mm • 208 pp

Hardback • £14.99/\$22.50

ebook 978 1 83639 054 1

World Rights: Reaktion

# Rough Music

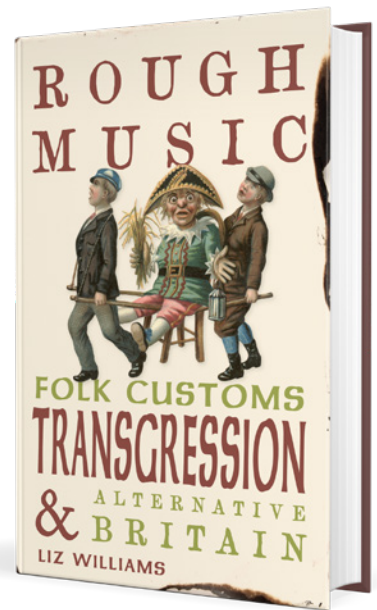
## *Folk Customs, Transgression and Alternative Britain*

Liz Williams

‘A lively and well-informed account of traditional British popular customs, with a novel and valuable pair of twists: showing the close relationship of those customs with subversion and disorder, and following their observance up into the current time. It is thus a revealing commentary on both past and present.’ – Ronald Hutton, Professor of History, University of Bristol, and author of *Pagan Britain* (2013)

*Rough Music* explores transgression and shame in British folklore and customs. It takes in a wide array of examples, including Bonfire Night, Wassail, Morris dancing, Mari Lwyd and Twelfth Night, along with events like the Cooper’s Hill Cheese-Rolling and Wake, and street football. Liz Williams explores the roots and roles of violence, mockery, protest and public shaming. She also addresses alternative culture and modern protests, such as the Battle of the Beanfield and the Stonehenge Free Festival. The interaction between racism and traditions involving blackface, alongside the emergence of all-female Morris sides, is also examined. Finally, it looks at folklore’s evolution in the digital age, highlighting new developments such as ghost bikes. This engaging book offers an entertaining yet rigorous look at British folklore and culture.

Liz Williams is a writer and journalist. She lives in Glastonbury. Her books include *Miracles of Our Own Making: A History of Paganism* (2020), also published by Reaktion Books.



An exploration of transgression and shame in British folklore and customs

March 2025 • History/Folklore

ISBN 978 1 83639 060 2

216 × 138 mm • 336 pp

Hardback • £15.99/\$27.50

ebook 978 1 83639 059 6

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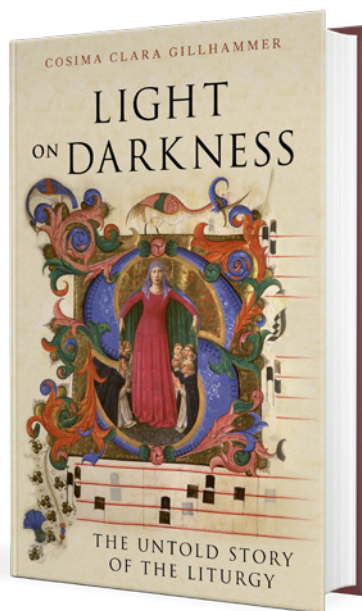
# Light on Darkness

## *The Untold Story of the Liturgy*

Cosima Clara Gillhammer

*Light on Darkness: The Untold Story of the Liturgy* offers a captivating journey through the history of religious rituals in Western Europe, showcasing the profound impact of Christian liturgy on art, literature, music and architecture. Through ten evocative stories, it explores medieval rituals and their cultural influence up to the present day, providing fresh insights into the enduring legacy of the liturgy as an expression of human emotion and religious experience. Accessible to all, this guide provides translations and explanations to uncover the hidden treasures of ancient rites and their lasting significance, appealing to those seeking a deeper understanding of Western liturgical traditions.

Cosima Clara Gillhammer is Junior Research Fellow in Medieval English at Christ Church, University of Oxford. She teaches and researches medieval literature, culture and liturgy. Her books include *A Late-Medieval History of the Ancient and Biblical World* (2022).



A captivating journey through the history of religious rituals in Western Europe

April 2025 • Religion  
ISBN 978 1 83639 043 5  
216 × 138 mm • 280 pp  
21 illustrations, 19 in colour  
Hardback • £15.99/\$24  
ebook 978 1 83639 044 2  
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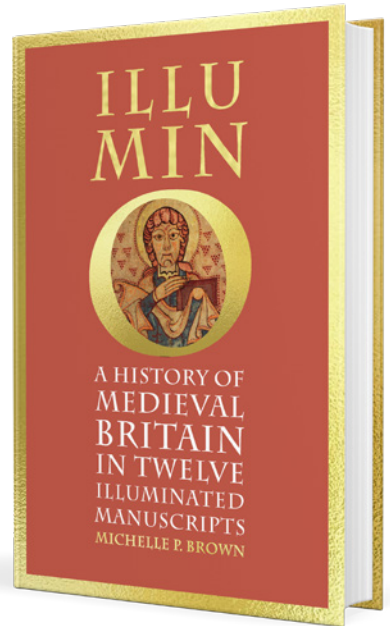
# Illumino

## *A History of Medieval Britain in Twelve Illuminated Manuscripts*

Michelle P. Brown

*Illumino* explores the history of medieval Britain through the biographies of twelve remarkable illuminated manuscripts and their creators. Each manuscript serves as a gateway into the lives of its makers and commissioners, and as a springboard into the era of its creation. Illuminated manuscripts are among the most intricate and fascinating forms of medieval evidence, blending literature, art, science, faith and human thought with the materiality of their production. By undertaking the detective work needed to determine the nature of each project and the underlying human-interest stories, this book reveals their social, economic and cultural contexts and charts the exchange of ideas and materials across time and space. Featuring over a hundred beautiful illustrations, this is a unique and accessible introduction to Britain's history, art history and book history over a thousand years.

Michelle P. Brown is Professor Emerita of Medieval Manuscript Studies at the School of Advanced Study, University of London, and was formerly Curator of Illuminated Manuscripts at the British Library. Her books include *Bede and the Theory of Everything* (Reaktion, 2023).



The history of  
medieval Britain  
through twelve  
remarkable  
illuminated  
manuscripts

May 2025 • History  
ISBN 978 1 83639 037 4  
234 × 156 mm • 320 pp  
107 illustrations, 100 in colour  
Hardback • £25/\$40  
ebook 978 1 83639 036 7  
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# Miracula

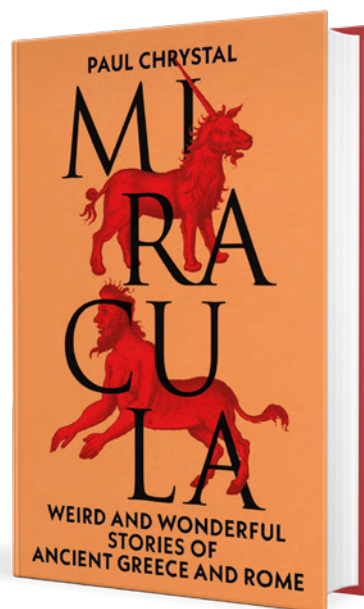
## *Weird and Wonderful Stories of Ancient Greece and Rome*

Paul Chrystal

Both humorous and shocking, *Miracula* is filled with astonishing facts and stories drawn from ancient Greece and Rome that have rarely been retold in English. It explores 'the incredible' as presented by little-known classical writers like Callimachus and Phlegon of Tralles. However, it offers much more: familiar authors such as Herodotus and Cicero often couldn't resist relating sensational, tabloid-worthy tales. The book also tackles ancient examples of topics still relevant today, such as racism, slavery and misogyny. The pieces are by turns absorbing, enchanting, curious, unbelievable, comical, astonishing, disturbing and occasionally just plain daft.

An entertaining and sometimes lurid collection, this book is perfect for all those fascinated by the stranger aspects of the classical world, history enthusiasts and anyone interested in classical history, society and culture.

Paul Chrystal is a contributor to a number of history and archaeology magazines, and tv and radio programmes. He is the author of numerous books published on a wide range of subjects, including, most recently, *The Book in the Ancient World: How the Wisdom of the Ages Was Preserved* (2024).



Astonishing,  
humorous and  
shocking tales  
from ancient  
Greece and  
Rome

March 2025 • History  
ISBN 978 1 83639 049 7  
216 × 138 mm • 256 pp  
43 illustrations  
Hardback • £15.95/\$24  
ebook 978 1 83639 050 3  
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# Ghosts, Trolls and the Hidden People

## *An Anthology of Icelandic Folk Legends*

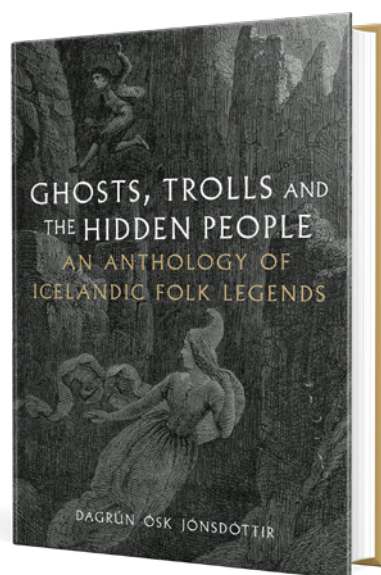
Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir

Foreword by Jack Zipes

This unique and enchanting book opens the door to a captivating world of Icelandic folk legends. The six chapters are each based on a different setting: farm, wilderness, darkness, church, ocean and shore. The anthology provides translated tales from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as introductions by the author that place these often-supernatural happenings in the context of Icelandic society. The legends include tales of hidden people, trolls, ghosts, sea monsters and even polar bears, exploring themes of love, revenge and conflict. The book highlights the tension between Christianity and heathen beliefs, past and present, nature and humanity, and divides within society.

Drawing from a wide variety of Icelandic sources, this book makes these colourful, entertaining, lively stories available to non-Icelandic speakers, many for the first time.

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir teaches folkloristics at the University of Iceland and has published widely in the field of Icelandic folk legends.



A unique and  
enchanting  
window into the  
world of Icelandic  
folk legend

May 2025 • Folklore

ISBN 978 1 83639 025 1

208 × 156 mm • 248 pp

23 illustrations

Hardback • £16.95/\$25

ebook 978 1 83639 026 8

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# The Year

## *An Ecology of the Zodiac*

Spike Bucklow

‘*The Year* is a contemplative almanac charting nature and culture through the zodiac, with a powerful message for our time of grave disjuncture between the two.’ – Ferdinand Saumarez Smith, author of *Eleusis and Enlightenment*

‘A wonderful book that invites you to read its words in ebbs and flows: a historical-cultural-aesthetic-poetic almanac to carry in your pocket, its sentences in your head.’ – Julian Yates, H. Fletcher Brown Professor of English, University of Delaware

*The Year* takes us on a journey into how nature transforms across twelve months, each chapter focusing on a specific month’s natural events, from spring’s beginning through to winter’s end. It opens with an overview of our evolving understanding of time and nature, from ancient astronomy to the present, and concludes with a chapter on the impact of climate change. Spike Bucklow draws on both modern ecological studies and historical naturalists such as Aristotle, Gilbert White, Thoreau and Aldo Leopold. Poetic reflections from Ovid, Shakespeare, John Clare and William Wordsworth enrich the narrative, giving further insights into nature’s changes. Blending modern science with traditional wisdom, *The Year* provides a positive perspective on ecological, global and personal change.

Spike Bucklow is the author of numerous books on artists and their materials and methods, including *Children of Mercury: The Lives of the Painters* (Reaktion, 2022). He was previously Professor of Material Culture at the University of Cambridge.



A journey through nature’s yearly cycle, blending science, history and poetic reflection

May 2025 • History/Nature

ISBN 978 1 83639 078 7

216 × 138 mm • 240 pp

26 illustrations

Hardback • £15.99/\$24

ebook 978 1 83639 079 4

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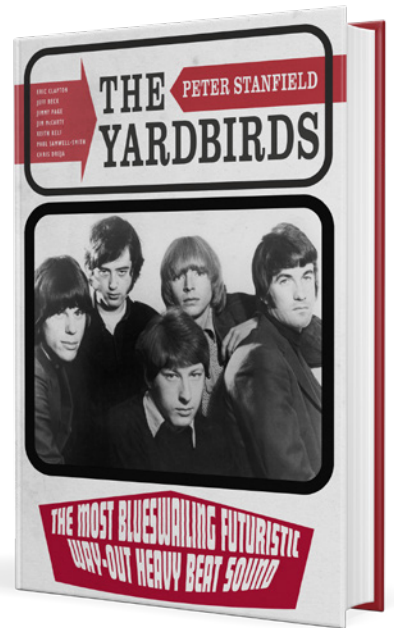
# The Yardbirds

## *The Most Blueswailing Futuristic Way-Out Heavy Beat Sound*

Peter Stanfield

The Yardbirds were trailblazers in the rapid development of pop music in Britain between 1963 and 1968. With members including Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page, they helped to set the basic template of what has been known ever since as rock music, and gave rise to one of the most commercially successful bands of all time: Led Zeppelin. Peter Stanfield situates the band in the rise of British R&B and the tumult of the psychedelic era. Obsessively detailed about both the band and 1960s pop culture, this is the book fans of the Yardbirds have always needed.

