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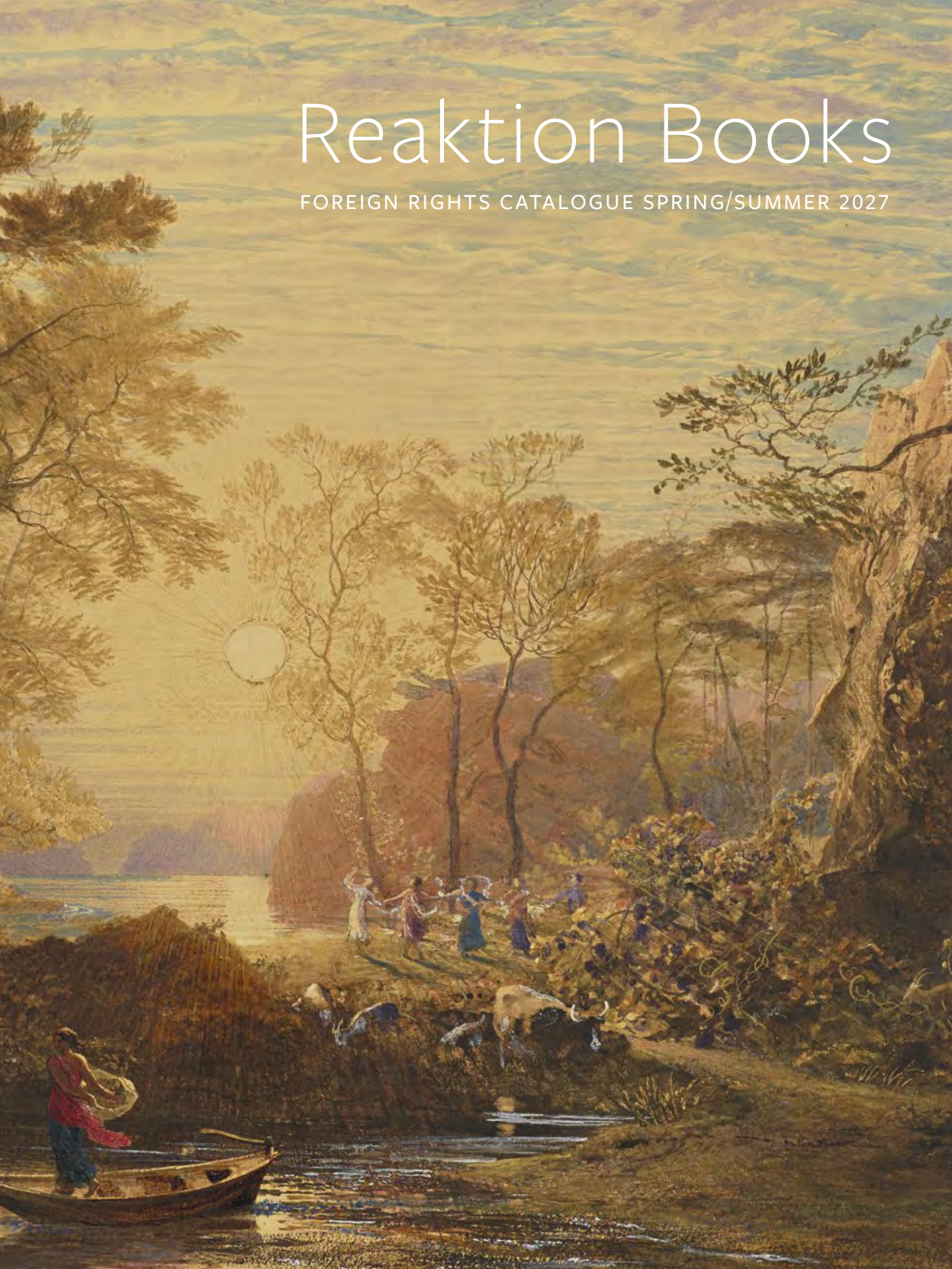

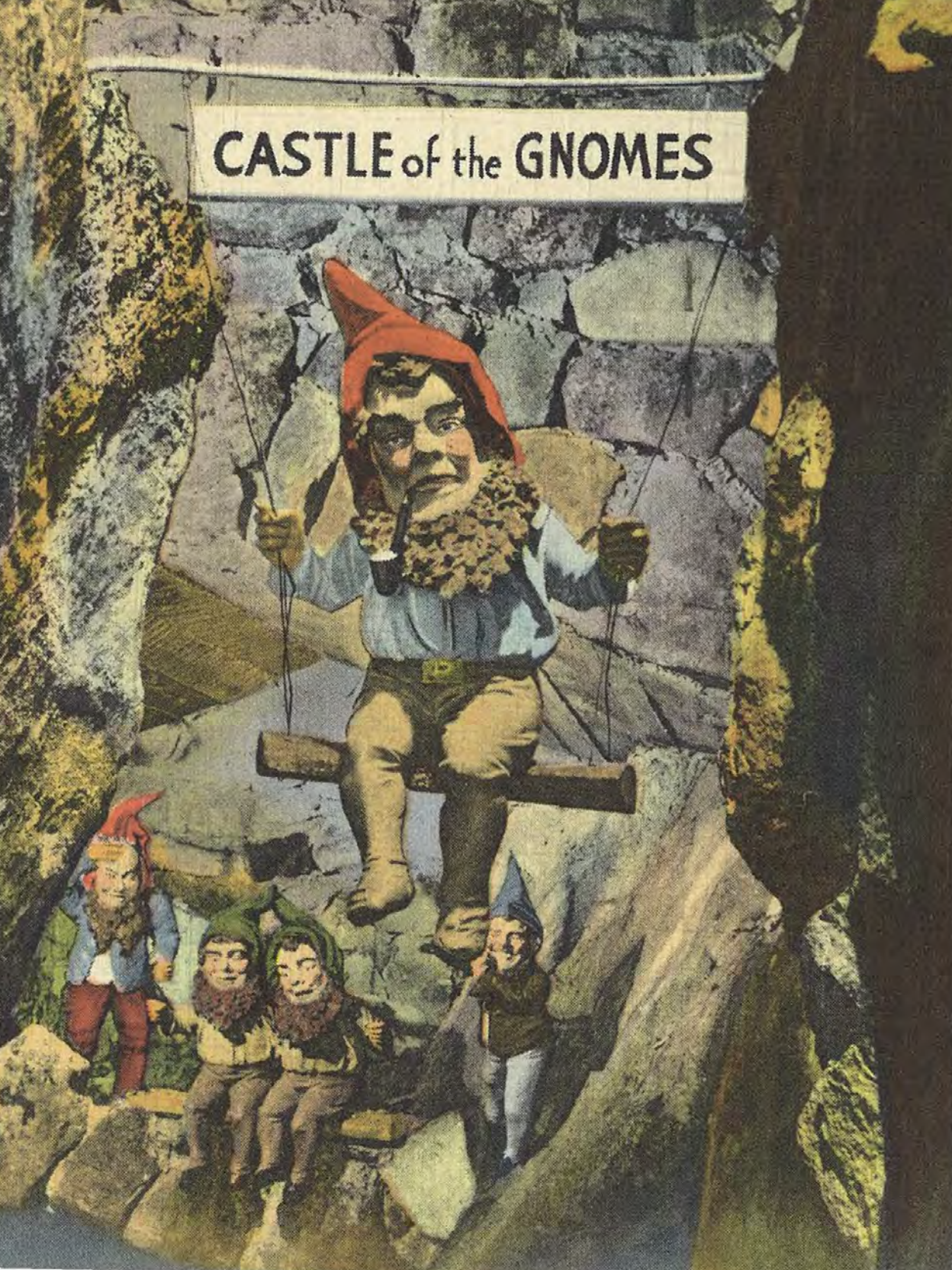
CASTLE of the GNOMES

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Welcome to Reaktion's books for Spring and Summer 2027. *Chromocopia*, David Batchelor's follow-up to one of our all-time bestsellers, *Chromophobia,* is a brilliant meditation on colour.

Peter Laufer's *America's Last Days* is a trenchant examination of the disintegration of the idea of unity in the United States of America.

In *Rejecting Reality*, acclaimed expert on pseudo-history Ronald H. Fritze investigates conspiracy theories in our age of suspicion and misinformation.

We are excited to be publishing essential biographies of three titans of world literature: *François Rabelais: 'The Great Jester of France'* by Richard Cooper, *Alexander Pushkin: Between Passion and Measure* by Alyssa Dinega Gillespie and *Gogol: The Inner Life* by Oliver Ready.

In our Renaissance Lives series, we are publishing outstanding new books on Andrew Marvell, Charles v and Sebastiano del Piombo, and, in Medieval Lives, on Chinggis Khan and Muhammad XI of Granada.

New in paperback are Peter Ackroyd's *Auden*, Liam Cagney's *Berghain Nights*, Paul Chrystal's *Miracula*, Karl Bell's excellent supernatural history of the Atlantic *The Perilous Deep* and several of our bestselling history books.

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

For further information and to request reading copies and PDFs, please contact:

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Cover: Samuel Palmer, *Sir Guyon, with the Palmer Attending, Tempted by Phaedria to Land upon the Enchanted Islands*, 1849, watercolour and gouache over black chalk. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.
Inside front cover: *Castle of the Gnomes in Fairyland Caverns, Rock City Gardens, Lookout Mountain*, postcard, date unknown.

Please note: All prices in this catalogue are recommended retail prices and are subject to alteration without notice. Details given of illustrations, format, content and month of publication were as accurate as possible at the time the catalogue went to press.

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Chromocopia

The Colours of Colours

David Batchelor

Chromocopia is a provocative meditation on colour and the meanings we attach to it. Conceived as a companion to *Chromophobia*, David Batchelor turns from colour as an abstract idea to the histories, associations and contradictions of individual colours. Across chapters devoted to reds, yellows, blues, greens, blacks, whites and greys, he draws on an extraordinary range of artists, writers, philosophers, architects and musicians to show how colour has been understood, celebrated, feared and contested. Written with clarity and insight by an artist whose own work is rooted in colour, this book argues that no colour possesses a fixed meaning and that every claim about colour can be challenged by another. In doing so, David Batchelor invites readers to reconsider their own perceptions and the limits of language itself.

David Batchelor is an artist and writer based in London. His books include the bestselling *Chromophobia* (2000) and *The Luminous and the Grey* (2014), both published by Reaktion Books.

A compelling guide to colour's meanings, contradictions and cultural life

April 2027 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 353 5
210 × 148 mm • 176 pp
9 colour illustrations
Paperback • £12.99/$19
ebook 978 1 83639 399 3
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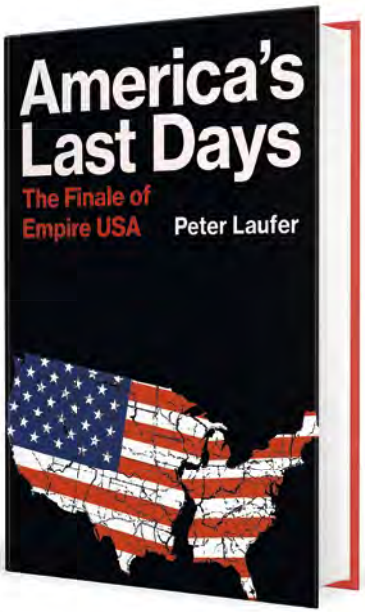
America's Last Days

The Finale of Empire USA

Peter Laufer



As the United States moves beyond its 250th anniversary, questions about national identity, political cohesion and the future of the republic have become increasingly urgent. *America's Last Days* argues that the tensions present since the nation's founding have deepened into a profound crisis of unity. Tracing the historical forces that shaped the United States, Peter Laufer examines contemporary divisions rooted in politics, economics, culture, immigration and regional identity. Drawing on primary sources and original reporting, this book considers secession movements, border realignment proposals and growing challenges to the idea of a shared American project. Provocative and wide-ranging, it asks whether the United States can endure in its current form, or whether a different political future may emerge from its longstanding divisions.

Peter Laufer is a former award-winning correspondent for NBC News and holds the inaugural James Wallace Chair in Journalism at the University of Oregon. His books include *Up Against the Wall* (2020) and *We Are All Americans* (2026).

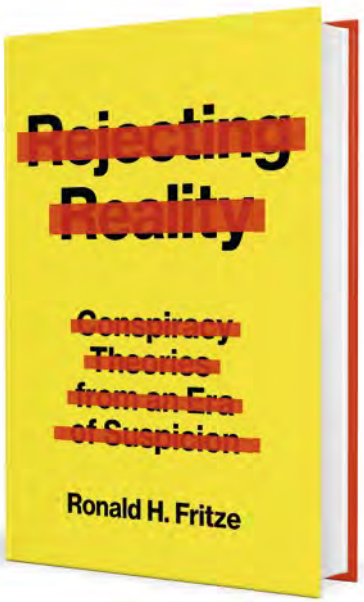
A provocative examination of whether the United States can remain united

February 2027 • Politics
ISBN 978 1 83639 331 3
216 × 138 mm • 288 pp
20 illustrations
Hardback • £15.99/$22
ebook 978 1 83639 385 6
World Rights: Reaktion

Rejecting Reality

Conspiracy Theories from an Era of Suspicion

Ronald H. Fritze



Conspiracy theories have long shaped public debate, but how do they originate and why do they persist? *Rejecting Reality* traces the origins and evolution of four of the most influential conspiracy theories of recent decades: anti-vaccination movements, QAnon, UFOs and claims surrounding COVID-19. Using historical case studies, the book shows how these ideas emerged, adapted and spread, with proponents often drawing from questionable assumptions that governments and institutions are engaged in deception. Ronald H. Fritze examines the appeal of such narratives while assessing their credibility and consequences and how they promote scepticism, distrust and division in general society. Clear-eyed and engaging, *Rejecting Reality* encourages readers to apply the same critical scrutiny to conspiracy theories that they apply to official claims, highlighting the importance of evidence in public life.