Peter Stanfield is Emeritus Professor of Film at the University of Kent. His publications include *A Band with Built-In Hate: The Who from Pop Art to Punk* (2021) and *Pin-Ups 1972: Third Generation Rock 'n' Roll* (2022), both published by Reaktion Books.



Shows how British  
pop trailblazers  
the Yardbirds  
helped to shape  
rock music

February 2025 • Music  
ISBN 978 1 83639 077 0  
234 × 156 mm • 432 pp  
34 illustrations  
Hardback • £25/\$38  
ebook 978 1 83639 076 3  
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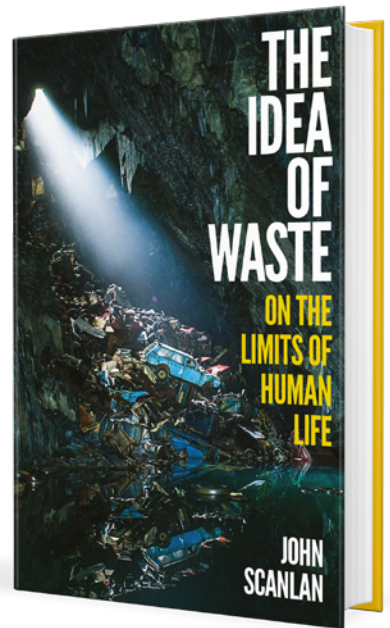
# The Idea of Waste

## *On the Limits of Human Life*

John Scanlan

This book starts with the premise that waste is inevitable in human society. *The Idea of Waste* explores how we have grappled with both the material reality and the spectre of this shape-shifting phenomenon throughout history – utilizing it, dreaming of overcoming it, yet never escaping it. John Scanlan explores what waste is and why it seems to be intrinsic to human life, at every turn, in every age and epoch. Finally, he demonstrates how waste never disappears, but rather only proliferates anew. The compelling narrative shows waste to be both an enduring material consequence of human activity and an idea or state of being.

John Scanlan is a cultural historian at the University of Central Lancashire. His previous books include *On Garbage* (2005), *Memory: Encounters with the Strange and the Familiar* (2013) and *Rock 'n' Roll Plays Itself* (2022), all published by Reaktion Books.



An exploration of both the reality and the spectre of waste throughout history

February 2025 • History

ISBN 978 1 83639 034 3

234 x 156 mm • 304 pp

40 illustrations

Hardback • £25/\$40

ebook 978 1 83639 035 0

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# Doc or Quack

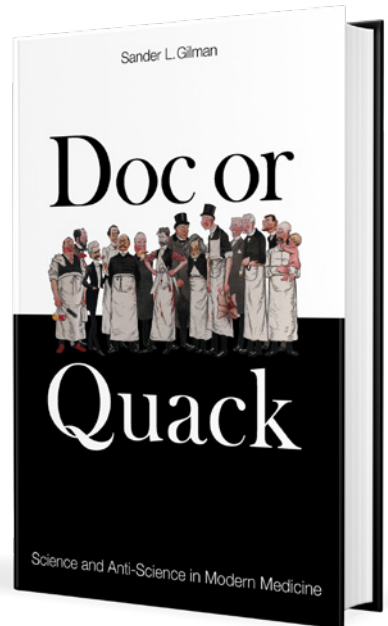
## *Science and Anti-Science in Modern Medicine*

Sander L. Gilman

Reaching from the beginnings of scientific medicine in the nineteenth century through to the present, Sander L. Gilman examines the ever-shifting boundary between scientific medicine and quackery, asking if such a fixed boundary can actually exist within mainstream medical practice. Through detailed case studies – of stomach ulcers, eye disease and acupuncture – *Doc or Quack* reveals the influence of pharmaceutical companies in determining the science of medical practice, the pros and cons of the increasing specialization in medical practice, and the murky issue of ‘race’ in scientific medicine.

This readable account covers medical practice from the Enlightenment to the present, offering a realistic view of health politics in the USA, Germany and the UK. It’s an essential read for anyone interested in the history and politics of Western medicine.

Sander L. Gilman is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of the Liberal Arts and Sciences as well as Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at Emory University. A cultural and literary historian, he is the author or editor of more than a hundred books, including *Stand Up Straight! A History of Posture* (Reaktion, 2018).



An examination of  
the ever-shifting  
boundary between  
scientific medicine  
and quackery

April 2025 • History of Medicine

ISBN 978 1 83639 015 2

234 × 156 mm • 320 pp

24 illustrations

Hardback • £20/\$30

ebook 978 1 83639 014 5

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# The Green Fuse

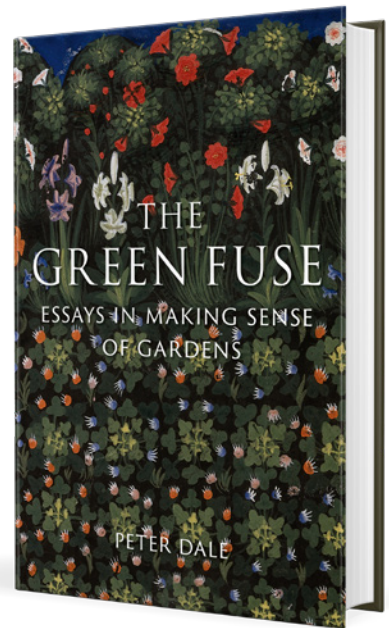
## *Essays in Making Sense of Gardens*

Peter Dale

Why do interiors of houses mimic nature – the wallpapers and curtains, flowers in vases, a vaporizer in the bathroom? Why do we so often connect our childhoods with gardens? Why has the myth of a lost Eden been so ubiquitous and so formative?

*The Green Fuse: Essays in Making Sense of Gardens* explores our deep-rooted impulses to create gardens, examining them through the lenses of history, religion, nostalgia and myth. It connects gardens with the other arts – painting, music, literature and theatre – and contemplates their intellectual and philosophical significance. Blending lyrical reflections with research, it offers an unusually wide-ranging and thoughtful perspective on gardens and why we make them. It will be ideal for all readers interested in gardening and its cultural implications.

Peter Dale lives in Essex, uk. A longstanding contributor to *Hortus*, he has written extensively on literature, music and gardens, and his previous books include *The Irish Garden: A Cultural History* (2018) and, with Brandon C. Yen, *Versed in Living Nature: Wordsworth's Trees* (Reaktion, 2022).



An unusually  
wide-ranging  
and thoughtful  
perspective on  
why we make  
gardens

May 2025 • Gardens/Nature

ISBN 978 1 83639 028 2

234 x 156 mm • 320 pp

41 illustrations, 19 in colour

Hardback • £25/\$40

ebook 978 1 83639 027 5

World Rights: Reaktion



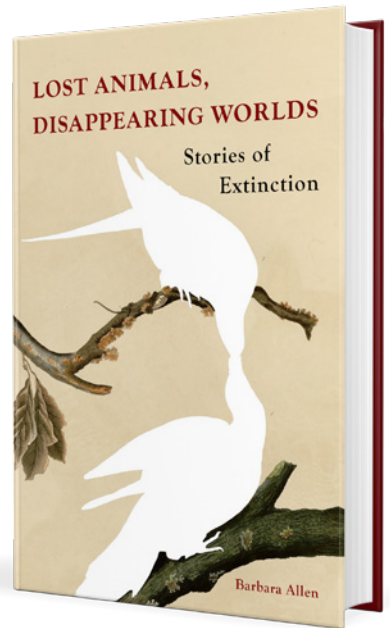
# Lost Animals, Disappearing Worlds

## *Stories of Extinction*

Barbara Allen

This book presents thirty-one extinct species through personal portraits. The intimate approach not only highlights each species but explores the broader implications of losing a species forever. How do we honour such a loss? Can we grieve for species we never knew? These animals range from the well-known passenger pigeon, thylacine and great auk, to lesser-known creatures like the Arabian ostrich, Saint Helena earwig and Bramble Cay melomys. These poignant portraits tug on the heartstrings and aim to inspire readers to protect vulnerable and endangered species today, motivating them to play a positive role in conserving our planet's biodiversity.

Barbara Allen is a minister in the Uniting Church in Australia. Her books include *Pigeon* (2009), *Animals in Religion* (2016) and *Pelican* (2019), all published by Reaktion Books.



Promoting awareness of endangered wildlife through intimate, personal portraits of extinct species

May 2025 • Natural History

ISBN 978 1 83639 045 9

234 × 156 mm • 248 pp

38 illustrations, 27 in colour

Hardback • £20/\$30

ebook 978 1 83639 046 6

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# The Turban

## *A History from East to West*

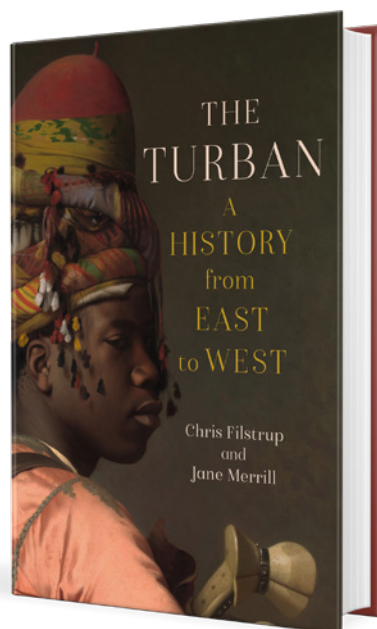
Chris Filstrup and Jane Merrill

'I'm impressed by the scope of this study, from the turban as a marker of religious affiliation to a prop for Rembrandt to a distinctive fashion for women. Headgear off to Filstrup and Merrill.' – Gay Talese, journalist and author

A turban is a strip of cloth folded and wrapped around the head; however, this description includes multifarious forms across space and time. This book follows the turban as it moves from the Arabian Peninsula through the Ottoman Empire to Europe and the Americas. It directs the reader's gaze from traditional and religious uses of the turban into the realms of international trade, Renaissance art and contemporary fashions. Turbans, as this book shows, have moved in and out of Western culture, at times considered archaic and forgotten, then noticed and reinstated as major accessories. Today Sikh men are recognized by their distinctive headwraps, and the turban remains an important part of Black culture. This book explores the turban's many adaptations worldwide.

Chris Filstrup was Chief of the Oriental Division at the New York Public Library and Dean of Libraries at Stony Brook University. He is co-author, with Jane Merrill, of *The Wedding Night* (2011), among other titles. He lives in Alexandria, Virginia.

Jane Merrill has written for many national u.s. magazines and is the author of *The Showgirl Costume* (2018) and other cultural histories. She lives in Saint George, Maine.



A superbly  
illustrated history  
of the turban,  
from Arabian  
origins to global  
cultural icon

February 2025 • History/Fashion

ISBN 978 1 83639 074 9

234 × 156 mm • 264 pp

99 illustrations, 45 in colour

Hardback • £20/\$30

ebook 978 1 83639 075 6

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# Tastes and Traditions

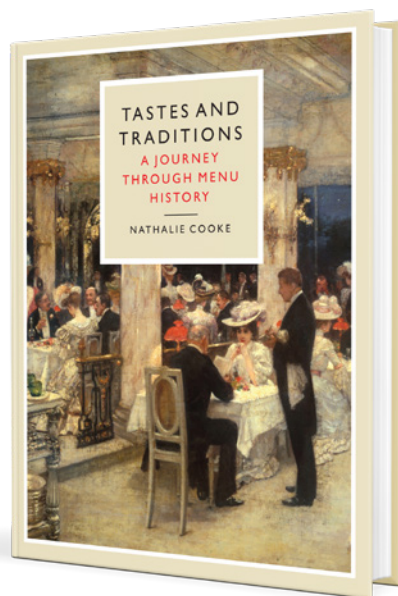
## *A Journey through Menu History*

Nathalie Cooke

Menus are invaluable snapshots of the food consumed in specific moments in time and place. *Tastes and Traditions: A Journey through Menu History* provides glimpses into the meals enjoyed by royalty and rogues, and by those celebrating special occasions, or sampling new culinary sensations, throughout history. It describes food prepared for the gods, meals served during sieges and tablescapes immortalized in art. It explores how menus entertain adults, link food with play for children, reflect changing notions of health and highlight the enduring human need to make meals meaningful.

Lavishly illustrated, this book offers an engaging exploration of why menus matter and the stories they tell, appealing to food lovers and general readers, as well as professionals in the food industry.

Nathalie Cooke is Professor of English at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. Her books include *Canadian Literary Fare* (with Shelley Boyd, 2023), winner of the 2024 Gabrielle Roy Prize, and *What's to Eat? Entrées in Canadian Food History* (2009).



An engaging  
exploration of  
why menus matter  
and the stories  
they tell

March 2025 • Food & Drink/  
History

ISBN 978 1 83639 067 1

250 × 190 mm • 192 pp

194 illustrations, 102 in colour

Hardback • £30/\$45

ebook 978 1 83639 068 8

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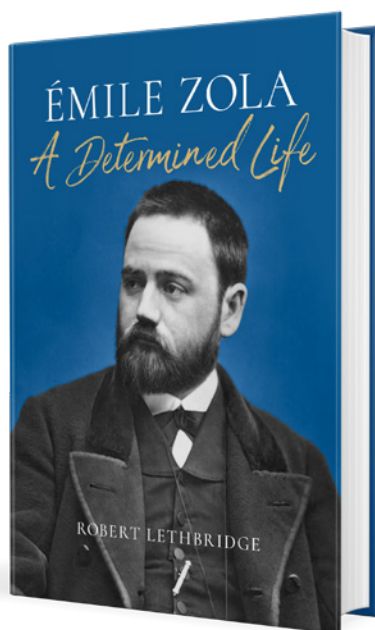
# Émile Zola

## *A Determined Life*

Robert Lethbridge

Émile Zola is widely regarded as one of the world's greatest writers, whose reputation was reinforced by his historic intervention in the Dreyfus Affair. This book explores Zola's life and work and the ways in which these were determined by the traumatic history of his times. From humble beginnings, Zola's life was marked by the determination to succeed. Robert Lethbridge traces his development as a writer, including Zola's earliest texts and his novel-cycles, and further shows how Zola's extraordinary creativity extended from his journalism to experiments in the theatre and even his own operatic adaptations of his novels. Lethbridge offers the reader new perspectives, informed by the most recent research, which bring together Zola's writing and its historical context.

Robert Lethbridge is a Life Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, and Emeritus Professor of French Language and Literature at the University of London. He is currently Hon. Professor at the University of St Andrews. His books include *Zola's Painters* (2022). He lives in Fife, Scotland.



A new perspective  
on one of the  
world's greatest  
writers

March 2025 • Biography  
ISBN 978 1 83639 017 6  
234 x 156 mm • 304 pp  
40 illustrations  
Hardback • £25/\$38  
ebook 978 1 83639 016 9  
[World Rights: Reaktion](#)

# ‘Our Little Gang’

## *The Lives of the Vorticists*

James King

The Vorticists, a rebellious cohort of young artists in early twentieth-century England, defied the conventions of the art world with their distinctive abstract creations. Despite the brevity of their existence, from 1911 to 1914, their startling innovations left an indelible mark on English art history. In this book James King explores the personalities and lives of these colourful individuals, capturing the tumultuous environment in which they thrived. The narrative presents biographies of the group’s members – ‘our little gang’, as Ezra Pound called them – highlighting personal conflicts and providing a concise, highly readable history of the movement. This book is ideal for art enthusiasts, historians and anyone intrigued by avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century.

James King is Professor Emeritus of English at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. His previous books include *Paul Nash: Designer and Illustrator* (2022).



The bold lives  
and revolutionary  
art of England’s  
early 20th-century  
Vorticists

June 2025 • Art/Biography

ISBN 978 1 83639 055 8

234 × 168 mm • 248 pp

97 illustrations, 70 in colour

Hardback • £30/\$45

ebook 978 1 83639 056 5

World Rights: Reaktion

# The First Russian Revolution

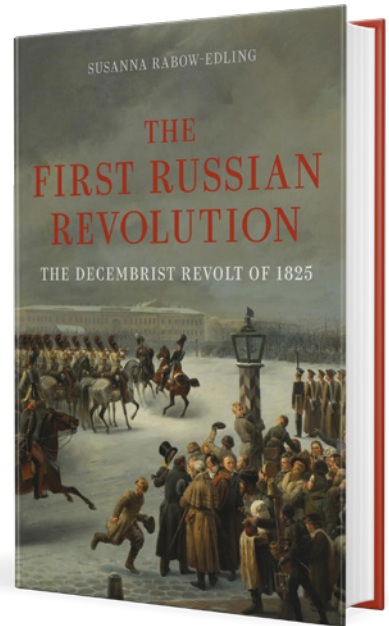
## *The Decembrist Revolt of 1825*

Susanna Rabow-Edling

On 14 December 1825 a group of young Russian army officers led 3,000 troops to Senate Square in St Petersburg, aiming to force the Senate to adopt a liberal constitution and transform the Russian Empire. The Decembrist Revolt – as it came to be known – was suppressed, with a second uprising in the south meeting the same fate. Five leaders were executed, and many others exiled to Siberia.

Why did so many young noblemen risk their lives for regime change, what was their vision for an alternative society and what were the consequences for participants and their families? This book highlights the often-neglected liberal tradition in Russian political thought and the experiences of Decembrist wives and fiancées, offering a fresh reinterpretation in the light of recent events in Russia.

Susanna Rabow-Edling is Associate Professor of Political Science and Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Uppsala University, Sweden. Her books include *Liberalism in Pre-Revolutionary Russia: State, Nation, Empire* (2018).



The genesis,  
sacrifice and  
enduring  
consequences of  
the Decembrist  
Revolt

March 2025 • History  
ISBN 978 1 83639 021 3  
234 x 156 mm • 320 pp  
12 illustrations  
Hardback • £20/\$30  
ebook 978 1 83639 020 6  
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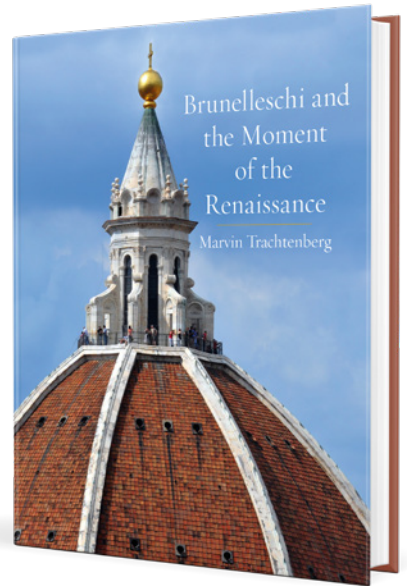


# Brunelleschi and the Moment of the Renaissance

Marvin Trachtenberg

Filippo Brunelleschi is at once the most famous and most misunderstood architect of the Renaissance. The founding architect of the movement that led the way to modernity, his originality was not expressed in words or theory but rather in the materials he used, the scenography of space he engineered, the ingenuity of his designs, the exquisite workmanship of his detailing and the strikingly creative reworking of classical elements that make up his buildings. Marvin Trachtenberg offers a new view of Brunelleschi's brilliant career as well as his life, guiding the reader through his most iconic works in Florence. In the process, this book sheds light on the driven, competitive culture of Renaissance Italy. This is an original, lively account of a key Renaissance figure.

Marvin Trachtenberg is Edith Kitzmiller Professor Emeritus at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, where he taught Gothic and Renaissance architecture for over fifty years. His books include *Building-in-Time: From Giotto to Alberti and Modern Oblivion* (2010). He lives in Bellport, New York.



A new view  
of the brilliant,  
strikingly original  
Renaissance  
architect Filippo  
Brunelleschi

May 2025 • Architecture/History

ISBN 978 1 83639 005 3

250 × 190 mm • 320 pp

160 illustrations, 100 in colour

Hardback • £40/\$55

ebook 978 1 83639 004 6

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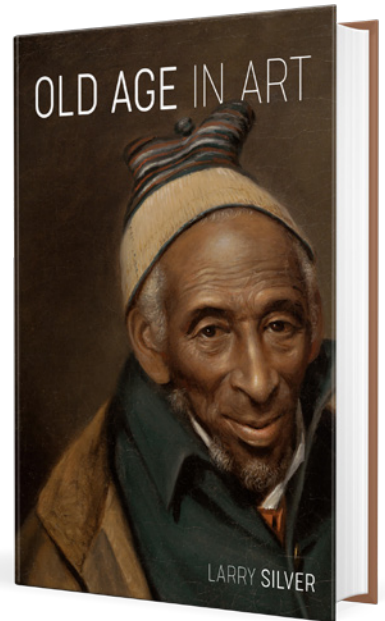


# Old Age in Art

Larry Silver

*Old Age in Art* provides a comprehensive overview of old age in European art history, and shows how aged individuals have been depicted from ancient Greece and Rome to the present century. It explores portraits, including self-portraits of artists in old age, and stories of older figures in religion, myth and history, focusing on the theme of wisdom versus folly. The book also discusses the concept of old age within the Ages of Humanity, especially during the Middle Ages and early modern periods. The final chapter examines how renowned artists like Michelangelo, Titian and Monet turned to experimental forms and new subjects in their later years, revealing a comparative 'old age style'.

Larry Silver is the Farquhar Professor Emeritus of History of Art at the University of Pennsylvania and a specialist in Dutch and Flemish paintings. He has published numerous monographs and exhibition catalogues, including *Rembrandt's Holland* (Reaktion, 2018).



Depictions of old age in art from ancient to modern

April 2025 • Art/History

ISBN 978 1 83639 051 0

216 × 138 mm • 208 pp

83 illustrations, 53 in colour

Hardback • £20/\$30

ebook 978 1 83639 052 7

World Rights: Reaktion

# Life Itself

## *Photography and South Africa*

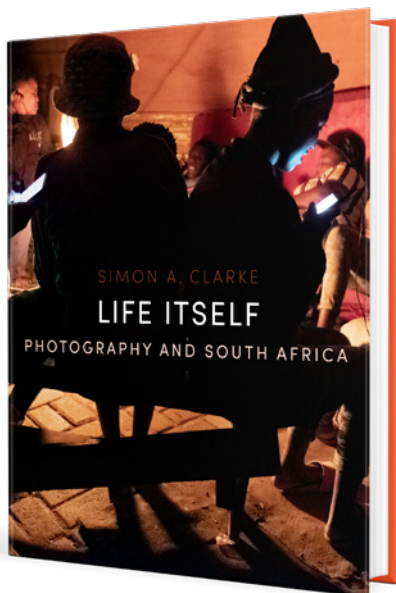
Simon A. Clarke

*'Life Itself* is likely to be the most important book ever published on the history of South African photography. Simon A. Clarke's text is elucidating and the well-chosen photographs for the book are aesthetic and documentary at the same time.'

– Roger Ballen, artist/photographer

Charting the photographic history of South Africa from colonialism to democracy, from early European photographers to work today by young South Africans, *Life Itself* explores how people, events and places have been depicted in photographic images over the decades. Featuring images from the heyday of *Drum* magazine and Black emergence to Peter Magubane's Soweto uprising pictures, David Goldblatt's *In Boksburg* and the photographers' collective Afrapix, as well as the struggles for freedom, the book carefully documents the visual representation of the nation. Simon A. Clarke concludes with post-apartheid documentary and art photography in the work of Andrew Tshabangu, Lindokuhle Sobekwa and others. Superbly illustrated, *Life Itself* helps to fill a gap in our understanding of the role of the camera in South African society over time.

Simon A. Clarke is Senior Lecturer at Falmouth University. His previous books include *Print: Fashion, Interiors, Art* (2014). He has undertaken photography fieldwork and research in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar and Madagascar.



South Africa's  
visual history  
from colonialism  
to democracy,  
through iconic  
photography

February 2025 • Photography

ISBN 978 1 83639 042 8

250 × 190 mm • 256 pp

150 illustrations, 100 in colour

Hardback • £35/\$55

ebook 978 1 83639 041 1

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# Transatlantic Drift

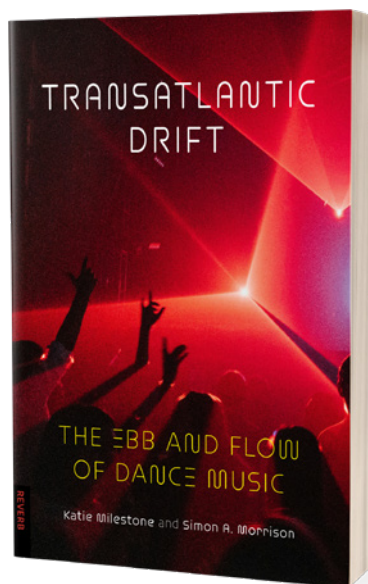
## *The Ebb and Flow of Dance Music*

Katie Milestone and Simon A. Morrison

*Transatlantic Drift* explores the emergence and evolution of nightclubs and electronic dance music from the 1950s onwards. It traces the rhythmic journey of dance music, following the pulse as it bounced between Europe, North America and the Caribbean. Music, dance styles and nightclub spaces are not created in isolation; they are shaped by collective influences and shared experiences. This book uncovers the interconnected story of dance music, taking in hotspots such as New York, Detroit, London, Manchester, Chicago, Düsseldorf and Ibiza. *Transatlantic Drift* offers an engaging exploration of how people have come together to share melodies and rhythms, forming a global conversation through electronic music.

Katie Milestone is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Manchester Metropolitan University, teaching and researching youth subcultures, music and identity. Her books include *Gender and Popular Culture* (2011).

Simon A. Morrison is a writer, academic and Programme Leader for Music Journalism at the University of Chester. He has published widely on global music culture, and his books include *Dancefloor-Driven Literature: The Rave Scene in Fiction* (2020).