Ronald H. Fritze is Professor Emeritus of History and Religion at Athens State University, Alabama. He is the author or editor of twelve books, including *Hope and Fear: Modern Myths, Conspiracy Theories and Pseudo-History* (Reaktion, 2022).

A history of modern conspiracy theories and their social consequences

May 2027 • Politics
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234 × 156 mm • 400 pp
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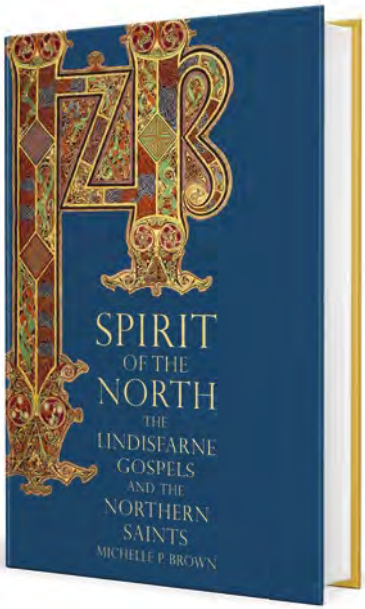
ebook 978 1 83639 405 1
World Rights: Reaktion

Spirit of the North

The Lindisfarne Gospels and the Northern Saints

Michelle P. Brown



Why does the North of England possess such a distinctive identity, and why does a manuscript created on a small island more than 1,300 years ago still speak so powerfully today? Written by a leading authority and former curator of the Lindisfarne Gospels, *Spirit of the North* traces the origins of the Old North and Northumbria in the turbulent centuries after the fall of Roman Britain. It brings to life the saints and communities who helped shape the region, including Cuthbert, Aidan, Hild and Bede. At its heart is a fresh interpretation of the Lindisfarne Gospels, a masterpiece of art, faith and cultural exchange whose imagery sought to reconcile diverse peoples and traditions. Richly illustrated and deeply informed, this is a story of creativity, belief and identity whose legacy continues to resonate across Britain and beyond.

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* (2023) and *Illumino* (2025), both published by Reaktion Books.

Faith, saints and the Lindisfarne Gospels

April 2027 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 356 6
234 × 156 mm • 440 pp
90 illustrations, 70 in colour
Hardback • £25/$40
ebook 978 1 83639 398 6
World Rights: Reaktion

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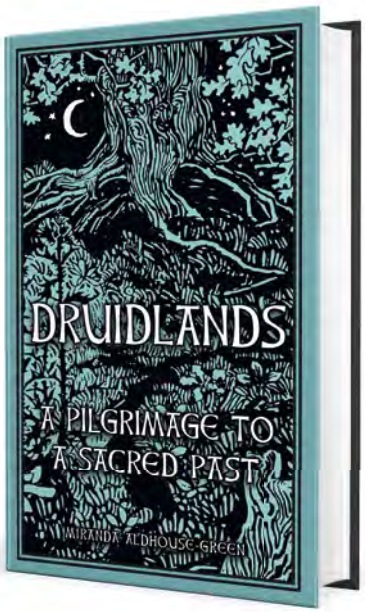
Druidlands

A Pilgrimage to a Sacred Past

Miranda Aldhouse-Green



The Druids – mystical, spiritual leaders of Britain and Europe during the last centuries BC – are a people shrouded in mystery. Miranda Aldhouse-Green's *Druidlands* is an illuminating, thrilling guidebook that throws light on this most enigmatic, arcane caste.

Druids flourished as the theocrats of their day – employing sacrifice, shamanism and magic – until the Romans forced them underground, condemning them as hostile religious insurrectionists who threatened the conquerors' supremacy. But Druidism endured: traditions were preserved, while in subtle ways, new composite beliefs were carved out alongside Roman paganism. Drawing on classical literary sources and a wealth of archaeological material, much of it recently unearthed, *Druidlands* points to a rich and complex native religion in the heartlands of Britain and Gaul.

Miranda Aldhouse-Green is Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at Cardiff University and a former president of the Prehistoric Society. She has published more than twenty books on Iron Age and Romano-British religion and ritual, including *Sacred Britannia* (2023) and *Bog Bodies Uncovered* (2016), winner of the Archaeological Institute of America's Felicia Holton Book Award.

An exhilarating investigation of the mysterious world of the Druids

April 2027 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 359 7
216 × 138 mm • 352 pp
12 illustrations
Hardback • £17.99/$25
ebook 978 1 83639 395 5
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The Wicked Witch

Origins of an Enduring Worldwide Belief

Gregory Forth

Few figures haunt the human imagination like the witch. While existing books and media have largely focused on the trials of Early Modern Europe and America, far less explored is the enduring global belief that certain people secretly wield destructive supernatural powers. Drawing on the author's own field of research and a wealth of cross-cultural evidence, this book examines how societies across the world imagine witches in strikingly similar ways: flying by night, shapeshifting into animals, inverting ordinary behaviour and committing horrifying acts – ritual murder, cannibalism, the abuse of children. By tracing these recurring ideas across vastly different cultures, the book uncovers remarkable patterns in human thought, fear and other emotions, and it asks why such concepts persist, pointing to deep social and psychological roots in human evolution.

Gregory Forth is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Alberta. His books include *Between Ape and Human: An Anthropologist on the Trail of a Hidden Hominoid* (2022) and *A Dog Pissing at the Edge of a Path: Animal Metaphors in an Eastern Indonesian Society* (2019).

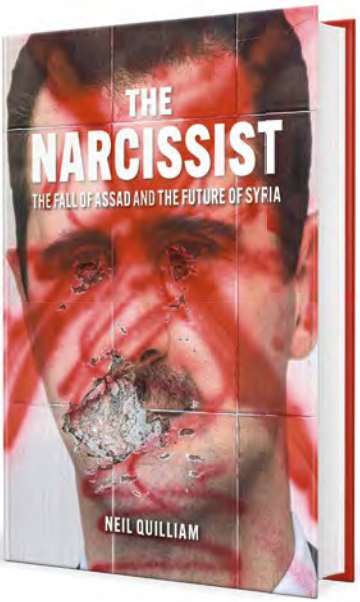
The witch: a global mirror of human fear

April 2027 • History/Anthropology
ISBN 978 1 83639 358 0
234 × 156 mm • 320 pp
50 illustrations
Hardback • £22/$32
ebook 978 1 83639 397 9
World Rights: Reaktion

The Narcissist

The Fall of Assad and the Future of Syria

Neil Quilliam



The Narcissist tells the story of a quiet ophthalmology student who never expected to rule his country. Neil Quilliam traces Bashar al-Assad's upbringing as the overlooked and uncertain son in a family of hard-edged power brokers, showing how these early experiences fed a deep sense of inadequacy and a need for validation. Over time, these traits found expression in the authorization of chemical weapons, the use of industrial torture and the systematic killing of his own people. More than two years after Bashar's dramatic flight to Moscow, the world is only now beginning to reckon with his regime's legacy and Syria's future.

Drawing on behavioural psychology, psychoanalytic theory, newly uncovered documents and interviews with those who knew him, Quilliam argues that the Syrian conflict cannot be understood through institutional or geopolitical explanations alone. It was the man, not the machine, that destroyed Syria.

Neil Quilliam is an Associate Fellow at Chatham House, London. He is a geopolitics, foreign affairs and energy policy specialist, with extensive knowledge and experience of the Middle East.

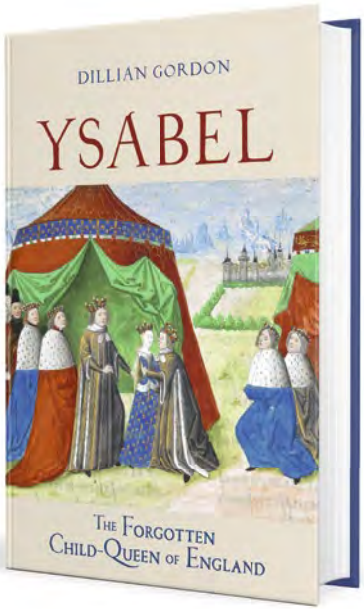
A reckoning with Assad's bitter legacy

March 2027 • Biography/ Politics
ISBN 978 1 83639 342 9
234 × 156 mm • 344 pp
11 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$32
ebook 978 1 83639 393 1
World Rights: Reaktion

Ysabel

The Forgotten Child-Queen of England

Dillian Gordon



'*Ysabel* is the heart-rending story of a forgotten queen of medieval England. Dillian Gordon's book is not just a compelling narrative; it is a great feat of historical recovery.'
– Neil MacGregor, author and broadcaster, and former Director of the National Gallery and the British Museum

'In this fascinating, lavishly illustrated and deeply researched book, Dillian Gordon has done a wonderful job in bringing the heartbreaking story of one of England's most tragic and forgotten queens to life.' – Christopher Given-Wilson, University of St Andrews, and author of *Henry IV*

Ysabel of Valois' life was shaped by power, diplomacy and tragedy. As the eldest daughter of King Charles VI of France, she was married at six years old to Richard II, king of England, bringing her dolls in her trousseau to a foreign land. A political pawn throughout her life, she was virtually held hostage by Henry IV following Richard's deposition and death, and after her return to France she was married off to Charles, Duke of Orléans.

This first independent biography of Ysabel places her remarkable story within the wider context of the French and English medieval courts, revealing the politics, ceremonies and material culture that framed her life.

Dillian Gordon was previously Curator of Early Italian Paintings at the National Gallery, London. She has published widely on Italian medieval and Renaissance paintings, as well as on the Wilton Diptych. She lives in Oxford.

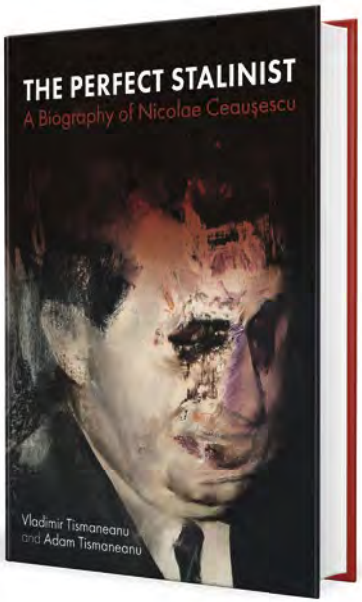
The first independent biography of Ysabel of Valois, the French child-queen of England

February 2027 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 329 0
216 × 138 mm • 280 pp
36 illustrations, 28 in colour
Hardback • £17.95/$27
ebook 978 1 83639 386 3
World Rights: Reaktion

The Perfect Stalinist

A Biography of Nicolae Ceaușescu

Vladimir Tismaneanu and Adam Tismaneanu



'The authors vividly dissect the phenomena that made the Ceaușescu regime so hideous and long-lasting. A vital book for understanding the Cold War in Europe.' – Robert D. Kaplan, author of *Balkan Ghosts* and *In Europe's Shadow*

This is the most comprehensive English-language biography of Romanian communist dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu. Based on unique archival materials, in-depth interviews and personal memoirs, *The Perfect Stalinist* tells the story of Ceaușescu's rule and rise to power, from his youth in the interwar Romanian communist underground and his role as a loyal protégé of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej to his eventual succession in 1965 and execution during the Romanian Revolution of 1989.

During his 24-year rule, Ceaușescu created a self-styled form of dynastic communism based on his all-encompassing cult of personality. His brand of extremist nationalism remains influential today among personalities like Peter Thiel, Alexander Dugin and other neoreactionaries. Ceaușescu's story of delusional narcissism and its destructive effects is sure to resonate with observers of contemporary politics.

Vladimir Tismaneanu is Professor of Comparative Politics and Director of the Center for the Study of Post-Communist Societies at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is the co-author of *Communism and Culture* (2022). Adam Tismaneanu is a writer, journalist and independent researcher. His work has appeared in various outlets including *Newsweek România* and *POLITICO Europe*.

An insider's account of the Romanian communist dictator's life and times

February 2027 • Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 330 6
234 × 156 mm • 304 pp
16 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$30
ebook 978 1 83639 387 0
World Rights: Reaktion

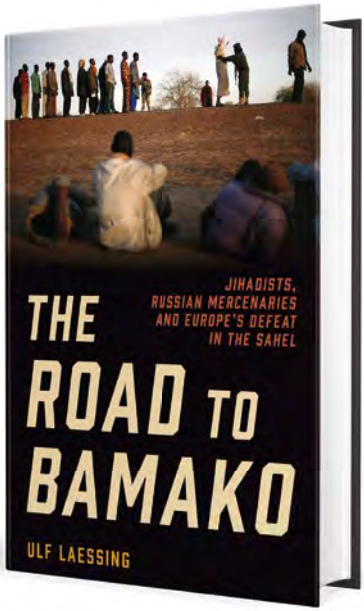
The Road to Bamako

Jihadists, Russian Mercenaries and Europe's Defeat in the Sahel

Ulf Laessing

'A superb book.' – Will Brown, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations

'[A] highly accessible account of the major issues bedevilling the region . . . compelling, and populated with personal observations and anecdotes.' – Ronald Bruce St John, author of *Qaddafi: Beyond the Myth*



The Sahel region, from Mauritania in the West to Sudan in the East, is in crisis. Ulf Laessing, a veteran journalist who has lived and worked in the region for years, leverages unprecedented access to diplomats, politicians, jihadists, smugglers and migrants. He travels to goldmines to expose an illegal trade worth billions, meets those who risk everything to escape and those who profit from such desperation, and reveals how European diplomatic and military blunders opened the door for Russian exploitation. Now, with jihadists marching on Mali's capital, Bamako, and French influence over its former colonies waning, the Sahel is sinking deeper into a tragedy that will have far-reaching consequences. *The Road to Bamako* is a fast-paced book that gives a rare first-hand account of this political and humanitarian disaster on Europe's doorstep.

Ulf Laessing was until recently Head of the Regional Sahel Programme at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and previously a foreign correspondent for Reuters in the Middle East and North Africa. He is the author of *Understanding Libya Since Gaddafi* (2020).

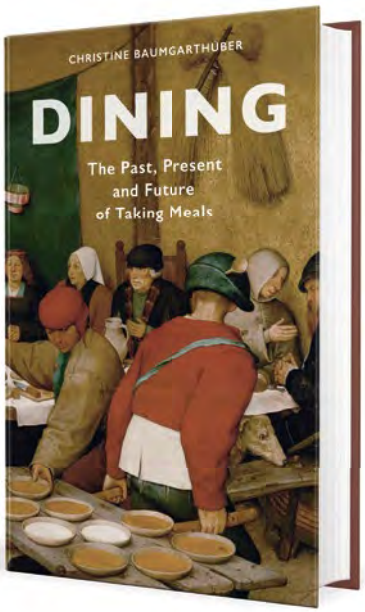
The story of a forgotten war with global consequences

April 2027 • Politics
ISBN 978 1 83639 378 8
216 × 138 mm • 256 pp
3 illustrations
Hardback • £18.99/$26
ebook 978 1 83639 401 3
World Rights: Reaktion

Dining

The Past, Present and Future of Taking Meals

Christine Baumgarthuber



Why do people eat together? Across thousands of years and cultures, shared meals have helped forge communities, display status, express beliefs and create a sense of belonging. This book offers a sweeping history of eating together, from prehistoric feasting rituals and ancient drinking vessels to royal banquets, family dining rooms, street food stalls and modern restaurants. Moving across continents and centuries, Christine Baumgarthuber examines the objects, customs, spaces and technologies that have shaped the experience of shared meals. Rich in stories of ceremony, hospitality, extravagance and everyday pleasure, the book shows how dining has long reflected the values and ambitions of societies. At a time when screens and delivery apps increasingly mediate our meals, it reminds us why gathering around food remains a deeply human need.

Christine Baumgarthuber is creator of The Austerity Kitchen, a one-of-a-kind culinary history blog. She is the author of *Fermented Foods* (2021) and *Why Fast?* (2023), both published by Reaktion Books.

A global history of dining as humanity's enduring social ritual

June 2027 • Food & Drink/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 372 6
216 × 138 mm • 304 pp
124 illustrations
Hardback • £17.99/$26
ebook 978 1 83639 411 2
World Rights: Reaktion

The Battle for Health

A History of the Health Food Movement

Gregory A. Barton

The Battle for Health tells the story of one of the modern world's most influential yet misunderstood cultural movements. Emerging in the nineteenth century as a reaction against industrial food production, chemical additives and the growing authority of conventional medicine, the health food movement reshaped how people thought about eating, health and personal responsibility. This first full-scale history traces its path from vitamin pioneers, organic farmers and dietary reformers to today's wellness industry and debates over nutrition, sustainability and public policy. It reveals a movement marked by striking contradictions: science and romanticism, innovation and quackery, individual choice and collective change. Lively, wide-ranging and deeply relevant, it shows how everyday food choices became a powerful force in shaping modern society.

Gregory A. Barton is Professor of History at Western Sydney University and Visiting Professor in the Department of History at the University of Johannesburg. He is the co-author of *Saving the World: How Forests Inspired Global Efforts to Stop Climate Change from 1770 to the Present* (Reaktion, 2024).

The first full-scale history of the movement that transformed food, health and consumer culture

February 2027 • Food & Drink
ISBN 978 1 83639 332 0
216 × 138 mm • 248 pp
Hardback • £16.99/$24
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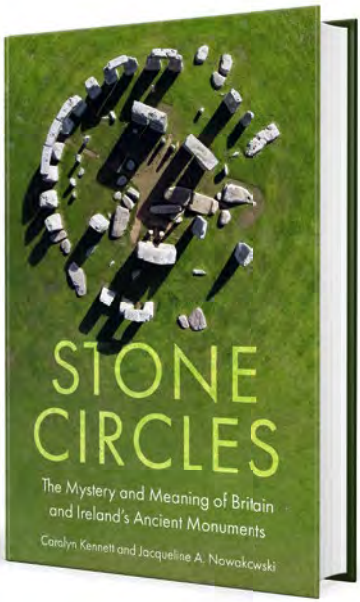
Stone Circles

The Mystery and Meaning of Britain and Ireland's Ancient Monuments

Carolyn Kennett and Jacqueline A. Nowakowski



Stone circles are among the most striking and mysterious monuments of prehistoric Britain. Built around 5,000 years ago, they continue to inspire wonder, debate and speculation. Centuries of curiosity about these remarkable structures are explored here alongside the latest archaeological discoveries. From world-famous sites such as Stonehenge to lesser-known circles scattered across Britain and Ireland, the book examines how and why they were built, the roles they played in prehistoric communities and the beliefs that may have shaped them. Challenging long-held assumptions, it reveals stone circles as places of gathering, ceremony and social connection as much as monuments of engineering. At once authoritative and accessible, it shows why these ancient stones continue to capture the imagination today.

Carolyn Kennett is a writer and astronomer who lives in Cornwall. She is Chair of the Society for the History of Astronomy and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, and her books include *Uranus and Neptune* (Reaktion, 2022). Jacqueline A. Nowakowski is an archaeologist and educator based in Cornwall. She is a contributing author to *Archaeology and Landscape at the Land's End* (2016) and *Tintagel Revisited: New Excavations at a Royal Citadel* (2026).

An engaging guide to the enduring mysteries of Britain and Ireland's stone circles

June 2027 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 327 6
234 × 156 mm • 272 pp
120 illustrations, 29 in colour
Hardback • £25/$35
ebook 978 1 83639 412 9
World Rights: Reaktion

Dressing for Leisure

How Swimsuits Shaped Popular Culture from Bloomers to Bikinis

Jo Coghlan and Lisa J. Hackett

From the suffocating modesty of bloomers to the bold minimalism of the bikini, *Dressing for Leisure* dives into the fascinating story of swimwear and its place at the heart of modern culture. Tracing more than a century of changing styles, it explains how swimsuits have not only followed fashion but reshaped ideas about the body, freedom, sexuality and identity. Moving through Hollywood glamour, beach culture, competitive sport and celebrity influence, Jo Coghlan and Lisa J. Hackett bring to life the moments when swimwear sparked outrage, set trends and defined generations. Stylish, accessible and thought-provoking, the book reveals how a simple garment sits at the centre of debates about gender, race, beauty and modern life.

Jo Coghlan is a political sociologist at the University of New England, New South Wales. She is the co-author of *Breaking Television: How Breaking Bad Redefined Morality, Genre and the Antihero* (2026). Lisa J. Hackett is a cultural historian at the University of New England, New South Wales. Together they have co-written *The British Royals in Popular Culture* (2025) and co-edited the two-volume *The Barbie Phenomenon* (2025–6).

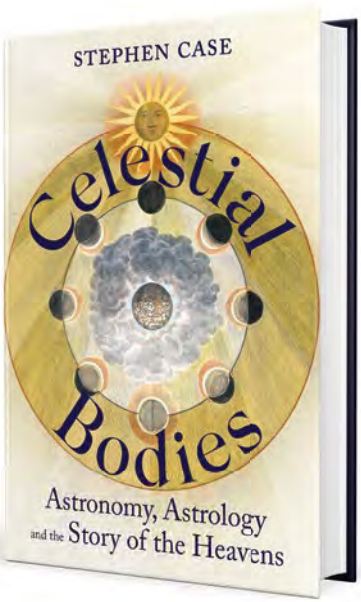
The history of swimwear and its surprising social influence

May 2027 • Fashion/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 366 5
234 × 156 mm • 264 pp
72 illustrations, 25 in colour
Hardback • £20/$28
ebook 978 1 83639 408 2
World Rights: Reaktion

Celestial Bodies

Astronomy, Astrology and the Story of the Heavens

Stephen Case



'A true joy to read . . . Case makes the reader care about each of his characters (and the astronomical and astrological questions they wrestled with).' – Laura Ackerman Smoller, Arthur R. Miller Professor of History, University of Rochester

Celestial Bodies offers a jargon-free history of astronomy and its relationship with astrology. For most of human history, the study of celestial bodies and their earthly influence was not distinguished. Although the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century sounded the death knell for astrology, many prominent early scientists took it seriously, casting horoscopes while conducting scientific experiments. The notion that celestial influence could be 'mapped' onto human lives only slowly became a fringe belief.

Stephen Case deftly explores how astrology transformed from a primary motivation to study astronomy to the pseudo-science that it is today. Only by understanding astrology's role in astronomy's development can we fully come to understand the complete story of humanity's relationship with the stars.

A jargon-free reinterpretation of the history of stargazing

Stephen Case is Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Geosciences at Olivet Nazarene University in Illinois. His books include *Creatures of Reason: John Herschel and the Invention of Science* (2024).

March 2027 • Popular Science
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234 × 156 mm • 336 pp
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Hardback • £20/$30
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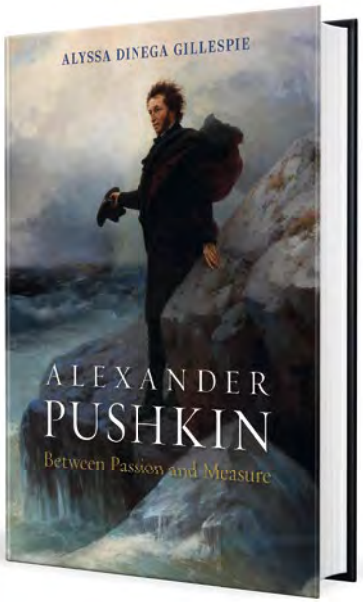
Alexander Pushkin

Between Passion and Measure

Alyssa Dinega Gillespie



Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837) was the founder of the modern Russian literary tradition and the first to fully develop Russian as an expressive literary language. Passionately and irrepressibly creative, he lived under the constraints of imperial censorship and repeatedly clashed with the Tsarist regime. This biography traces the dramatic events of Pushkin's life while revealing the personal and psychological forces that shaped his work, from the wounds of childhood and his evolving political sympathies to his intense emotional life and uncompromising sense of honour. Drawing on the latest scholarship, Alyssa Dinega Gillespie challenges the sanitized, official 'Pushkin myth' in Russian culture and offers a more complex portrait of the poet. At its heart is the story of a writer whose pursuit of inner freedom transformed Russian literature and continues to resonate today.

Alyssa Dinega Gillespie is a prize-winning translator and scholar of Russian and Ukrainian literature, the editor of *Taboo Pushkin: Topics, Texts, Interpretations* (2012) and translator of *Vega's Fugitive: Poems by Marina Tsvetaeva* (2026). She lives in Brunswick, Maine.