The emergence,  
evolution and  
global spread of  
nightclubs and  
electronic dance  
music

REVERB

March 2025 • Music

ISBN 978 1 83639 073 2

210 × 148 mm • 256 pp

24 illustrations

Paperback • £11.99/\$18

ebook 978 1 83639 072 5

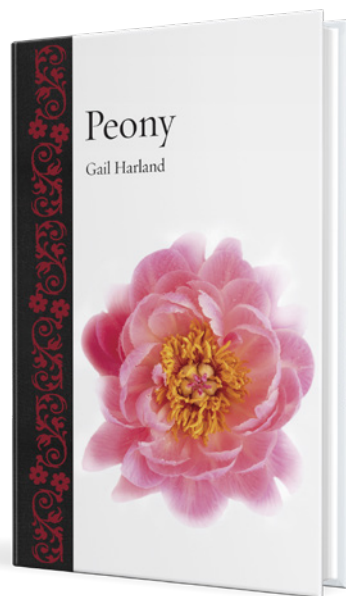
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# Peony

Gail Harland

People have always loved flowers, and peonies are among the most highly regarded, with petals of the finest silk and often a distinctive perfume. Their large, flamboyantly coloured blooms are attractive and photogenic, ideal for celebrations. Beyond the flowers, the colourful new shoots, described by landscape gardener Gertrude Jekyll as 'dear rosy snouts', add value and interest to any garden. Peonies appear in the art and literature of China, Korea, Japan, the classical Mediterranean and medieval Europe. Charles Darwin, as a child, was sent to count the peonies in his family garden, his first exercise in scientific data collection. Superbly illustrated, and covering cultural as well as botanical aspects, this book is an ideal companion for plant lovers wanting to learn more about this fascinating flower.

Gail Harland combines work as a dietitian with horticultural writing. Her previous publications include *Snowdrop* (2016) in Reaktion's Botanical series.



The history,  
culture, botany  
and beauty of the  
beloved peony

BOTANICAL

April 2025 • Nature/Gardens

ISBN 978 1 83639 058 9

216 × 138 mm • 248 pp

106 illustrations, 96 in colour

Hardback • £18/\$27

ebook 978 1 83639 057 2

World Rights: Reaktion

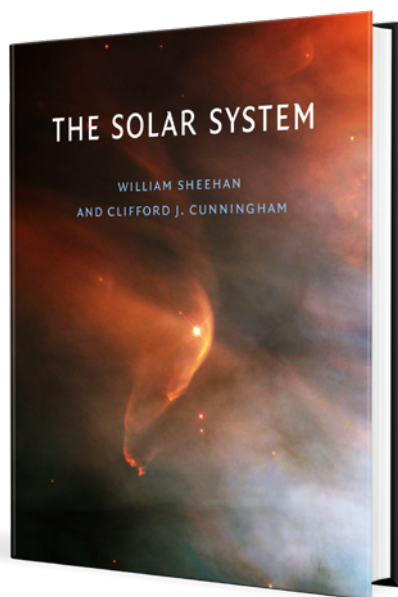
# The Solar System

William Sheehan and Clifford J. Cunningham

As recently as the dawn of the Space Age, the solar system was still largely unknown. The first probes to the Moon, Venus and Mars ushered in a golden age of planetary science, transforming planets from distant mysteries into vividly realized worlds. This book provides a comprehensive, accessible survey of the entire solar system, covering all major planets from Mercury to Saturn, the outer solar system and asteroids. It includes insights from leading scientists through in-person interviews, offering an engaging overview for general readers and amateur astronomers. Noting Earth's small, beautiful and precarious nature, this book fills a unique niche, presenting the latest discoveries without losing sight of the broader picture, making it essential for anyone interested in our celestial neighbourhood.

William Sheehan is a noted historian of astronomy, writer and retired psychiatrist. His books include *Mercury* (2018), *Saturn* (2019) and *Venus* (2022) in Reaktion's Kosmos series. He lives in Arizona, and asteroid 16037 is named Sheehan in his honour.

Clifford J. Cunningham is a Research Fellow at the University of Southern Queensland and Associate Editor of the *Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage*. His books include *Asteroids* (2021) in Reaktion's Kosmos series. Asteroid 4276 (Clifford) is named in his honour.



A comprehensive,  
beautifully  
illustrated survey  
of the entire solar  
system

KOSMOS

June 2025 • Popular Science

ISBN 978 1 83639 064 0

220 × 171 mm • 248 pp

110 illustrations, 80 in colour

Hardback • £25/\$40

ebook 978 1 83639 063 3

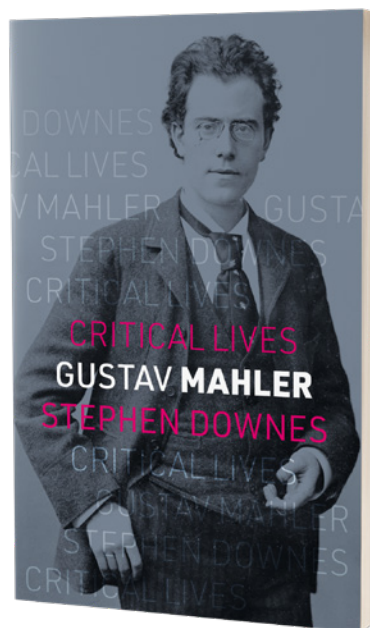
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# Gustav Mahler

Stephen Downes

Gustav Mahler's status as an icon of *fin-de-siècle* Viennese music is assured, with his works now staples of the concert repertoire. His life story has been told in numerous biographies, films and novels, yet he remains an ambiguous, provocative figure. Mahler was a composer who challenged musical form and style but identified with German Enlightenment and Romantic culture, disliking many contemporary artistic trends. He was a Jewish conductor who reached the pinnacle of his profession in antisemitic Vienna. He was supposedly haunted by death, trapped in a torrid marriage, and his brief meeting with Freud has spurred posthumous psychoanalytical speculations. This book, reflecting the latest research, constructs a fresh interpretation of Mahler's music in relation to his life.

Stephen Downes is Professor of Music at Royal Holloway, University of London. His books include *Music and Sentimentalism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (2021).



The life and work  
of the ambiguous,  
provocative  
Austrian composer  
and conductor

CRITICAL LIVES

April 2025 • Biography/Music

ISBN 978 1 83639 030 5

200 × 130 mm • 216 pp

32 illustrations

Paperback • £12.99/\$22

ebook 978 1 83639 029 9

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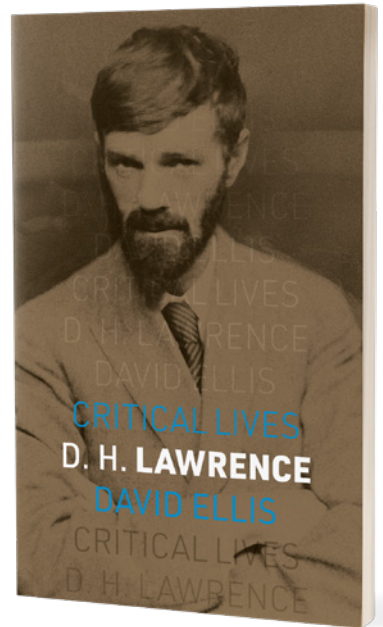


# D. H. Lawrence

David Ellis

This book offers a concise yet comprehensive look at D. H. Lawrence's turbulent life and writing career. Tracing his journey from a mining village outside Nottingham to his death at 44 years old in the South of France, it provides fresh perspectives on his major works. David Ellis covers all essential aspects of Lawrence's life and work and presents a balanced view, steering skilfully between admirers and critics. Written in an accessible style, this book is ideal for both students new to Lawrence and readers looking to revisit one of Britain's greatest early twentieth-century writers.

David Ellis is Emeritus Professor of English Literature at the University of Kent in Canterbury and was awarded the Harry T. Moore prize for distinguished services to Lawrence studies. His books include *Love and Sex in D. H. Lawrence* (2016).



A concise yet comprehensive account of D. H. Lawrence's stormy life and writing career

CRITICAL LIVES

March 2025 • Biography

ISBN 978 1 83639 013 8

200 × 130 mm • 192 pp

40 illustrations

Paperback • £12.99/\$22

ebook 978 1 83639 012 1

World Rights: Reaktion

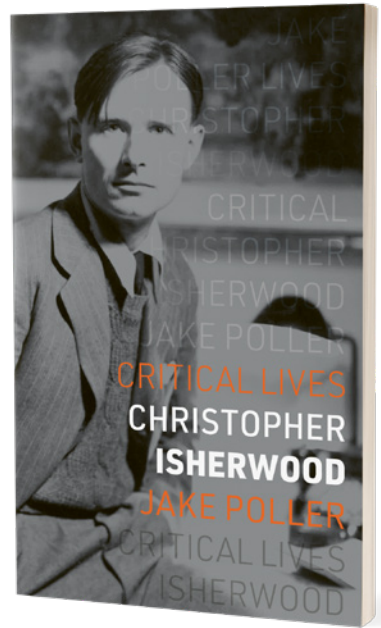
# Christopher Isherwood

Jake Poller

Christopher Isherwood began writing modernist novels before evolving into a pioneer of autofiction, which mingles fiction and autobiography. His novel *Goodbye to Berlin* inspired the hit musical *Cabaret*. Everything changed when Isherwood emigrated to America in 1939. He had become a pacifist and was studying to be a Hindu monk. Although Isherwood resumed his career as a writer, the novels he produced while living in the USA, including *A Single Man*, reflected his newfound spiritual interests and blazed a trail for the gay liberation movement.

In this new biography, Jake Poller takes a holistic approach to Isherwood, exploring his life and innovative autofiction, and expertly unpacking Vedanta philosophy, tracing its influence in Isherwood's work. This is a concise yet thorough account of a monumental figure.

Jake Poller teaches in the English department at Queen Mary University of London. His books include *Aldous Huxley* (Reaktion, 2021).



A holistic  
approach to the  
monumental  
modernist writer  
Christopher  
Isherwood

CRITICAL LIVES

March 2025 • Biography

ISBN 978 1 83639 009 1

200 x 130 mm • 208 pp

22 illustrations

Paperback • £12.99/\$22

ebook 978 1 83639 008 4

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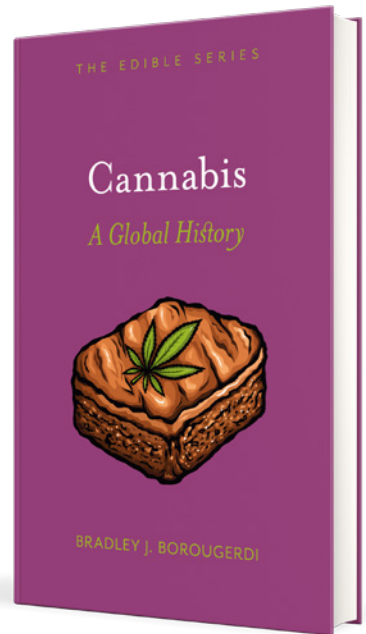
# Cannabis

## *A Global History*

Bradley J. Borougerdi

*Cannabis: A Global History* explores the abundant history, pharmacology and cultural significance of a controversial plant. Beginning with its origins as a food source in Southeast Asia, the book describes the culinary cultures that have evolved around it over centuries, with a particular focus on its spread across the Atlantic, and its modern renaissance in cuisine. It also investigates its mood-altering forms of consumption, from smoking to cannabis-infused edibles and drinks. Combining rigour and readability, this timely volume offers a nuanced perspective on cannabis use throughout history. Richly illustrated, it brings together global cannabis cultures in a single captivating narrative.

Bradley J. Borougerdi is Professor of History at Tarrant County College in Arlington, Texas. He is the author of *Commodifying Cannabis: A Cultural History of a Complex Plant in the Atlantic World* (2018).



A nuanced,  
richly illustrated  
perspective on  
cannabis use  
throughout history

EDIBLE

May 2025 • Food & Drink

ISBN 978 1 83639 007 7

197 × 120 mm • 168 pp

65 illustrations, 53 in colour

Hardback • £12.99/\$19.95

ebook 978 1 83639 006 0

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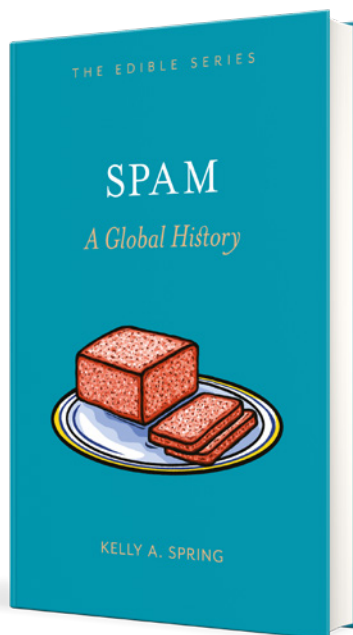
## SPAM

### *A Global History*

Kelly A. Spring

The year 2025 marks the eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, a conflict that solidified SPAM's place in global food culture. Created by Hormel Foods in 1937 to utilize surplus pork shoulder during the Great Depression, SPAM became an essential resource during the Second World War, and helped shape perceptions of American culture. This book explores SPAM's complex history, from its inception to its resurgence during the 2020–23 pandemic, highlighting its enduring legacy in places like Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, Okinawa and South Korea. It demonstrates how SPAM, a long-lasting and valuable protein, played a crucial role during wartime and continues to influence dietary practices worldwide.