A fresh, uncensored portrait of Pushkin and the price of creative freedom

February 2027 • Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 334 4
234 × 156 mm • 248 pp
44 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$32
ebook 978 1 83639 384 9
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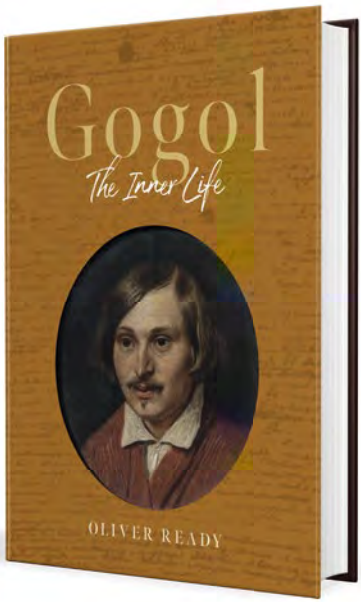
Gogol

The Inner Life

Oliver Ready



Nikolai Gogol (1809–1852) was one of the most original and elusive writers of the nineteenth century: a comic genius, a master of the grotesque and a restless traveller whose life crossed the cultural worlds of Ukraine, Russia and Europe. In this first comprehensive account of Gogol's life and work in a generation, Oliver Ready draws on the latest scholarship, as well as his own translations of Gogol's fiction, to present a concise yet richly nuanced portrait. Moving beyond familiar myths and stereotypes, he portrays a figure shaped by competing loyalties, spiritual longings, creative ambition and periods of profound inner struggle. Attentive to Gogol's enduring connections with Ukraine as well as his wider European horizons, Ready illuminates the sources of an extraordinary imagination and the complexities of identity, belonging and artistic creation.

Oliver Ready is Lecturer in Russian at St Edmund Hall, University of Oxford. He is a prize-winning translator and the author of *Persisting in Folly: Russian Writers in Search of Wisdom, 1963–2013* (2017).

A revealing portrait of Gogol beyond myth, nationalism and caricature

April 2027 • Biography
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33 illustrations
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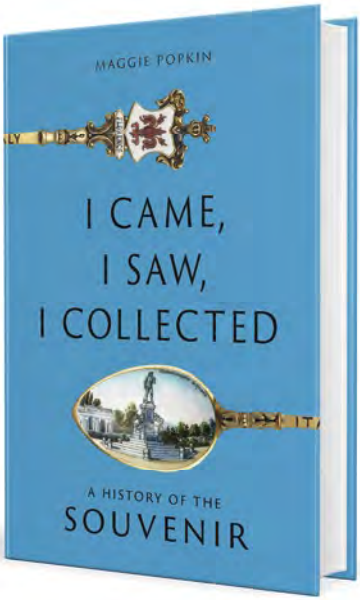
World Trade Center

I Came, I Saw, I Collected

A History of the Souvenir

Maggie Popkin



'This book reveals, brilliantly, the deeper history of souvenirs, not just the rubbish but the expensive mementoes of ancient religious pilgrimages, the replicas of famous statues and the tokens of encounters with celebrities. Popkin's fascinating study shows the economic and political impact of these objects and how they served as physical embodiments of the lived experiences of people across the ages.'
– Jerry Toner, University of Cambridge

The human drive to capture memories and experiences through physical objects is as old as civilization itself. In *I Came, I Saw, I Collected*, art historian and archaeologist Maggie Popkin takes readers on an exhilarating tour through the surprising history of souvenirs. From drinking cups depicting Roman gladiators, early Christian pilgrimage flasks and Maya figurines to folding fans from the Grand Tour, Hokusai's *Great Wave* and modern snow globes, Popkin shows how souvenirs have always shaped how we see our world and feel at home within it. Far from mere kitsch, souvenirs fuel economies, reinforce political ideologies and frame the way we think about art, culture and authenticity. Richly illustrated, this book uncovers the profound stories hidden within the humble objects we still accumulate today.

Maggie Popkin is Professor of Art History at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. Her books include *Souvenirs and the Experience of Empire in Ancient Rome* (2022).

A richly illustrated history of our most precious objects

May 2027 • Art/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 365 8
234 × 156 mm • 280 pp
71 illustrations, 55 in colour
Hardback • £20/$30
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Gnomes

A Strange History

Gregory Ariail

Gnomes: A Strange History is the first book to trace the remarkable story of gnomes across centuries of literature, art, folklore and popular culture. Far more than the familiar bearded figures of gardens and fairy tales, gnomes have appeared in occult writings, Romantic fantasies, children's stories and modern fantasy worlds, taking on surprising and often contradictory forms. Drawing on rare and neglected texts alongside works by major writers, the book follows their evolution from the writings of Paracelsus to the imaginations of Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Terry Pratchett and many others. Combining cultural history with literary detective work, the book demonstrates how one of Europe's strangest mythical beings has continually adapted to changing beliefs and tastes. The result is a fresh perspective on fantasy, folklore and the enduring power of imagination.

Gregory Ariail is Assistant Professor of English at the University of West Alabama. He is the author of *Hermits Die on Thursday: Stories of Appalachia and the Dark Ages* (2025).

The first history of gnomes across folklore, fantasy and culture

June 2027 • Folklore/Popular Culture
ISBN 978 1 83639 376 4
216 × 138 mm • 240 pp
44 illustrations, 9 in colour
Hardback • £18/$26
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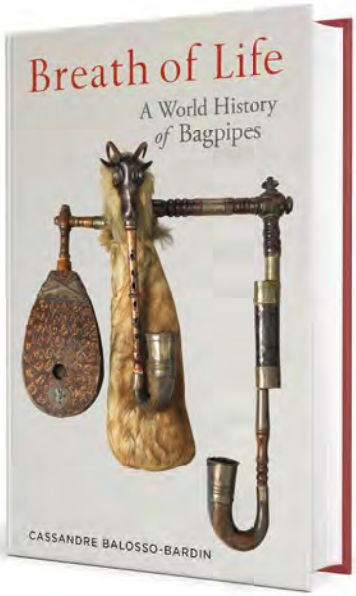
Breath of Life

A World History of Bagpipes

Cassandre Balosso-Bardin



'Brilliant and revelatory . . . This is the most exciting book on the subject that's been written in a long time, perhaps ever.' – Michael Beckerman, Dean of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

'Highly readable and richly illustrated.' – Mark Slobin, author of *Folk Music* and *Motor City Music*

Forget everything you think you know about bagpipes. *Breath of Life* takes readers far beyond the lone Scottish piper to reveal a vast, surprising and deeply human world of more than 130 bagpipe traditions. Cassandre Balosso-Bardin traces the history of bagpipes from antiquity to the present day and across continents, from India to Western Europe and from Scandinavia to North Africa. Drawing on two decades of research and interviews, she approaches the subject thematically, with each chapter uncovering the people, places and legends that have shaped the history of this instrument. Shepherds and princesses, soldiers and dancers, beggars and monarchs, devils and angels all appear in a rich tapestry of stories woven through a diverse array of bagpipes.

A truly global history of bagpipes

Cassandre Balosso-Bardin is Professor in Cultural Musicology at the University of Leuven, Belgium. She is a bagpiper as well as the founding director of the International Bagpipe Organisation and the co-founder of International Bagpipe Day (10 March).

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90 illustrations, 22 in colour
Hardback • £18/$25
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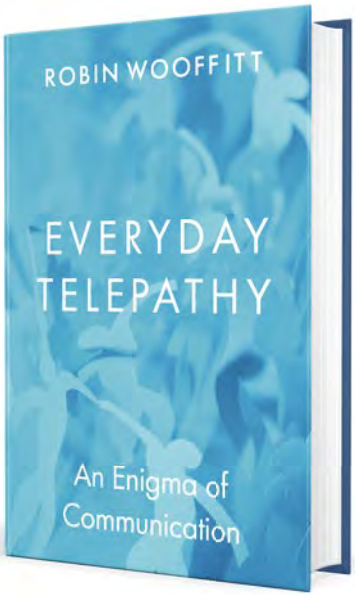
Everyday Telepathy

An Enigma of Communication

Robin Wooffitt



'Impressive . . . a major accomplishment.' – Doug Maynard, University of Wisconsin-Madison

'You will not think of your linguistic faux pas the same way after reading this illuminating book.' – Etzel Cardeña, Lund University, and editor of *Parapsychology: A Handbook for the 21st Century*

What if telepathy is already part of our daily conversation? In this unconventional yet accessible book, Robin Wooffitt explores the hidden social side of psychic experiences. Combining evidence-based research with entertaining examples drawn from real conversations, Wooffitt introduces us to the history of parapsychology and telepathy's role in psychotherapy, and argues why the psychic development literature gets it wrong. This book reveals how everyday language holds the key to extraordinary human connection, and is essential reading for anyone curious about the creative range of verbal communication as well as the unexpected quirks of interaction.

Robin Wooffitt is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of York and Visiting Professor at the Centre for Psychology and Sociological Sciences, University of Northampton. He is the author of *The Language of Mediums and Psychics* (2006) and co-author of *Making Sense of the Paranormal* (2021).

The strange ways our minds accidentally connect through everyday speech

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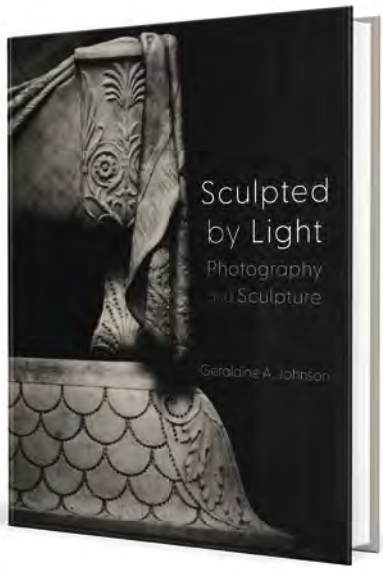
Sculpted by Light

Photography and Sculpture

Geraldine A. Johnson



This book explores the fascinating and often unexpected ways photography and sculpture have intersected over the past two centuries. It examines photographs of sculpture by Classical pioneers like Talbot and Daguerre, Modernists such as Steichen and Brâncuși – who were both captivated by light and shadow – and contemporary practitioners including Mapplethorpe and Goldin, who explore gender and identity. Photographers from Africa, Asia and Latin America also feature. *Sculpted by Light* reveals how photography generates new sculptural works – as when Brassaï transformed found objects into 'involuntary sculptures' – and how photographs can animate a statue or freeze a living body. Photographs, Geraldine A. Johnson argues, are also objects with sculptural qualities of their own. By approaching these two media from varied perspectives, this volume offers fresh insights into both.

Geraldine A. Johnson is Associate Professor in the History of Art at the University of Oxford and Fellow of Christ Church, Oxford. She is the editor of *Art History Now: Objects, Concepts, Approaches* (2026) and co-editor of *Photo Archives and the Place of Photography* (2025).

How photography and sculpture have transformed each other

June 2027 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 374 0
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125 illustrations, 80 in colour
Hardback • £29/$42
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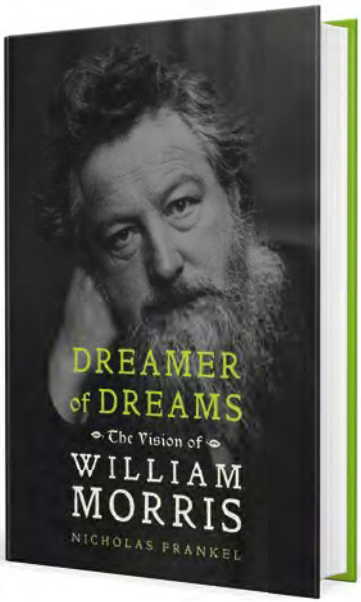
Dreamer of Dreams

The Vision of William Morris

Nicholas Frankel



Dreamer of Dreams is a critical biography that highlights William Morris's radical and transformative vision of art. Through close exploration of his visual designs, poems and stories, as well as his prolific career as a lecturer and activist and his creation of the Kelmscott Press later in life, Nicholas Frankel demonstrates Morris's commitment to the idea of beauty as a vehicle for social transformation, justice and heightened environmental consciousness.

Art was a means for change, not an end in itself, and Morris despised the idea that it should be enjoyed by only a privileged few. Serving as a portrait of the artist as a committed agent of change, this book underscores Morris's relevance to our own times, no less than to the world in which he lived.

Nicholas Frankel is Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University. His books include *Oscar Wilde: The Unrepentant Years* (2017) and *The Invention of Oscar Wilde* (Reaktion, 2021).

William Morris's radical, transformative vision of art

May 2027 • Biography/Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 363 4
234 × 156 mm • 304 pp
71 illustrations, 22 in colour
Hardback • £25/$32
ebook 978 1 83639 404 4
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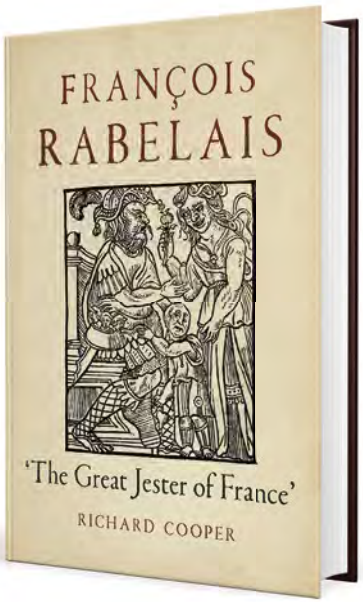
François Rabelais

'The Great Jester of France'

Richard Cooper



François Rabelais was one of the Renaissance's most extraordinary figures: comic author, physician, teacher, editor, monk and tireless intellectual. Best known for the exuberant adventures of Gargantua and Pantagruel, he transformed French literature with a style that combined satire, folklore, fantasy and learning. Yet the details of his life have long remained obscured by myth and anecdote.

Drawing on the latest research, this biography reconstructs Rabelais' remarkable career, tracing his religious vocation, medical practice, work in the early printing industry, travels in Italy, connections at court and repeated encounters with censorship. Alongside the story of his extraordinary works, Richard Cooper shows how Rabelais navigated the intellectual, religious and political tensions of sixteenth-century Europe, illuminating the world that helped shape one of literature's most inventive and enduring voices.

Richard Cooper is Emeritus Professor of French at the University of Oxford and Emeritus Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford. His books include *Roman Antiquities in Renaissance France, 1515–65* (2013).

A vivid biography of Rabelais and the world that shaped him

March 2027 • Biography/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 348 1
234 × 156 mm • 280 pp
65 illustrations
Hardback • £25/$32
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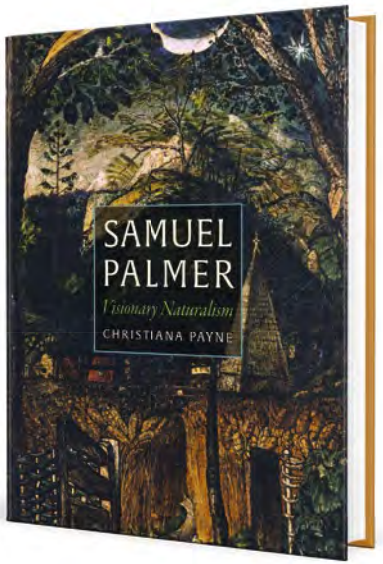
Samuel Palmer

Visionary Naturalism

Christiana Payne



'An admirably crafted account of the life, art, and posthumous reputation of one of the nineteenth century's most striking and individual painters.' – Scott Wilcox, Yale Center for British Art

'Payne's writing elegantly steers the reader through the artist's life and landscapes, revealing along the way the man behind the magic and the reality embedded in the enchantment.' – Nicola Moorby, curator and author of *Turner and Constable: Art, Life, Landscape*

Samuel Palmer is one of Britain's most beloved artists, celebrated for the visionary landscapes he created as a young man in Shoreham, Kent. Yet his later career has often been overshadowed by these early masterpieces and by accounts of personal tragedy. This richly illustrated book offers a fresh and balanced view of Palmer's life and work, tracing the continuities that linked his youthful achievements to his later paintings, watercolours and etchings. Christiana Payne shows how his distinctive artistic vision was sustained by a lifelong engagement with the pastoral landscape and with the close observation of nature, or what he called 'visible creation'. Accessible and insightful, the book introduces readers to both familiar and lesser-known works, presenting an artist whose imagination remained remarkably consistent across a long and evolving career.

Christiana Payne is Professor Emerita of History of Art at Oxford Brookes University. Her books include *John Brett: Pre-Raphaelite Landscape Painter* (2010) and *In the Shade of the Pine: Artists, Writers, and Trees in America, 1825–1876* (2025).

A fresh reassessment of Samuel Palmer's life, art and enduring vision

April 2027 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 355 9
234 × 168 mm • 208 pp
88 illustrations, 68 in colour
Hardback • £35/$48
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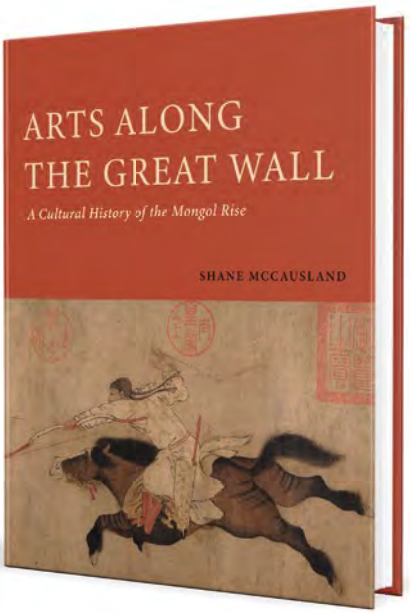
Arts Along the Great Wall

A Cultural History of the Mongol Rise

Shane McCausland



'An excellent introduction.' – Eiren L. Shea, Grinnell College, Iowa, and author of *Mongol Court Dress, Identity Formation, and Global Exchange*

'A valuable reassessment of the significant cultural roles played by the mostly nomadic people living north of China.' – Morris Rossabi, Distinguished Professor of History, CUNY, and author of *The Mongols and Global History*

The Mongol Empire was the largest contiguous empire in history, but its origins lie in a rich and often overlooked cultural world that flourished long before the rise of Chinggis Khan. This book traces the history of Northeast Asia from around 900 to 1400, focusing on the dynamic region along the Great Wall where nomadic and sedentary societies met, competed and exchanged ideas. By placing the arts, cultures and lifeways of nomadic peoples at the centre of the story, it challenges conventional narratives that privilege imperial China alone and reveals how the peoples who ruled the frontier shaped the emergence of a medieval superpower and transformed the history of Eurasia.

Shane McCausland is Percival David Professor of the History of Art at SOAS University of London. His many books include *The Mongol Century: Visual Cultures of Yuan China, 1271–1368* (2014) and *The Art of the Chinese Picture-Scroll* (2023), both published by Reaktion Books.

A cultural history of the nomadic arts and lifeways that shaped the rise of the Mongol Empire

May 2027 • Art/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 324 5
250 × 190 mm • 216 pp
126 illustrations, 115 in colour
Hardback • £35/$45
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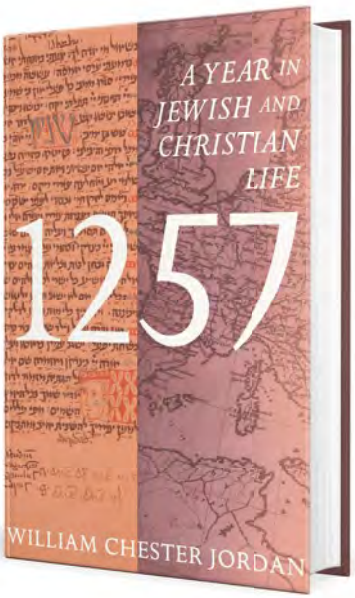
1257

A Year in Jewish and Christian Life

William Chester Jordan



Set in the year 1257, this insightful book offers a vivid portrait of Jewish–Christian relations across medieval Europe through eight interconnected stories. From the streets of Paris and Oxford to the trading centres of Cologne, the frontier town of Cuenca and the troubled landscapes of southern France, William Chester Jordan reveals a world shaped by cooperation, conflict, commerce, faith and political ambition. Along the way, powerful figures such as Louis IX of France, Manfred of Sicily and James of Aragon illuminate the wider forces transforming European society. Rather than reducing relations between religious communities to hostility or harmony alone, the book examines the conditions that encouraged both tension and coexistence, and offers a nuanced picture of a diverse and deeply interconnected medieval world.

William Chester Jordan is Dayton-Stockton Professor of History, Emeritus, at Princeton University. His previous books include *From England to France: Felony and Exile in the High Middle Ages* (2015) and *The Apple of His Eye: Converts from Islam in the Reign of Louis IX* (2019).

A vivid portrait of Jewish–Christian life across Europe in 1257

May 2027 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 369 6
216 × 138 mm • 240 pp
20 illustrations
Hardback • £18/$25
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From Brown Wax to Bytes

How Audio Formats Have Been Transforming Music for the Last 150 Years

Eva Moreda

From Brown Wax to Bytes is an accessible and surprising history of audio formats and the indelible imprint they have left on music over the last 150 years.

Formats – be it Edison's phonograph or file-sharing – have revolutionized how we listen to and think about music, going so far as to influence the music being made. Technological advancements have created waves that have rippled through every aspect of the music industry: from the working lives and creative decisions of composers and performers to the radical reshaping of our listening habits.

Ultimately, the formats we listen to have helped fashion our musical identities. In this brilliant, original survey, Eva Moreda explains the who, how, when and why of all this – what we can learn from the past and where the future might take us.

Eva Moreda is Professor of Musicology at the University of Glasgow. She has written four books on music in Spain, focusing on music and politics under Franco and an early history of recorded sound.

A unique and lively look at the history of recording formats and how they have shaped music over the last 150 years

May 2027 • Music/History
ISBN 978 1 83639 367 2
216 × 138 mm • 336 pp
Hardback • £16.99/$24
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‘Switched On’

British Pop Artists, 1950–70

James King

‘Meticulously researched and with a visual and conceptual analysis of the many forms of Pop Art devised in Great Britain in the 1950s and 1960s, *‘Switched On’* is humanized and enriched by the biographical back stories of each of the sixteen artists taken as the core of the movement. This well-argued survey, written in accessible and refreshingly straightforward language, is a welcome and essential addition to the literature on the movement.’
– Marco Livingstone, author of *Pop Art: A Continuing History*

‘This new volume brings a fresh voice to the subject. Extremely readable.’ – Richard Riley, curator

‘Switched On’ is the first full-length history of British Pop Art, the movement that transformed the visual culture of post-war Britain and helped define the spirit of the 1960s. Through the lives and work of artists such as Eduardo Paolozzi, Peter Blake, Richard Hamilton and Pauline Boty, it reveals a movement shaped not only by mass media and consumer culture but by class, aspiration and social change. Set against the vibrant world of Swinging London, this book reconstructs a landscape populated by pop stars, film icons, wrestlers and fashion models, showing how art and popular culture together reshaped modern Britain.

James King is Professor Emeritus of English at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. His previous books include *Paul Nash: Designer and Illustrator* (2022) and *‘Our Little Gang’: The Lives of the Vorticists* (Reaktion, 2025).

A vibrant history of British Pop Art and its social roots

March 2027 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 341 2
234 × 168 mm • 240 pp
67 illustrations, 47 in colour
Hardback • £30/$42
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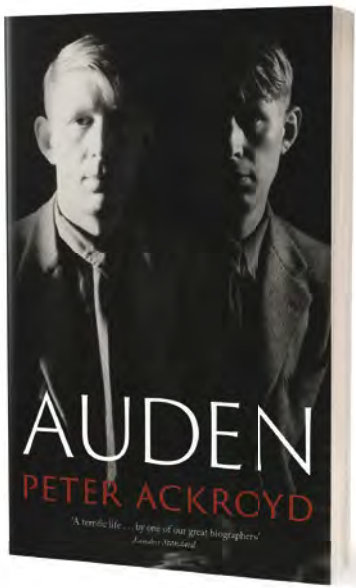
Auden

Peter Ackroyd



'[A] first-class new biography.' – *The Independent*

'A terrific life of an intriguing poet by one of our great biographers.' – *London Standard*

'Auden finally found a biographer worthy of his life and work.' – *New World*

Of all the English poets born in the twentieth century, Wystan Hugh Auden is by far the most significant. This forthright biography explores the evolution of his poetic voice in tandem with his shifting beliefs – Existentialism, Marxism, Freudianism and Anglo-Catholicism – reflecting the intellectual climate of the century. The book traces his journeys from Oxford to Berlin, China and America, bringing to life his turbulent era and inner conflicts. This insightful and compelling account captures Auden's genius as both a historical witness and an enduring poet.

Peter Ackroyd is one of Britain's most respected historians and novelists. His many books include *London: The Biography*, *Hawksmoor* and the bestselling *History of England* series. He is also the author of *The English Actor* and *The English Soul*, both published by Reaktion Books.

Peter Ackroyd's compelling portrait of W. H. Auden, poet of a restless century

March 2027 • Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 343 6
198 × 129 mm • 400 pp
23 illustrations
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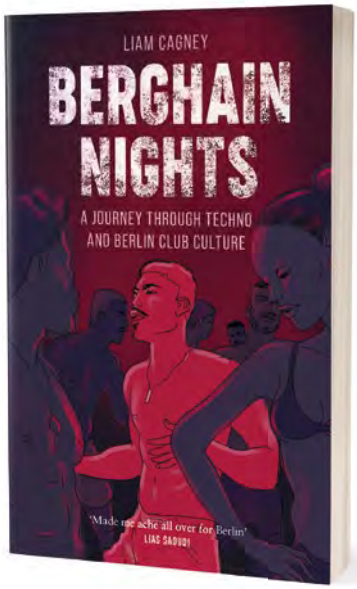
Berghain Nights

A Journey through Techno and Berlin Club Culture

Liam Cagney

An *Irish Times* Book of the Year 2025



'A compelling narrative, with music at its very core.' – *Record Collector*

'Candid and captivating . . . a deeply exciting book.' – Wendy Erskine, author of *The Benefactors*

'A future classic.' – Tim MacGabhann, author of *The Black Pool*

'His love for the genre pulses from every page.' – *Gay and Lesbian Review*

'Part memoir, part cultural anthropology, part genealogy of techno – it can also be read as a manifesto for a new way of living.' – *Brooklyn Rail*

Liam Cagney is residing in a Berlin squat when one night he finds himself at Berghain. Fascinated by the strange techno and even stranger dance floor, he sets out to explore Berlin's unique club culture in all its intensity. *Berghain Nights* is the result, the first major literary exploration of Berlin's club scene. Blending essay and memoir, it features interviews with major electronic dance music artists alongside other figures from Berlin's night-time economy and the history of techno. *Berghain Nights* not only captures the excitement of Berlin's clubs, it explores how spaces like these can help one find a truer self.