Kelly A. Spring, owner of The Fork Front and convenor of the IHR Food History Seminar, is a food history researcher. Her work examines the history of global food systems.



SPAM's enduring  
global impact,  
from wartime  
necessity to  
cultural icon and  
beyond

EDIBLE

June 2025 • Food & Drink

ISBN 978 1 83639 066 4

197 × 120 mm • 152 pp

57 illustrations, 34 in colour

Hardback • £12.99/\$19.95

ebook 978 1 83639 065 7

World Rights: Reaktion

# Champagne

## *A Global History*

### Second Edition

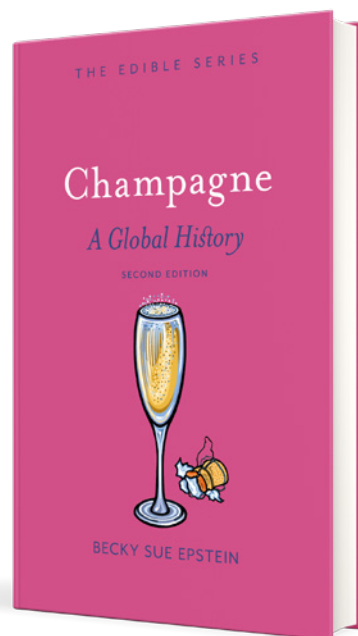
Becky Sue Epstein

‘This short volume, wittily illustrated and beautifully designed, is a pleasure both to look at and to consume. Which, given the subject matter, seems fitting.’ – *The Spectator*

‘A sparkling history of the world’s greatest wine. Stories, pictures and mouth-watering cocktails.’ – *The Lady*

Champagne signals celebration, fun and camaraderie, embodying luxury and decadence as the preferred drink for any toast. Now available in a revised and expanded second edition, *Champagne* explores the history of sparkling wines and the people behind them, from Dom Pérignon to Veuve Clicquot. Becky Sue Epstein traces the journey from the first French sparkling wines in 1531, produced by monks in Limoux, to modern vineyards across the Champagne region, Germany, Spain and the New World. She explains the science of fizz and bubble, proper storage and serving techniques, and the distinction between champagne and other sparkling wines. Whether you enjoy magnums of Cristal or affordable prosecco or cava, *Champagne* is an elegant, informative gift for wine lovers.

Becky Sue Epstein is an author and journalist in the fields of wine, spirits, food and travel based in Massachusetts, USA. She is the author of many books on wine, spirits and food, including *Brandy: A Global History* (2014) and *Strong, Sweet and Dry: A Guide to Vermouth, Port, Sherry, Madeira and Marsala* (2019), both published by Reaktion Books.



An elegant,  
informative history  
of sparkling wines  
and the people  
behind them

EDIBLE

May 2025 • Food & Drink

ISBN 978 1 78914 995 1

197 x 120 mm • 144 pp

61 illustrations, 46 in colour

Hardback • £12.99/\$19.95

ebook 978 1 86189 963 7

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Rights sold: Japanese



# The Minoans

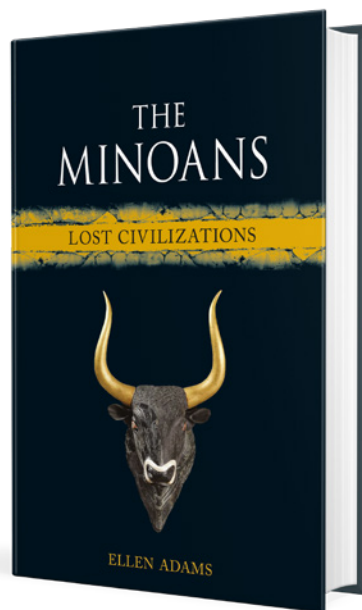
## *Lost Civilizations*

Ellen Adams

Bronze Age Crete is one of the most thoroughly explored archaeological regions, yet the island retains an air of mystery. This book offers an authoritative introduction to the world of the Minoans, the first 'modern' civilization on European soil. With its grand palaces, a sophisticated bureaucracy complete with writing (including undeciphered scripts), exquisite artworks, powerful depictions of women and advanced urban engineering, this ancient civilization was remarkably modern.

This readable account presents key features of Minoan archaeology – architecture, art, religion, writing and bureaucracy, and the economy. It also explores how this pioneering European civilization has influenced Western culture, examining its reconstruction and representation in museums. This concise and up-to-date guide is essential for understanding both the history and the lasting legacy of the Minoans.

Ellen Adams is Reader in Classical Archaeology and Liberal Arts at King's College London. She has participated in many archaeological excavations in Greece and published widely on the subject. She is the author of *Cultural Identity in Minoan Crete: Social Dynamics in the Neopalatial Period* (2017).



An exploration  
of the Minoans,  
from cultural  
sophistication to  
enduring legacy

LOST CIVILIZATIONS

June 2025 • History/Archaeology

ISBN 978 1 83639 047 3

216 × 138 mm • 208 pp

66 illustrations, 50 in colour

Hardback • £18/\$25

ebook 978 1 83639 048 0

World Rights: Reaktion

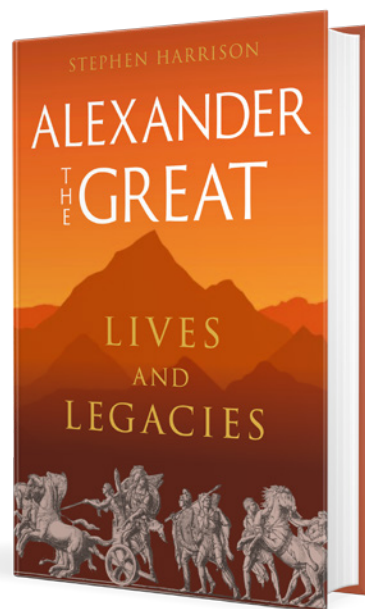
# Alexander the Great

## *Lives and Legacies*

Stephen Harrison

This book offers a fresh perspective on the reign of Alexander the Great. It re-examines Alexander's military victories and personality, while also exploring the impact of his campaigns on the people he conquered. Alexander's story, Stephen Harrison argues, is one that includes the vital roles that other figures played in historical events. By considering the social and intellectual currents of the last two decades, Harrison highlights how changing contemporary experiences shape historical interpretations. Moving beyond polarized debates about Alexander, he provides a nuanced discussion of Alexander's achievements and impact. The book presents an Alexander for the twenty-first century, offering new insights into how and why historical interpretations of him have changed.

Stephen Harrison is Lecturer in Ancient History at Swansea University.



A nuanced discussion of Alexander the Great's life, personality, achievements and impact

GREAT LIVES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

June 2025 • Biography/History

ISBN 978 1 78914 997 5

216 × 138 mm • 240 pp

30 illustrations

Hardback • £15.99/\$22.50

ebook 978 1 78914 996 8

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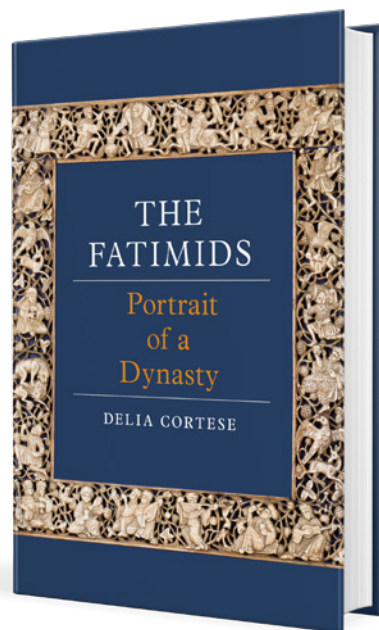
# The Fatimids

## *Portrait of a Dynasty*

Delia Cortese

The Fatimids (909–1171), one of the most significant and intriguing Islamic dynasties, built an empire that included North Africa, Egypt and parts of Sicily, Syria, Palestine and Arabia. Theirs is the only Muslim dynasty known by a female's name, Fatima, the Prophet Muhammad's daughter. The Fatimids promoted women to unprecedented positions of authority and visibility in Islamic history. From Cairo – which they founded in 969 – this Shi'i dynasty fostered cultural and artistic excellence as well as overall tolerance and prosperity across the empire. By blending historical and material sources, personalities and events that defined the Fatimid era are brought to life in this book. Examining their impact within the context of medieval history across Europe, Africa and Asia, the book also tells of the Fatimids' legacy and influence on contemporary culture worldwide.

Delia Cortese is Senior Research Fellow of Middlesex University, London, and is affiliated to the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. She has published extensively on the Fatimids and medieval Ismailism and her books include *Women and the Fatimids in the World of Islam* (with Simonetta Calderini, 2006).



Brings to life  
the Fatimids,  
one of the most  
significant and  
intriguing Islamic  
dynasties

#### DYNASTIES

June 2025 • History/  
Archaeology

ISBN 978 1 83639 019 0

234 × 156 mm • 352 pp

50 illustrations, 25 in colour

Hardback • £25/\$35

ebook 978 1 83639 018 3

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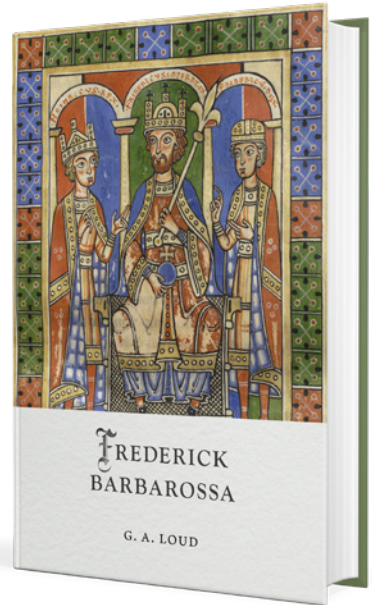
# Frederick Barbarossa

G. A. Loud

‘An excellent overview, showing in a nuanced but accessible way how Barbarossa’s personality and ambitions interacted with the structures of power and government available to him in Germany and Italy. It offers vivid insights into both the scope and the limitations of a medieval monarch’s power to act and to rule.’ – Len Scales, Professor of Late Medieval History, Durham University

Frederick Barbarossa, also known as Frederick I, Holy Roman Emperor from 1155, was a dominant figure in late twelfth-century European history. He is remembered as one of the greatest medieval German emperors; some even regard him as a German hero. He brought peace to Germany, fought to maintain control over Italian cities and engaged in a lengthy dispute with the papacy. Barbarossa died on a crusade to reclaim the Holy Land for Christianity. But despite his efforts, his reign marked a decline in imperial authority, with defeats in Italy and growing local power among German princes. *Frederick Barbarossa* examines this paradox, revealing the realities and limitations of monarchical power in medieval Europe. This is a cogent, original and up-to-date analysis of Barbarossa, suitable for both students and the general reader.

G. A. Loud is Emeritus Professor of Medieval History at the University of Leeds. His previous books include *The Chronicle of Arnold of Lübeck* (2019) and *The Social World of the Abbey of Cava, c. 1020–1300* (2021).



The story of the supreme, heroic yet paradoxical medieval German emperor Frederick Barbarossa

MEDIEVAL LIVES

February 2025 • Biography/History

ISBN 978 1 83639 022 0

216 × 138 mm • 200 pp

22 illustrations, 14 in colour

Hardback • £16.95/\$25

ebook 978 1 83639 023 7

World Rights: Reaktion

# Thomas Becket and His World

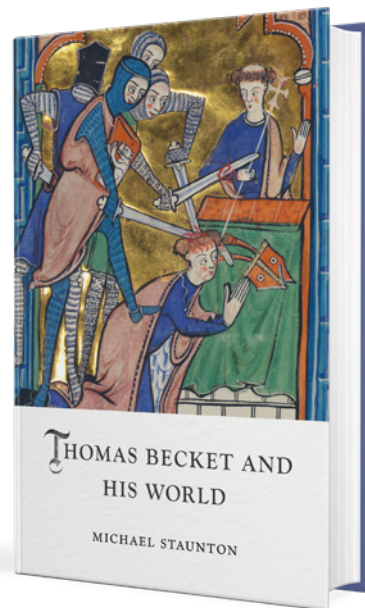
Michael Staunton

‘In this beautifully fluent new biography, Michael Staunton brings out the challenges and contradictions running through the controversial life and death of Thomas Becket . . . Blending smart storytelling with clever nuance, this is a genuine pleasure to read.’ – Jonathan Phillips, author of *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin*

This book explores the turbulent life and violent death of Thomas Becket, one of the most controversial figures of the Middle Ages. From a London merchant’s son to royal chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury, Becket’s murder in Canterbury Cathedral on 29 December 1170 elevated him to England’s most celebrated saint. Michael Staunton looks at Becket’s complex and contested legacy, drawing from Becket’s own words and those of his contemporaries.