Liam Cagney is an Irish writer and musicologist. His music writing appears in publications including *The Guardian*, *The TLS*, *The Spectator* and *DJ Mag*. He lives in Berlin.

An electrifying guide to Berlin's notorious club scene

February 2027 • Music
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198 × 129 mm • 304 pp
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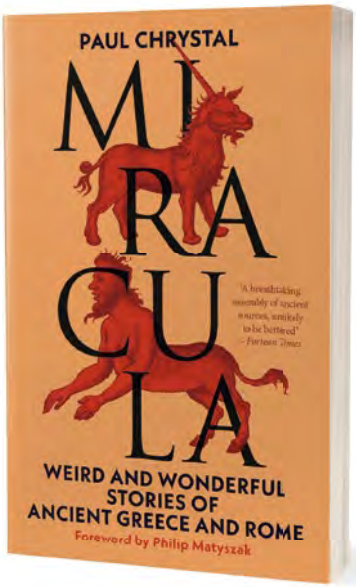
Miracula

Weird and Wonderful Stories of Ancient Greece and Rome

Paul Chrystal



'Written with gusto and humour . . . A breath-taking assembly of ancient sources, unlikely to be bettered.' – *Fortean Times*

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 pieces are by turns absorbing, enchanting, curious, unbelievable, comical, astonishing, disturbing and occasionally just plain daft. An entertaining and sometimes lurid collection, *Miracula* is perfect for all those fascinated by the stranger aspects of the classical world.

Paul Chrystal is a contributor to history and archaeology magazines and TV and radio programmes. His numerous publications include *The Romans: A People's History* (Reaktion, 2026).

Astonishing, humorous and shocking tales from ancient Greece and Rome

February 2027 • History
ISBN 978 1 83639 340 5
198 × 129 mm • 472 pp
42 illustrations
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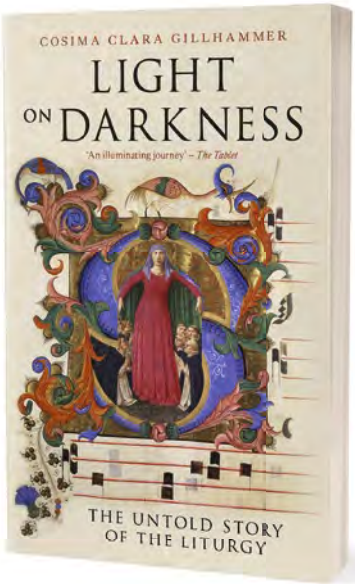
Light on Darkness

The Untold Story of the Liturgy

Cosima Clara Gillhammer



'This book tells a story that needs to be heard.' – *Church Times*

'A beautiful book that gives voice to our deepest human need for ritual and meaning.' – Victoria Johnson, Dean of Chapel, St John's College, Cambridge

Light on Darkness 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 provides 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 Career Development Fellow in English at Lady Margaret Hall, 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 2027 • History/Religion
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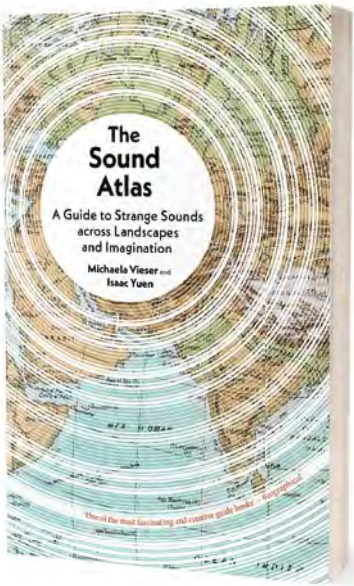
The Sound Atlas

A Guide to Strange Sounds across Landscapes and Imagination

Michaela Vieser and Isaac Yuen



'This book taught me that to "see" sound is to touch life.'
– Kyoichi Tsuzuki, photographer and journalist

'As guide books go, *The Sound Atlas* must surely stand as one of the most fascinating and creative written to date.'
– Jules Stewart, *Geographical*

Nature writers Michaela Vieser and Isaac Yuen set out in search of sounds beautiful and loathsome, melodious and disturbing, healing, strange and intimate. The phenomena of sound may be fleeting and evanescent, but the memory of it can open a window into the soul, deepening our connections with time, the environment and each other. From the edge of the solar system to the crackle of arctic sea ice and the singing pillars of Hampi, each of this book's 36 essays explores stories of sound through the lens of history, science and culture, stylishly blending fantastical facts and unique anecdotes to create a compelling narrative.

Michaela Vieser is a writer based in Berlin whose books include the German bestseller *Tee mit Buddha* (2009). Isaac Yuen is a Hong Kong-Canadian writer, whose books include *Utter, Earth: Advice on Living in a More-than-Human World* (2024).

Explores the profound, cultural significance of sounds, blending history, science and personal reflection

February 2027 • Music/Travel Writing
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198 × 129 mm • 176 pp
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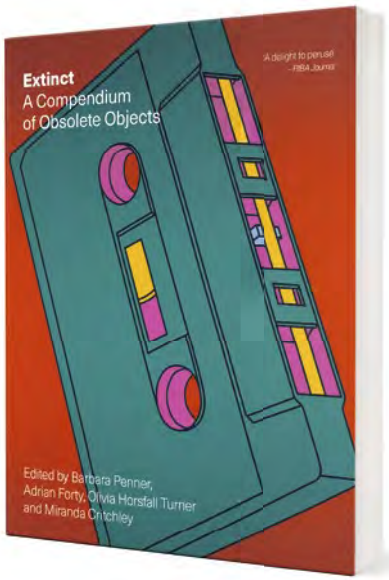
Extinct

A Compendium of Obsolete Objects

Edited by Barbara Penner, Adrian Forty, Olivia Horsfall Turner and Miranda Critchley



'Inventions that calamitously failed or quietly faded into obscurity are brought back to life.' – *New York Times*

'A delight to peruse.' – *RIBA Journal*

'A brilliant book.' – *Electronic Sound* magazine

Extinct gathers together the work of an exceptional range of artists, curators, architects, critics and academics across 85 illustrated essays. Contributors nominate 'extinct' objects and address them in a series of short, vivid, sometimes personal essays, speaking of not only obsolete technologies but other ways of thinking, making and interacting with the world. *Extinct* is filled with curious, half-remembered objects, each one evoking a future that never came to pass.

Barbara Penner is Professor in Architectural Humanities at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. Her books include *Bathroom* (Reaktion, 2013). Adrian Forty is Emeritus Professor of the History of Architecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. He is the author of many books, including *Concrete and Culture: A Material History* (Reaktion, 2012). Olivia Horsfall Turner is Chief Curator of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Collections. Miranda Critchley completed her PhD on railways and colonial narratives of progress in 2022 at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. She now works as a solicitor specializing in public law and migrants' rights.

A collection of 85 'extinct' objects, now superseded, unfashionable or simply forgotten

March 2027 • Design
ISBN 978 1 83639 350 4
220 × 171 mm • 392 pp
119 illustrations, 106 in colour
Paperback • £22/$30
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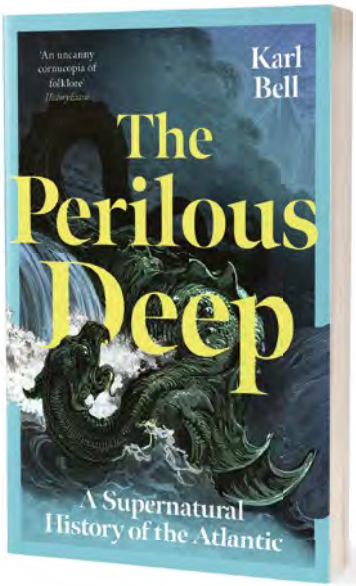
The Perilous Deep

A Supernatural History of the Atlantic

Karl Bell



'A colourful compendium of "the merfolk, ghosts, phantom ships and sea monsters" that have populated the seafaring folklore of the Atlantic nations for centuries.' – *The Scotsman*

'An uncanny cornucopia of folklore.' – *BBC History Magazine*

'Ambitious [and] entertaining.' – *Fortean Times*

The vast expanse, unknown depths, dangers and mysteries of the sea have led mariners to create fantastical stories of ghosts and monsters for centuries; it is a world strange and 'other' to the experience of land dwellers. *The Perilous Deep* explores why these stories were told, how they were repeated and mutated and what fears, anxieties and desires they helped to express. This is a fascinating exploration of the supernatural history of the Atlantic Ocean and some of its neighbouring seas, showing how seafaring peoples have developed knowledge and a sense of control over nature through myths and legends.

Karl Bell is Associate Professor in Cultural and Social History and Co-Director of the Centre for Port Cities and Maritime Cultures at the University of Portsmouth. His books include *The Legend of Spring-Heeled Jack*, winner of the 2013 Katharine Briggs Award.

The fantastical stories of ghosts and monsters engendered by the Atlantic ocean

May 2027 • Folklore
ISBN 978 1 83639 364 1
198 × 129 mm • 336 pp
39 illustrations
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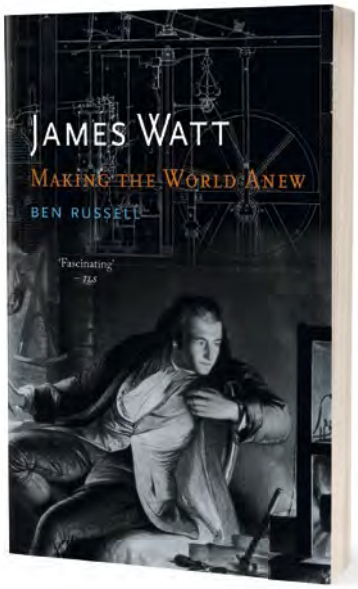
James Watt

Making the World Anew

Ben Russell



'Fascinating.' – *TLS*

'A compelling book . . . essential reading.' – *Isis Journal*

In *James Watt: Making the World Anew*, Ben Russell explores James Watt's early years and interests, as well as his highly successful 25-year partnership with the industrialist Matthew Boulton. While traditional biographies of Watt concentrate on the steam engine, this book tells a richer story. Watt's work is emblematic of a wider culture of multifaceted artisanship, and Russell probes the widely held motivation for making things, looking at not only what was produced but why. Generously illustrated and drawing on a wide range of resources, *James Watt* is a unique, expansive exploration of the engineer's career.

Ben Russell is Curator of Mechanical Engineering at the Science Museum, London.

A unique, expansive exploration of engineer James Watt's life and work

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ISBN 978 1 83639 361 0
198 × 129 mm • 280 pp
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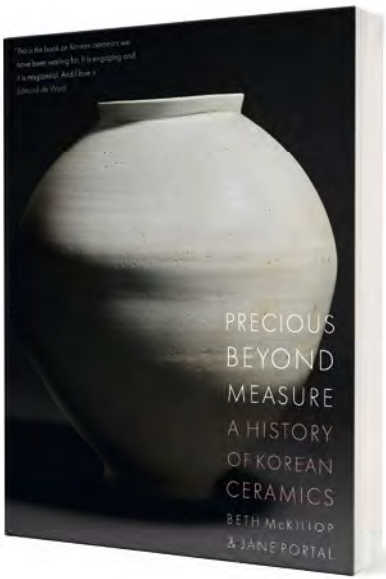
Precious beyond Measure

A History of Korean Ceramics

Beth McKillop and Jane Portal



'The book on Korean ceramics we have been waiting for. Engaging . . . and magisterial.' – Edmund de Waal

'An enchanting study, as beautiful as the objects it describes.' – Dan Snow

This is a captivating, richly illustrated history of the use of fired clay in Korea, spanning ancient times to the present day. *Precious beyond Measure* features a wide range of examples from archaeological sites and museums and offers a rare glimpse into the world of modern North Korean ceramics. Merging maritime archaeology, textual evidence and kiln excavation reports, Beth McKillop and Jane Portal engage with Korea's domestic and international spheres in surprising ways. Throughout history, Koreans have cherished their ceramic heritage. This overview reveals a remarkable and enduring tradition.

Beth McKillop was Senior Research Fellow and former Deputy Director at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Her publications include *North Korean Culture and Society* (2004). Jane Portal is Keeper of Asia at the British Museum, London. Her publications include *Arts of Korea – MFA Highlights* (2012).