Based on extensive contemporary medieval sources, this account offers a fresh perspective on Thomas Becket’s life and places him within the broader landscape of twelfth-century England and Europe – a time of rapid change, conflict and achievement. *Thomas Becket and His World* is perfect for anyone wanting to learn more about this pivotal figure in medieval history.

Michael Staunton is Professor of Medieval History at University College Dublin and an internationally recognized expert on Thomas Becket. His books include *The Historians of Angevin England* (2017).



The controversial, turbulent life and violent death of Thomas Becket

MEDIEVAL LIVES

March 2025 • Biography/History

ISBN 978 1 83639 070 1

216 × 138 mm • 208 pp

29 illustrations, 25 in colour

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# Johannes Gutenberg

## *A Biography in Books*

Eric Marshall White

Johannes Gutenberg is famous as the inventor of Europe's first typographic printing method, and his life and legacy have long fascinated a wide audience. Due to scant and vague fifteenth-century documentation, however, Gutenberg's career has long been obscured by derivative storytelling, competing agendas and scholarly guesswork. This new biography removes these barriers to retell his story directly, through his pioneering work: schoolbooks, pamphlets, indulgences, broadsides and, notably, the first printed Bible. The book also describes Gutenberg's posthumous fortunes, and his eventual recognition as 'Man of the Millennium'. This much-needed corrective to the old legends and conjectures brings Gutenberg to life through the books that remain his lasting monument.

Eric Marshall White is the Scheide Librarian and Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts at Princeton University. His publications include *Editio princeps: A History of the Gutenberg Bible* (2017), which won the DeLong Prize for outstanding book in the field of book history.



## Pioneering printer Johannes Gutenberg's true story and enduring legacy

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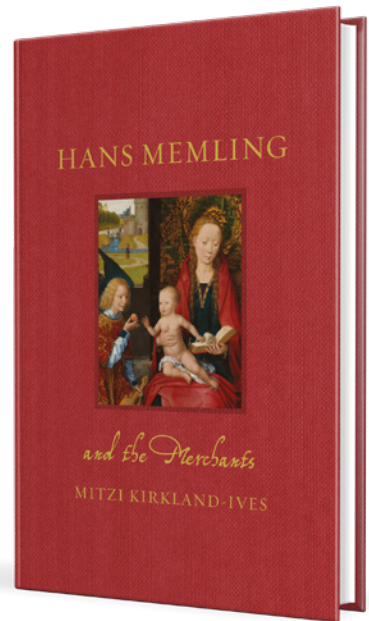
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# Hans Memling and the Merchants

Mitzi Kirkland-Ives

Emigrating from southern Germany in the late fifteenth century, painter Hans Memling sought success in Bruges, which was a vibrant commercial hub at the time. Rather than among the nobility or ecclesiastical institutions, instead he found his audience in the new urban middle class of merchant bankers, financiers, politicians, affluent clerics and artisans. He also enjoyed a reputation among diverse communities of traders and diplomats from across Europe, including Castile and England, as well as Italian cities like Genoa, Bologna and Florence, and the Hanseatic League. This book explores the social and material aspects of Memling's career and workshop, providing a vibrant entry into Bruges as an early modern commercial capital, highlighting international trade, factional politics, artisanal guilds, devotional traditions, and the aspirations and identities of his merchant-class clientele.

Mitzi Kirkland-Ives is Professor of Art History and Visual Culture at Missouri State University. Her books include *In the Footsteps of Christ: Hans Memling's Passion Narratives and the Devotional Imagination in the Early Modern Netherlands* (2013).



A vibrant  
exposition of the  
life and career of  
German-Flemish  
painter Hans  
Memling

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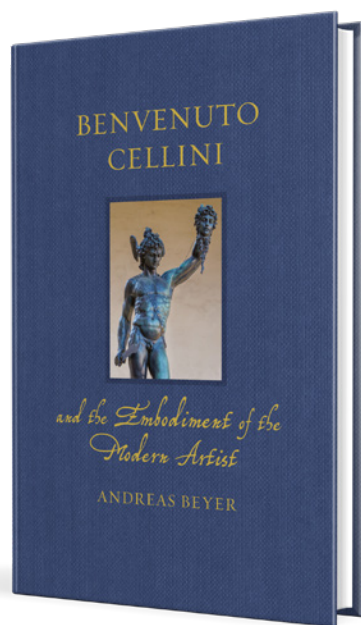
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# Benvenuto Cellini and the Embodiment of the Modern Artist

Andreas Beyer

The art history public has long been both fascinated and repelled by renowned Renaissance sculptor Benvenuto Cellini. He was a murderer, thief, lover of all genders, servant and rival of popes and princes, as well as an ingenious artist. In his legendary autobiography, the *Vita*, Cellini describes his activities vividly and in lurid detail. Often, the most disturbing passages were dismissed as fiction. In this clear-eyed portrayal, Andreas Beyer argues that these sensational accounts of body, sex and extreme experiences are not only entertaining but authentic. They reveal the true depth of Cellini's character: an artist who embraced life's full spectrum and shattered all boundaries. This book asserts that the roots of artistic autonomy in modernism can be traced back to Cellini's audacious life and work.

Andreas Beyer is Professor of Modern Art History at the University of Basel and was previously Director of the Centre allemand d'histoire de l'art in Paris. He has published widely on art history.



A clear-eyed  
portrayal of  
the audacious  
Renaissance  
sculptor  
Benvenuto Cellini

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# Rudolf II

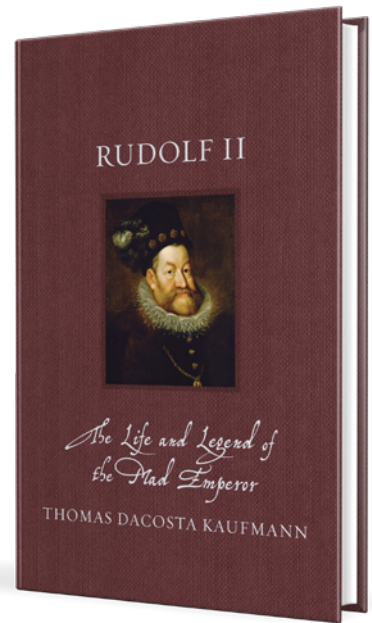
## *The Life and Legend of the Mad Emperor*

Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann

‘Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann convincingly strips away the calumnious legends of the mad emperor. His marvelous, contextualized portrait of Rudolf II reveals a complex personality grappling with political and religious upheavals.’  
– Jeffrey Chipps Smith, Professor Emeritus of Art History, The University of Texas at Austin, and author of *Kunstkammer*

*Rudolf II: The Life and Legend of the Mad Emperor* offers a fresh perspective on the Habsburg ruler, shedding new light on a reign often coloured by myths of madness. Contrary to popular belief, Rudolf was not a passive recluse but an engaged monarch, navigating the complexities of state affairs amid turbulent times. By contextualizing his interests in astrology, alchemy and magic, Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann offers new insights into Rudolf’s support for scientific endeavours and his quest for power. He also demonstrates that Rudolf’s assembling of the greatest *Kunstkammer* and painting collection of his time and his patronage of artists were essential elements of Renaissance rulership. This book will appeal to a diverse audience, including enthusiasts of the occult and those fascinated by Renaissance history, the Habsburg dynasty and art history.

Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann is Frederick Marquand Professor of Art and Archaeology at Princeton University. He has published extensively on Central Europe and on global art history, including *Arcimboldo* (2009) and *Toward a Geography of Art* (2004).



A fresh, corrective view of ‘mad’ Habsburg ruler Rudolf II

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# Jean Sibelius

## *Life, Music, Silence*

Daniel M. Grimley

‘A brief, thoughtful biography [and] a welcome addition to the literature on a creative master who continues to stand apart.’

– Tim Page, *Wall Street Journal*

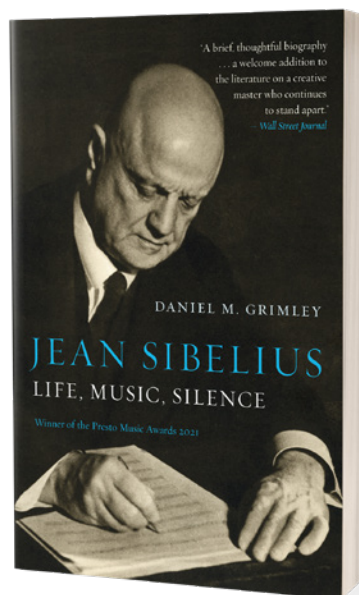
‘A wide-ranging yet taut narrative, in which the musical works are balanced with the life story. And while this is far from the first Sibelius biography, [Daniel M. Grimley] adds something new by meticulously drawing on relevant cultural, artistic, historical and political context.’ – *BBC Music* magazine

Presto Music Awards 2021 – Book Winner

*TLS* ‘Books of the Year’

Few composers have enjoyed such critical acclaim – or longevity – as Jean Sibelius, who died in 1957 aged 91. More than simply a Finnish national figure, an ‘apparition from the woods’ as he ironically described himself, Sibelius lived through many turbulent events, and his work is central to the story of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century music. Now in paperback, this book situates Sibelius within a rich interdisciplinary environment, paying attention to his relationship with architecture, literature, politics and the visual arts. Drawing on the latest developments in Sibelius research, it is an accessible and rewarding introduction for the general reader, and offers a fresh, provocative interpretation for those more familiar with his music.

Daniel M. Grimley is Professor of Music and Professorial Fellow at Merton College, University of Oxford. His books include *Delius and the Sound of Place* (2018).



## A nuanced account of the life and work of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius

February 2025 • Biography/  
Music

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39 illustrations

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# Delicioso

## *A History of Food in Spain*

María José Sevilla

‘Take a deep dive into Spanish cuisine from prehistory to Ferran Adrià . . . [this] illustrated book is a dense, scholarly survey.’

– Florence Fabricant, *New York Times*

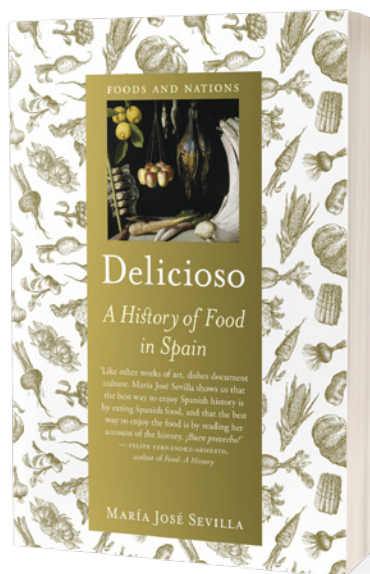
‘Like other works of art, dishes document culture. María José Sevilla shows us that the best way to enjoy Spanish history is by eating Spanish food, and that the best way to enjoy the food is by reading her account of the history. *iBuen provecho!*’

– Felipe Fernández-Armesto, author of *Food: A History*

Spanish cuisine is a melting pot of cultures, flavours and ingredients. It has been enriched by its climate, geology and spectacular topography, which have encouraged a variety of regional food traditions and ‘cocinas’, such as Basque, Galician, Castilian, Andalusian and Catalan. It has been shaped by the country’s complex history – foreign occupations brought religious and cultural influences that determined what people ate and still eat – and has continually evolved with the arrival of new ideas and foodstuffs from Italy, France and the Americas.

From the use of pork fat and olive oil to the Spanish passion for aubergines and pomegranates, María José Sevilla skilfully weaves together the history of Spanish cuisine, the circumstances affecting its development and characteristics, and the country’s changing relationship to food and cookery.

María José Sevilla’s previous books include *Life and Food in the Basque Country* (1989), *Spain on a Plate* (1992) and *Mediterranean Flavours* (1995). She lives in London, UK, and the Sierra de Aracena in Andalusia, Spain.



## The first comprehensive history in English of the food of Spain

FOODS AND NATIONS

June 2025 • Food & Drink

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# Al Dente

## *A History of Food in Italy*

Fabio Parasecoli

‘Dense with passion and expertise, written exquisitely . . . infinitely enjoyable . . . destined for classic status.’

– *Huffington Post*

‘Parasecoli’s knowledge of his subject is encyclopedic . . . the sheer volume of information packed into *Al Dente* makes it a valuable contribution to the field.’ – *TL5*

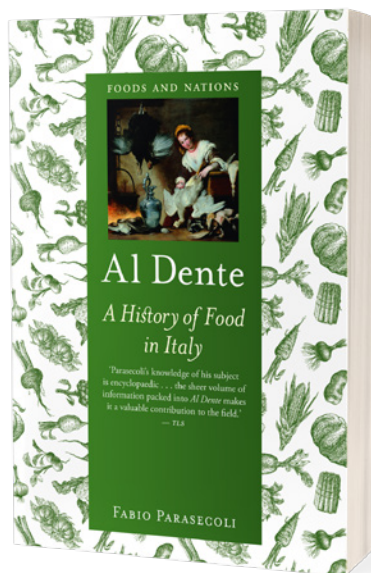
‘This cool analysis of the geopolitical background to the delights of Italian gastronomy is a welcome addition.’