A captivating, richly illustrated history of Korean ceramics

May 2027 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 370 2
250 × 190 mm • 272 pp
208 illustrations, 203 in colour
Paperback • £20/$30
ebook 978 1 78914 898 5
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The Greatest Adventure

A History of Human Space Exploration

Colin Burgess

The Guardian 'Book of the Week'

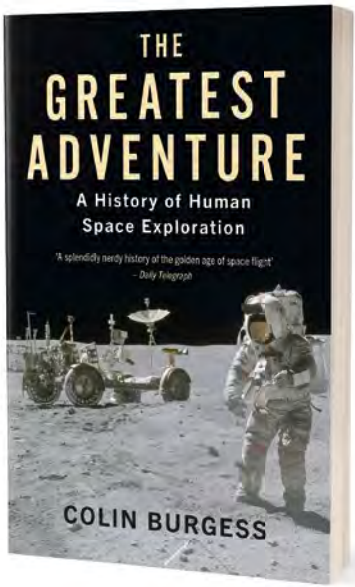
'An enjoyable read [and] a wonderful overview of space exploration.' – *BBC Sky at Night Magazine*

'If you want to revisit the drama of the space race, Burgess's account is excellent.' – *Los Angeles Review of Books*

'A splendidly nerdy history.' – *Daily Telegraph*

The space race was perhaps the greatest technological contest of the twentieth century. It was a thrilling era of innovation, discovery and exploration, as astronauts and cosmonauts were launched on space missions of increasing length, complexity and danger. *The Greatest Adventure* traces the events of this extraordinary period and takes the reader on a journey through to the present time, detailing the many successes, tragedies, risks and rewards of space exploration along the way.

Colin Burgess is the author or editor of almost forty books on the military and spaceflight, including *Selecting the Mercury Seven: The Search for America's First Astronauts* (2011) and *Soviets in Space* (Reaktion, 2022).



A history of space exploration, from the 1960s space race to the present day

June 2027 • Popular Science
ISBN 978 1 83639 375 7
198 × 129 mm • 368 pp
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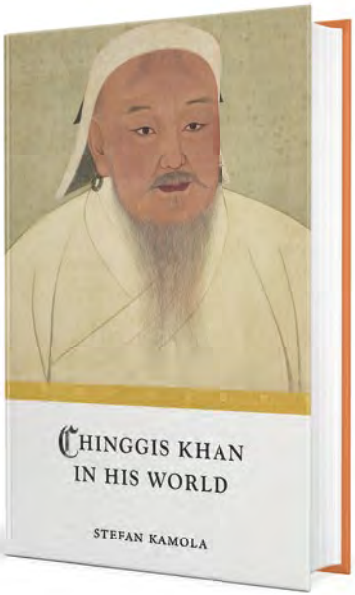
Chinggis Khan in His World

Stefan Kamola



'A deeply insightful biography . . . original, nuanced and compelling.' – Hodong Kim, Seoul National University, and co-editor of *The Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire*

Chinggis Khan in His World offers a fresh perspective on one of history's most influential figures by placing the founder of the Mongol Empire within the social and political realities of the Eurasian steppe. Rather than focusing primarily on military conquest and legend, it reconstructs his life through the experiences, relationships and decisions that shaped his rise to power. Drawing on the latest scholarship and a close reading of primary sources, the book reveals the dynamics of daily life among Inner Asian nomads and the networks of loyalty, rivalry and kinship on which the empire was built. At once a biography and a portrait of a changing world, it situates Chinggis Khan within the wider history of medieval Eurasia, showing how one life helped reshape a continent.

Stefan Kamola is a historian at the Institute of Iranian Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. He is the author of *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and the Jami' al-Tawarikh* (2019).

A human-centred biography revealing Chinggis Khan's world beyond conquest alone

MEDIEVAL LIVES
February 2027 • History/ Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 336 8
216 × 138 mm • 256 pp
29 illustrations, 19 in colour
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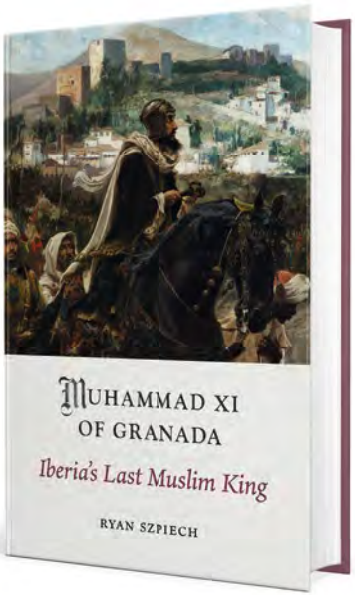
Muhammad xi of Granada

Iberia's Last Muslim King

Ryan Szpiech



Muhammad xi of Granada, better known as Boabdil, was the last ruler of Muslim Granada and one of the most consequential figures in the history of medieval Iberia. This biography traces his turbulent life, following his struggles for power, family rivalries, the fall of Granada in 1492 and his final years in exile. It places his life within a world transformed by religious conflict, political consolidation and the emergence of Spain as a global power. Drawing on sources in multiple languages, the book separates history from centuries of legend while examining how Muhammad xi's memory has been reimagined across the world. More than the story of a defeated king, it is an account of how history is remembered, reshaped and contested across generations.

Ryan Szpiech is Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. His books include *Conversion and Narrative: Reading and Religious Authority in Medieval Polemic* (2013).

The life, legend and legacy of Granada's last Muslim ruler

MEDIEVAL LIVES
June 2027 • History/ Biography
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216 × 138 mm • 288 pp
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Francis of Assisi

His Life, Vision and Companions

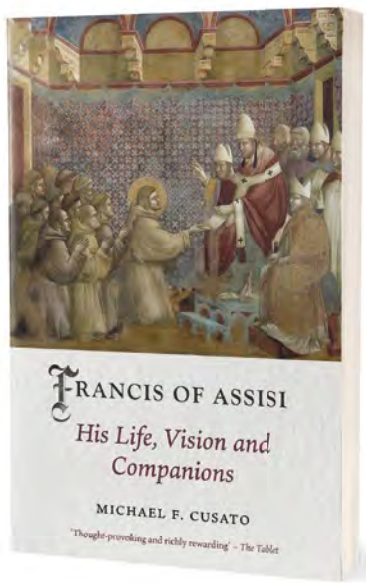
Michael F. Cusato

'A refreshing contribution to the literature on St Francis of Assisi.' – *Church Times*

'Thought-provoking and richly rewarding.' – *The Tablet*

This is an original and historically informed account of Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscans and one of the most venerated figures in Christianity. The book explores how Francis – along with his earliest brothers – embraced a life of poverty, in solidarity with the lowest ranks of society, preaching a message of justice and dignity for all. It examines how and why his vision then expanded to embrace non-Christians, and Muslims in particular, and considers the clash between Francis and newer members of his order, the stimulus for his reception of the stigmata, and his final years spent trying to keep his brothers faithful to their original vision.

Michael F. Cusato is a Franciscan friar who is currently Scholar-in-Residence at St Bonaventure University in western New York State. He has published widely on the history of the Franciscan Order in the Middle Ages.



An original and historically informed biography of Francis of Assisi

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Eleanor of Aquitaine

Woman, Queen and Legend

Lindy Grant

'Outstanding [and] beautifully written . . . The best biography yet published on a woman who confused even contemporaries with her many contradictions.' – *Country Life*

'The book is a triumph of the biographer's art . . . brilliantly conceived.' – Stephen Church, author of *King John: England, Magna Carta and the Making of a Tyrant*

'Not only the best short biography of Eleanor, but of any medieval queen.' – Nicholas Vincent, Professor of Medieval History, University of East Anglia

Eleanor of Aquitaine (1124–1204), the legendary queen of France and later England, has captivated historians for centuries. Heiress to the duchy of Aquitaine, wife to King Henry II and mother to Richard the Lionheart and King John, her life was marked by power, influence and myth. This concise, accessible history sheds new light on Eleanor, cutting through the hearsay and slander. It highlights the family bonds that shaped her power and identity, and demonstrates that Eleanor's story is one of resilience.

Lindy Grant is Professor Emeritus of Medieval History at the University of Reading and an Honorary Research Fellow at the Courtauld Institute of Art. Her books include *Blanche of Castile, Queen of France* (2016).

The life, power, influence and myth of Eleanor of Aquitaine

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April 2027 • History/Biography
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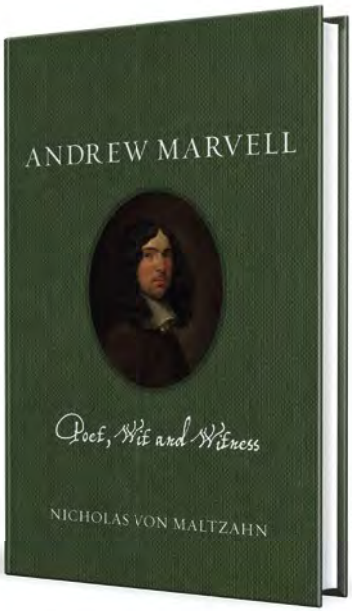
Andrew Marvell

Poet, Wit and Witness

Nicholas von Maltzahn



'An authoritative combination of literary and biographical insight.' – Blair Worden, Emeritus Fellow, St Edmund Hall, University of Oxford

'Here is a biography befitting its subject: elegant, compact, and witty.' – Feisal G. Mohamed, Professor of English, Yale University, and author of *Sovereignty*

Andrew Marvell (1621–1678) remains one of the most admired poets in the English language, celebrated for the wit, beauty and imaginative power of works such as 'To His Coy Mistress', 'The Garden' and 'Upon Appleton House'. Yet the man behind these poems has often remained elusive. Drawing on three decades of groundbreaking scholarship, Nicholas von Maltzahn brings Marvell vividly to life, revealing how his poetry, political commitments and personal experiences were shaped by the upheavals of the English Revolution and the Restoration. From lyric genius to fierce polemicist, Marvell emerges as a writer whose private verse and public writings illuminate each other in unexpected ways.

Nicholas von Maltzahn is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Ottawa. His publications include an edition of Marvell's *Account of the Growth of Popery* for *The Prose Works of Andrew Marvell* (2003) and *An Andrew Marvell Chronology* (2005).

A revealing portrait of Andrew Marvell, poet, polemicist and political witness

RENAISSANCE LIVES
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ISBN 978 1 83639 333 7
216 × 138 mm • 240 pp
28 illustrations, 14 in colour
Hardback • £18.95/$26
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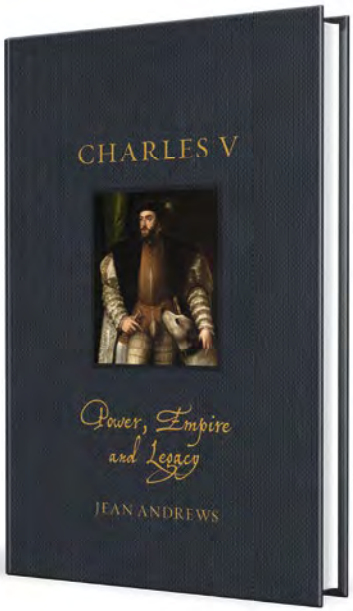
Charles v

Power, Empire and Legacy

Jean Andrews



'Jean Andrews gives us insights into the complex and interlocked political, religious and dynastic problems that attended Charles's reign and drove him to despair . . . this book provides a deeply human portrait of [the] ruler.'
– Martyn Rady, author of *The Habsburgs*

Charles v inherited an empire on a scale unmatched by any monarch of his generation. Born in 1500 and raised in Brussels, he became duke of Burgundy at fifteen, king of Spain at sixteen and Holy Roman Emperor at nineteen, ruling territories that stretched across Europe and the Americas. This biography follows his efforts to govern a vast and diverse collection of lands during an age of religious upheaval, war and imperial expansion. Jean Andrews presents a nuanced portrait of a conscientious monarch who sought compromise as often as conquest, giving particular attention to Charles's lifelong struggle with physical disability, his reliance on family networks and the financial pressures that shaped his reign. His story illuminates the challenges of ruling a global empire before the modern age.

Jean Andrews is Associate Professor in Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies at the University of Nottingham. She is the author of *Painting and Devotion in Golden Age Iberia: Luis de Morales* (2020).

A portrait of empire, disability and power in Europe

RENAISSANCE LIVES
March 2027 • History/ Biography
ISBN 978 1 83639 346 7
216 × 138 mm • 232 pp
34 illustrations, 30 in colour
Hardback • £18.95/$26
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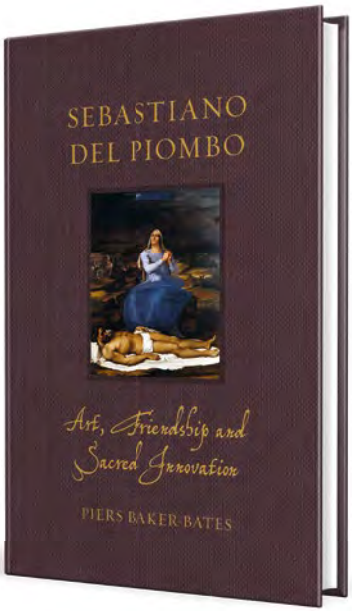
Sebastiano del Piombo

Art, Friendship and Sacred Innovation

Piers Baker-Bates



Sebastiano del Piombo was one of the most accomplished and innovative artists of the Italian Renaissance, yet his achievements have long been overshadowed by his friendship and collaboration with Michelangelo. This accessible and up-to-date account of Sebastiano del Piombo's life and work offers a fresh reassessment of an artist whose paintings rank among the masterpieces of sixteenth-century art. From Venice to Rome and beyond to Spain, the book traces his career, examining celebrated works such as *The Raising of Lazarus* while revealing the distinctive vision that set him apart from his contemporaries. It considers his pioneering experiments with painting on stone and the religious ideas that shaped his art. Sebastiano del Piombo emerges as a central figure of the Renaissance, deserving renewed attention in his own right.