– Gillian Riley, author of *The Oxford Companion to Italian Food*

Italy is a mecca for food lovers. The home of pasta and pizza, it also boasts a dazzling array of wines, cheeses, breads, vegetables and meats. Globally, Michelin-starred Italian restaurants and tv chefs celebrate Italian cuisine for its freshness and health benefits.

Now in paperback, *Al Dente* takes readers on a journey through Italy’s regions and food history, exploring how its cuisine evolved. Including historical recipes, *Al Dente* is a captivating history of perhaps the world’s most beloved cuisine.

Fabio Parasecoli is Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Food Studies Program, The New School, New York, the author of *Bite Me! Food in Popular Culture* (2008) and co-editor of the six-volume *Cultural History of Food* (2012).



An engaging,  
wide-ranging  
journey through  
Italy’s regions  
and food history

FOODS AND NATIONS

May 2025 • Food & Drink

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# Those They Called Idiots

## *The Idea of the Disabled Mind from 1700 to the Present Day*

Simon Jarrett

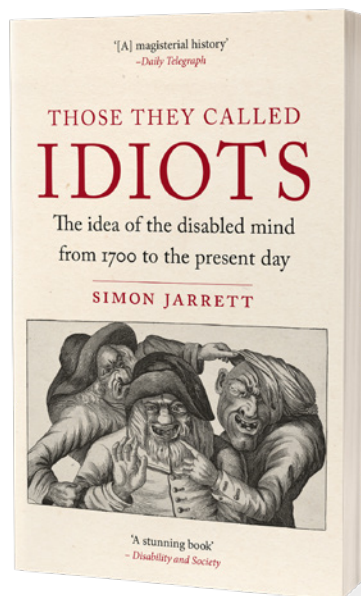
‘[A] magisterial history.’ – Michael Fitzpatrick, *Daily Telegraph*

‘Simon Jarrett’s elegant and provocative book brings into focus for the first time the history of people with intellectual disabilities over three centuries.’ – David Turner, Professor of History, Swansea University, and author of *Disability in Eighteenth-Century England*

‘We should be grateful to Simon Jarrett for telling this complex, compelling and frequently troubling story with such tremendous clarity and style. I can’t recommend this wonderful book highly enough.’ – Stephen Unwin, writer, playwright and director

*Those They Called Idiots* traces the little-known lives of people with learning disabilities from the communities of eighteenth-century England to the nineteenth-century asylum and care in today’s society. Using evidence from civil and criminal courtrooms, joke books, slang dictionaries, novels, art and caricature, it explores the explosive intermingling of ideas about intelligence and race, while bringing into sharp focus the lives of people often seen as the most marginalized in society.

Simon Jarrett is an Honorary Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London. He is the editor of *Community Living Magazine*.



A humane,  
thoughtful and  
clear-eyed history  
of people with  
learning disabilities

March 2025 • History/Health

ISBN 978 1 83639 071 8

198 x 129 mm • 352 pp

62 illustrations

Paperback • £10.99/\$15.99

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# A Brief History of Nakedness

Philip Carr-Gomm

‘Once you’ve finished this thought-provoking book, go back to the mirror. Slip off the bathrobe and have another look. Unless you were reading it in the waiting room of a plastic surgeon, nothing much will have changed. Yet something seems different. If it weren’t anatomically impossible, you’d swear your whole body was smiling.’ – *Daily Telegraph*

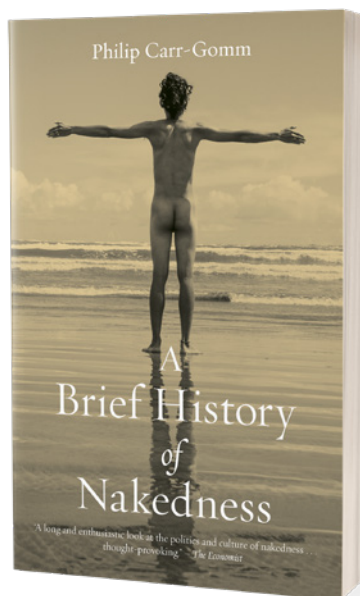
‘[An] entertaining and copiously illustrated history.’  
– *The Guardian*

‘A grown-up book about the excitement and humour of surrendering the mystery of clothes.’ – *Evening Standard*

Now in B-format paperback, *A Brief History of Nakedness* traces our preoccupation with nudity in religion, politics and popular culture. Rather than study the history of the fine-art nude, for example, this book explores new territory – revealing the ways in which religious teachers, politicians, protestors and cultural icons have used nudity to enlighten or empower themselves, or simply to entertain us.

From the naked sages of India and St Francis of Assisi to modern-day druids and Christian nudists, from *The Full Monty* and *Calendar Girls* to Lady Godiva and Lady Gaga, *A Brief History of Nakedness* surveys the touching, sometimes tragic and often bizarre story of our relationship with our own and with others’ naked bodies.

Philip Carr-Gomm is a writer and psychologist. His books include *Sacred Places* (2008), *Druid Mysteries* (2002) and *The Book of English Magic* (with Richard Heygate, 2009).



An entertaining,  
alternative portrait  
of nudity down  
the ages

January 2025 • History

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# Ballroom

## *A People's History of Dancing*

Hilary French

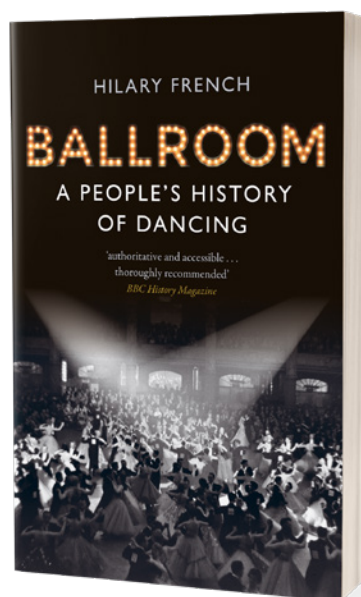
'Have you ever watched *Strictly Come Dancing* and wondered about the history of ballroom and Latin dancing? If so, Hilary French has provided an authoritative and accessible introduction . . . French's richly detailed book is thoroughly recommended for anyone intrigued by the social history of dancing.' – *BBC History* magazine

'Fascinating . . . tells the history of dance from the very beginning . . . an essential read.' – *Dance News*

In the early twentieth century, American ragtime and the Parisian tango fuelled a dancing craze in Britain. Public ballrooms were built throughout the country, providing a glamorous setting for dancing. The new English style, defined in the 1920s and followed by the films of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in the 1930s, ensured that ballroom dancing continued to be the most popular British pastime until the 1960s, rivalled only by cinema.

Now in paperback, this book explores the vibrant history of ballroom and Latin dancing: the dances, lavish venues, competitions and influential instructors. It also traces the decline of couple dancing and its resurgence in recent years with the hugely popular TV shows *Strictly Come Dancing* and *Dancing with the Stars*.

Hilary French is Professor of Design Studies at Bath Spa University. She is also a ballroom dancer and occasional competitor. She lives in London.



A tune-filled,  
light-footed  
people's history of  
ballroom dancing

January 2025 • History  
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# Bountiful Empire

## *A History of Ottoman Cuisine*

Priscilla Mary Işin

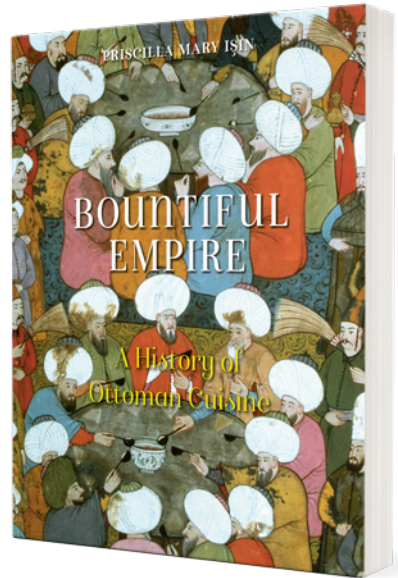
‘The main pleasure of the book lies in the background history and lively anecdotes of storytellers and puppet-shows entertaining in coffee houses, or the astonishment of a British visitor at the quantities of salt fish, nuts, olives and pickles served merely as appetizers.’ – *TLs*

‘Işin says her aim has been to hold up a mirror to life in this large and complex empire through its food culture. She certainly has accomplished it.’ – *The Middle East in London* magazine

‘A most entertaining book. [This] account of Ottoman eating just romps along.’ – *Petits Propos Culinaires*

*Bountiful Empire: A History of Ottoman Cuisine* examines the food of the Ottoman Empire – one of the largest and longest-lasting empires in history – as it changed and evolved over more than five centuries. From sultans to soldiers, food bound people of different classes and backgrounds together, defining identity and serving symbolic functions in the social, religious, political and military spheres. This meticulously researched account draws on more than six hundred primary and secondary sources, ranging from archive documents to poetry, and includes over one hundred illustrations. It is a fresh and lively insight into an empire that until recent decades has been sidelined or viewed through orientalist spectacles.

Priscilla Mary Işin is a food historian based in Istanbul, Turkey. Her publications include *A King's Confectioner in the Orient* (2003) and *Sherbet and Spice* (2013), which traces the history of Turkish confectionery and desserts.



## An examination of the rich culinary culture of the Ottoman Empire

January 2025 • Food & Drink

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# Hayek vs Keynes

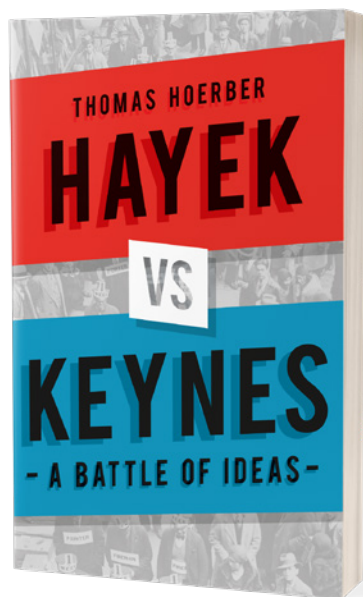
## *A Battle of Ideas*

Thomas Hoerber

‘Thomas Hoerber’s analysis of these two giants of the history of economics makes us reflect on the crisis of our own time as much as on the world they inhabited.’ – Martin Daunton, Emeritus Professor of Economic History, University of Cambridge

Now in paperback, *Hayek vs Keynes* is a clear historical account of the works of the two great totems of modern economic thought: Friedrich Hayek and John Maynard Keynes. Thomas Hoerber explains the historical context in which Hayek’s *The Road to Serfdom* and Keynes’s *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* were written, and shows how lessons can be drawn for current economic and political phenomena such as the recent financial crisis, globalization and European integration. The book also illustrates how classical economic theory as well as a qualitative method can enlighten our understanding of the present economic environment. This book asks what we can learn from these two great economic thinkers of the twentieth century.

Thomas Hoerber is Professor in European Studies at ESSCA School of Management in Angers, France. He is the author of five books, including *The Foundations of Europe* (2006) and *European Space Policy: European Integration and the Final Frontier* (2015).



A clear-eyed  
account of the  
totemic economic  
thinkers Hayek  
and Keynes

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# Future Cities

## *Architecture and the Imagination*

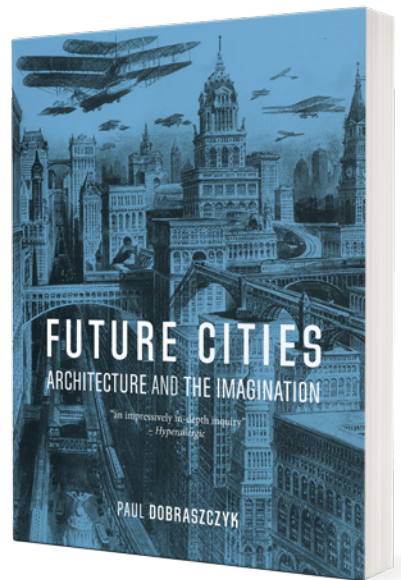
Paul Dobraszczyk

‘Dobraszczyk’s eloquent redefinition of ecology, of the imagination and of architecture is breathtaking in its audacity and indisputably brilliant.’ – *The Australian*

‘Dobraszczyk looks at how the cityscapes once dreamed up by artists and architects are slowly becoming a reality as climate change and overpopulation take hold.’ – *National Geographic Traveller*

Exploring a breathtaking range of imagined cities – submerged, floating, flying, vertical, underground, ruined and salvaged – this book teases out the links between speculation and reality, arguing that there is no clear separation between the two. In the Netherlands, floating cities are already being built; Dubai’s recent skyscrapers resemble those of science-fiction cities of the past; while makeshift settlements built by the urban poor in the developing world are already like the dystopian cities of cyberpunk. Bringing together architecture, fiction, film and art, *Future Cities* reconnects the imaginary city with the real – proposing a future for humanity that is already grounded in the present and in the creative practices of many kinds.

Paul Dobraszczyk is an architectural writer and a lecturer at the Bartlett School of Architecture, London. His books include *Animal Architecture* (2023) and *Botanical Architecture* (2024), both published by Reaktion Books.



This breathtaking  
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intertwines  
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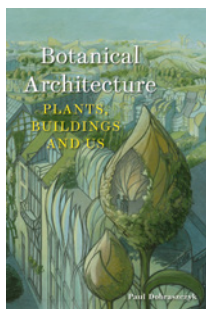
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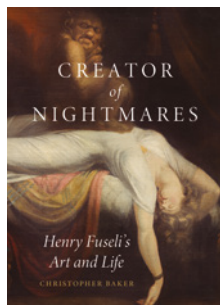
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**Sergei Prokofiev**  
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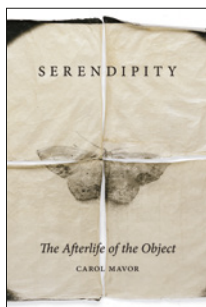
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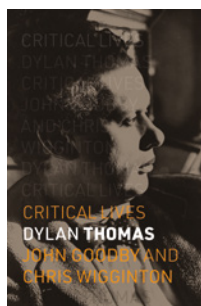
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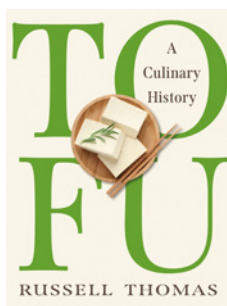
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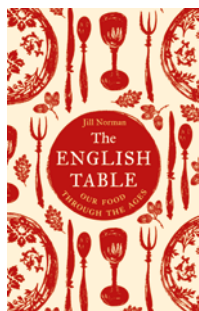
**Dylan Thomas**  
John Goodby and Chris Wigginton  
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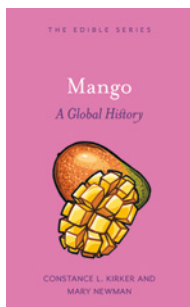
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*Our Food through the Ages*  
 Jill Norman

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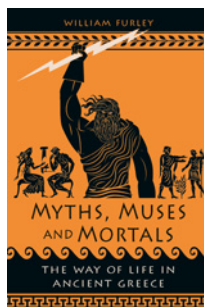
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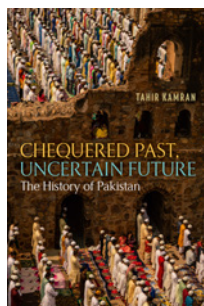
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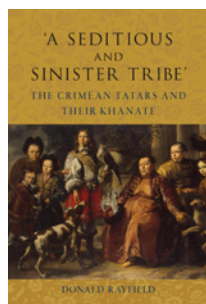


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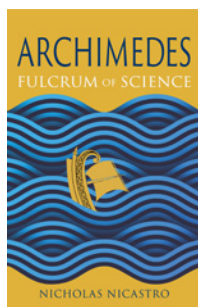


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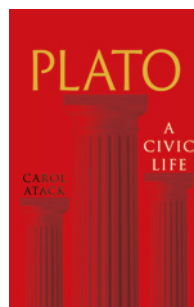


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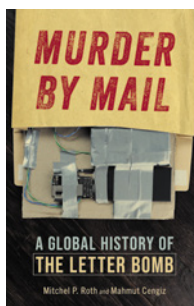


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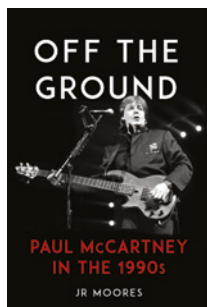


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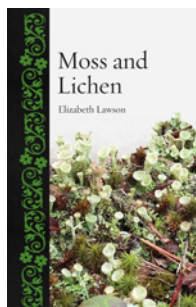
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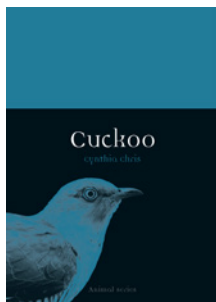
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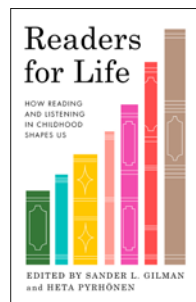
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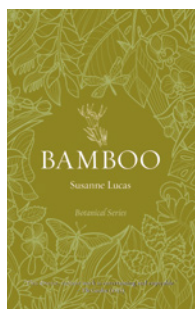
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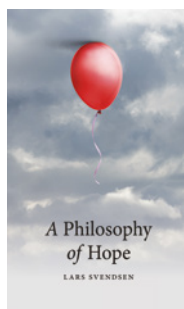
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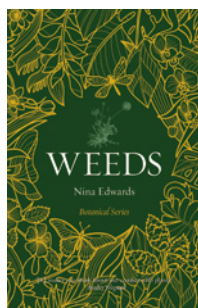
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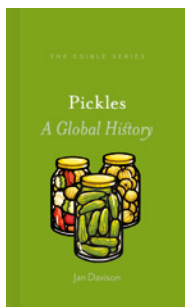
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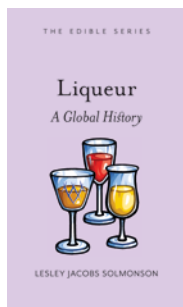
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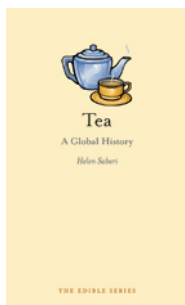
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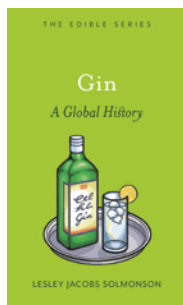
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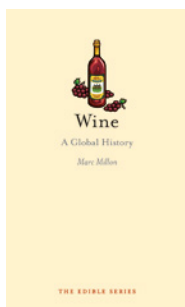
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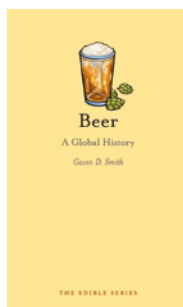
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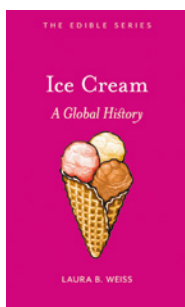
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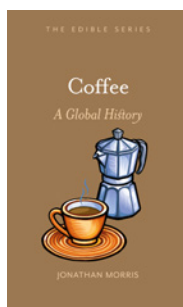
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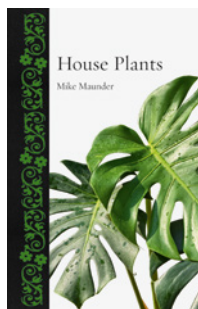
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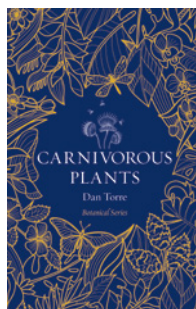


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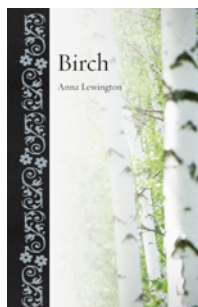


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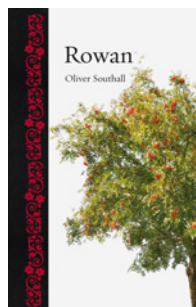


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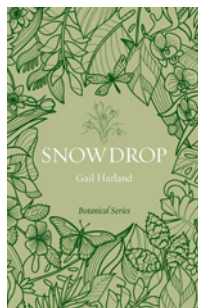


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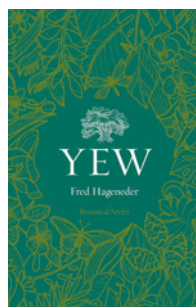


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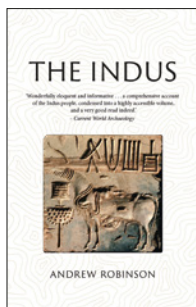
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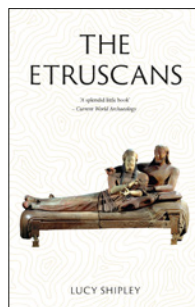
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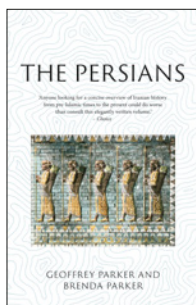
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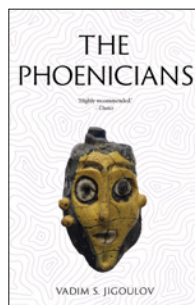
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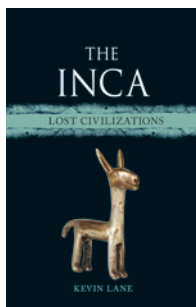
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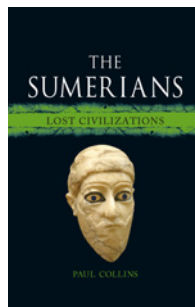
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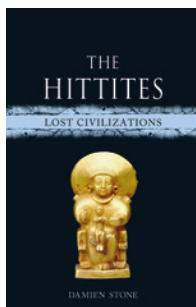
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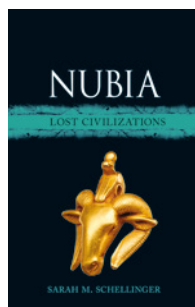
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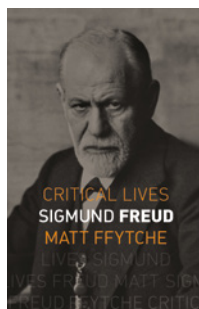


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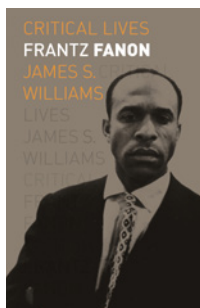


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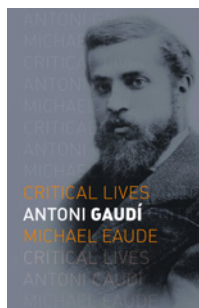


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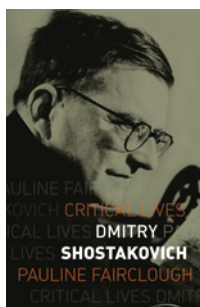


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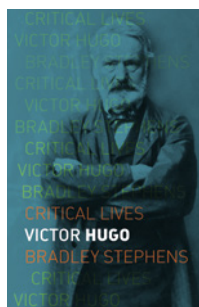


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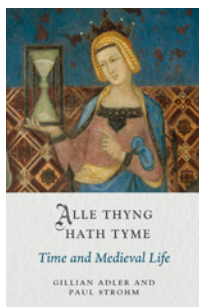


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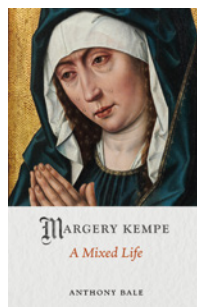
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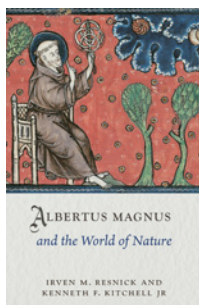
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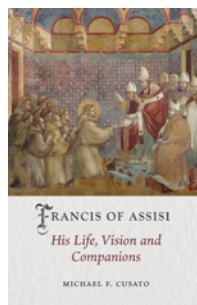
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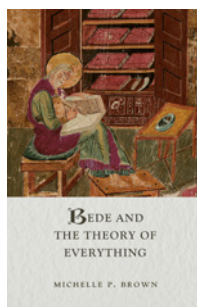
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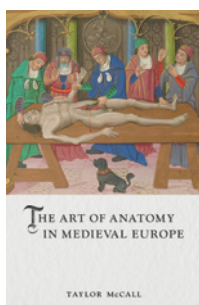
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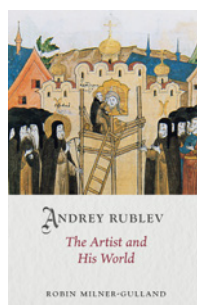
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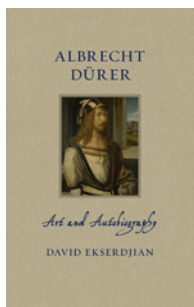
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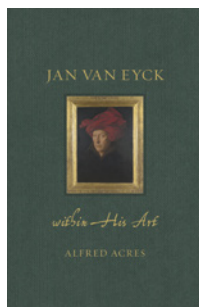
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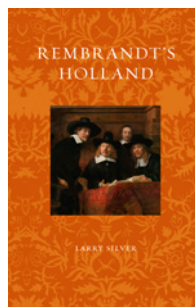
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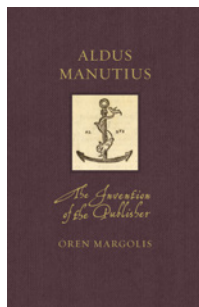
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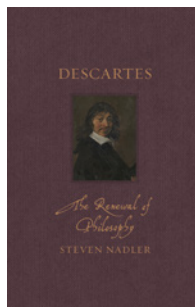
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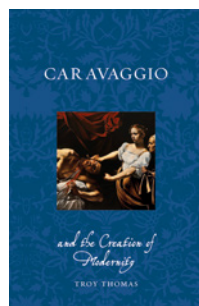
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