Piers Baker-Bates is Visiting Research Associate at the Open University. His books include *Sebastiano del Piombo and the World of Spanish Rome* (2016) and *Artistic Exchanges between Spain and Italy, 1516–1621* (2024).

A fresh reassessment of a neglected master of the Italian Renaissance

RENAISSANCE LIVES
May 2027 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 362 7
216 × 138 mm • 280 pp
66 illustrations, 60 in colour
Hardback • £18.95/$26
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Jan van Eyck within His Art

Alfred Acres

'A perfect introduction . . . this book has no rivals.'
– *Sixteenth Century Journal*

Jan van Eyck was one of the most inventive and influential artists in the entire European tradition. The phenomenal realism of his paintings, now six centuries old, still astounds observers today. But other dimensions of his work are just as original and absorbing. Unlike any earlier artist, Van Eyck infused his paintings with himself. In addition to portraying, reflecting and implying his own presence in a variety of works, he introduced his voice, hand and mind in an array of inscriptions, signatures and even a personal motto. Incorporating a wealth of new research and recent discoveries within an exploration of the paintings themselves, this book reveals how profoundly Van Eyck transformed the idea of what an artist could be.

Alfred Acres is the Wright Family Associate Professor of Art History at Georgetown University, Washington, DC, and the author of *Renaissance Invention and the Haunted Infancy* (2013).

A new focus on the inventive and influential artist Jan van Eyck

RENAISSANCE LIVES
January 2027 • Art
ISBN 978 1 83639 323 8
216 × 138 mm • 240 pp
63 illustrations, 59 in colour
Paperback • £14.95/$24
ebook 978 1 78914 811 4
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The Minoans

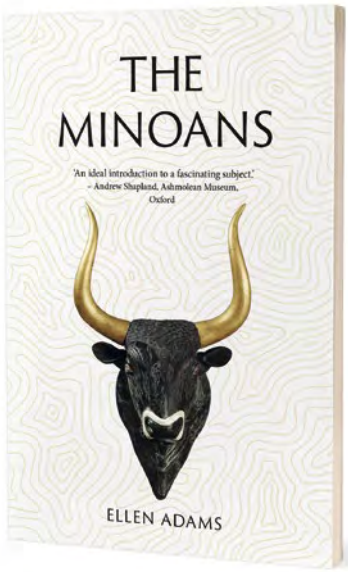
Lost Civilizations

Ellen Adams

'Lively, informative and thought-provoking.' – Nicoletta Momigliano, Professor of Aegean Studies, University of Bristol

Bronze Age Crete stands as one the most extensively explored sites by archaeologists, yet the island maintains an air of labyrinthian 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, exquisite gold and ivory artworks, unique and powerful depictions of women and advanced urban engineering, including flushing toilets, this ancient civilization had remarkably modern elements and has influenced Western culture since its discovery. 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
April 2027 • History/Archaeology
ISBN 978 1 83639 351 1
216 × 138 mm • 200 pp
66 illustrations, 43 in colour
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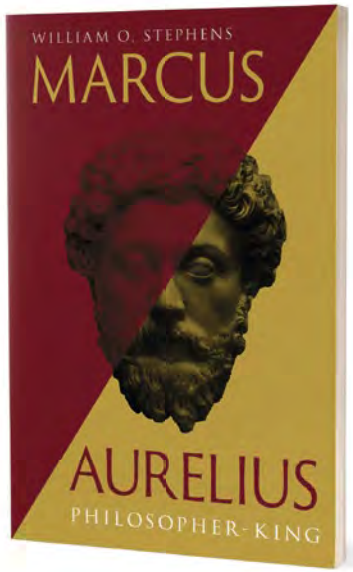
Marcus Aurelius

Philosopher-King

William O. Stephens



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William O. Stephens is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Creighton University. His books include *Epictetus's 'Encheiridion': A New Translation and Guide to Stoic Ethics* (with Scott Aikin, 2023) and *Marcus Aurelius: A Guide for the Perplexed* (2012).

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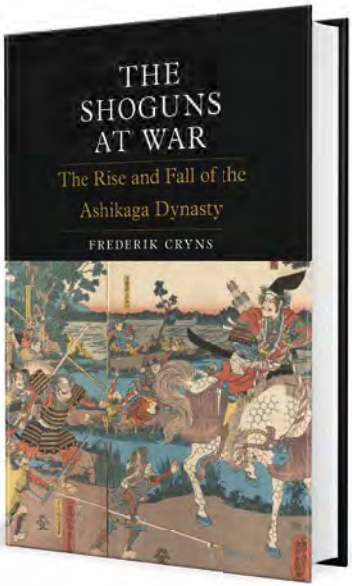

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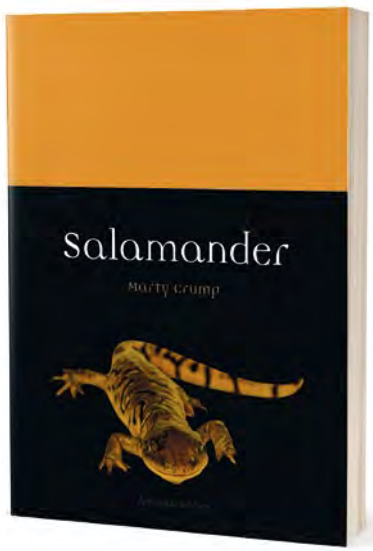

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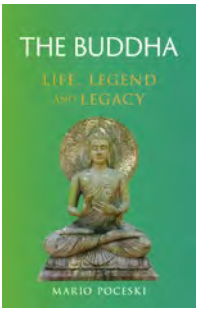

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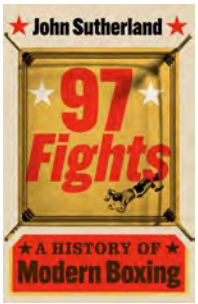

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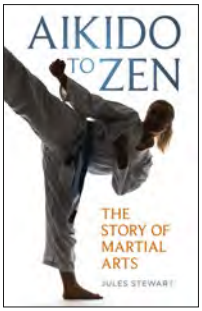

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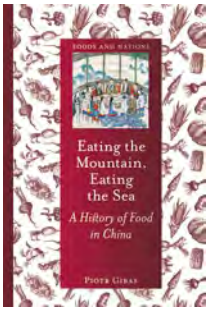

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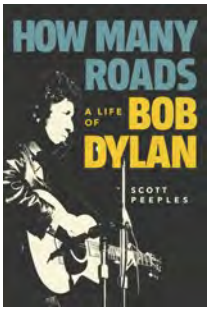

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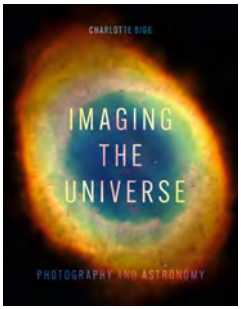

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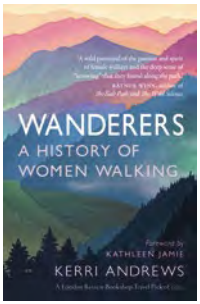

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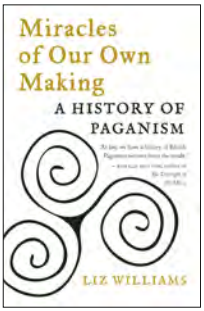

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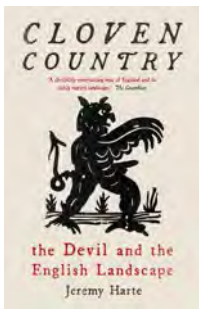

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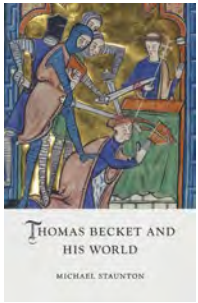

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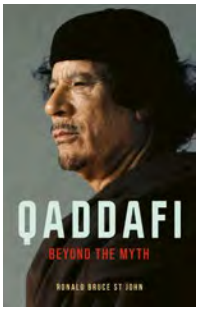

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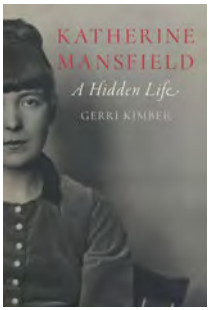

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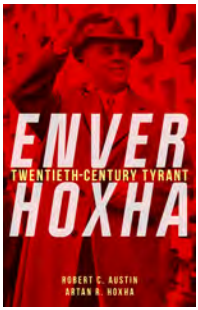

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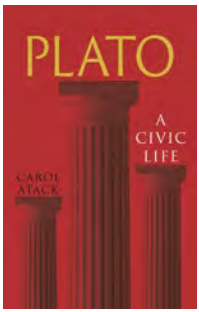

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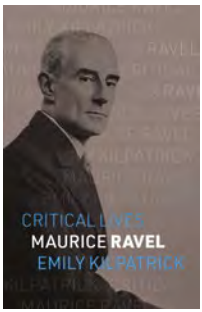

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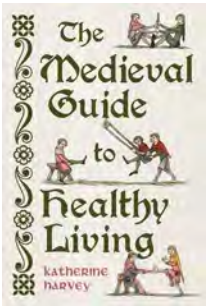

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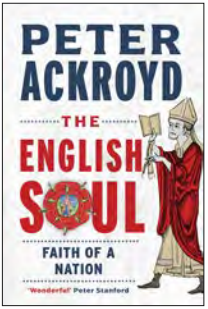

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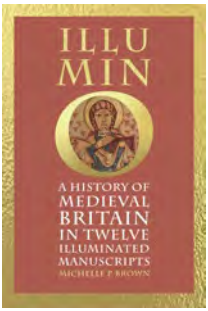

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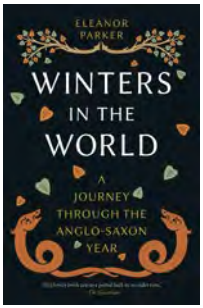

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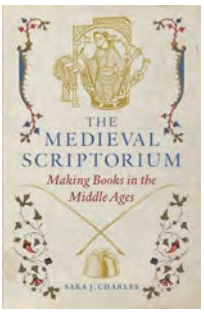

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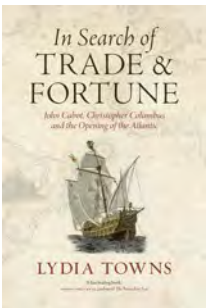

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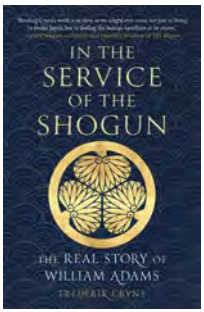

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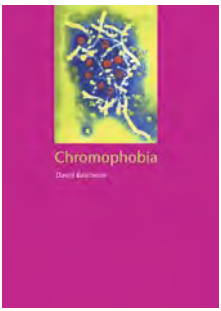

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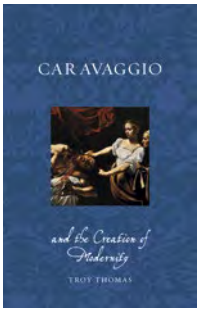

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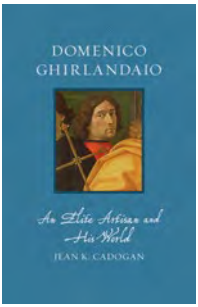

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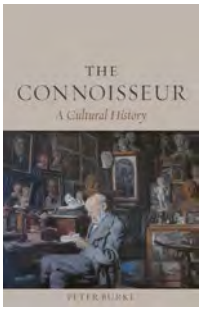

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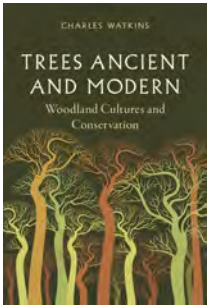

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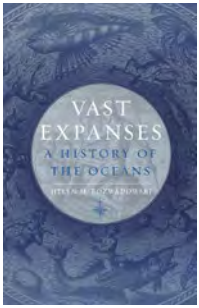

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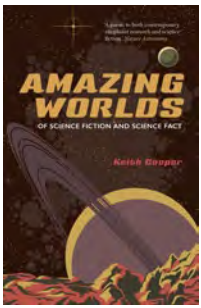

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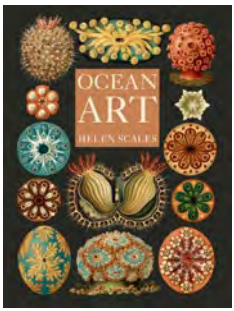

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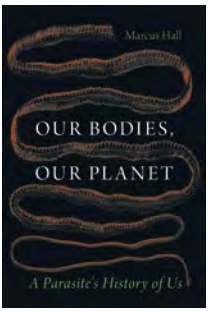

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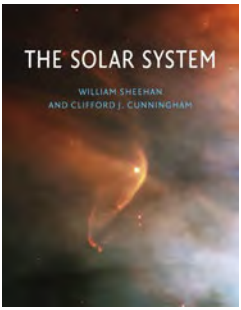

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