

ARTNEWS Reads 2013

THE NINTH ANNUAL BOOK LIST

Tom Ferguson

Cecelia Kane

Elyse Defoor

Robert Cheatham

Vicki Bethel

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Jena Sibille

Patty Nelson Merrifield

Jon Ciliberto

Diane Hause

Susan Todd-Raque

Lisa Alembik

Jimmy Lo

QUOTE OFFERED BY SUSAN CIPCIC IN 2012 APPROPRIATE ENOUGH TO INCLUDE AGAIN:

From *Being There* by Robert D. Kaplan

"Travel is like a good, challenging book: it demands presentness---the ability to live completely in the moment, absorbed by the words or vision of reality before you. And like serious reading itself, travel has become an act of resistance against the distractions of the electronic age, and against all the worries that weigh us down, thanks to that age. A good book deserves to be finished, just as a haunting landscape tempts further experience of it. Travel and serious reading, because they demand sustained focus, stand athwart the non-existent attention spans that deface our current time on Earth."

Tom Ferguson

2013 (seems like a lot maybe but I don't have a TV)

Crime Fiction

Chris Ewan, *The Good Thief's Guide to Berlin, Paris*, another title not part of that series, more recent

David Ignatious, two well-written novels but too obviously pro-Israel (Chomsky cites him as establishment propagandist for Washington Post)

John Harvey, short stories & novels set in Great Britain – Good Bait

Peter Robinson, set in Great Britain

Jo Nesbo, set in Norway

Camilla Lackberg, set in Sweden, *The Stranger*

Denise Mina, set in Scotland

Ruth Rendell, Gr. Br.

John Lawton, Gr. Br. *Old Flames*

Scott Turow, lawyer stuff like Grisham but better

David Baldacci, *Absolute Power*, *Total Control*

Reginald Hill, one of the best from book 1 in 1971, d. 2011

Donold Westlake, *Bad News* (now i've read them all & he died last year so... the only crime fiction I re-read is George V. Higgins)

Novels

Dickens, *Hard Times*

Faulkner, *Light in August*

P.D. Wodehouse, collection of Cheeves/Wooster & other stories)

plus the “new” one, written very much in the style by Sebastian

Faulks, *Jeeves & the Wedding Bells*

Ian McEwan *Sweet Tooth*

Non-fiction

David Foster Wallace, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*

David Foster Wallace, *Infinite Jest* (but only 100 pages)

Noam Chomsky, *Imperial Ambitions*,

Michael Parenti, *The Assassination of Julius Caesar*

Michael Parenti, *Against Empire*

Arundhati Roy, *War Talk* (not all)

Steve Coll, *Private Empire*, Exxon-Mobile and U.S. Power

Winston Groom, *Shiloh*, 1862

Rachel Maddow, *Drift*

James Howard Kunstler, *Too Much Magic*

Oliver Stone et al, *The Untold History of the U.S.*

Salman Rushdie, *Joseph Anton*

Miko Peled, *The General's Son* (actually only attended his talk on the book)

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John Dean, *Worse Than Watergate*

Eckhart Tolle, *A New Earth, The Power of Now* & many short youtube talks (I keep re-reading)

Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*

Michael Parenti, *The Face of Imperialism*

David Sedaris, *Naked, When You are Engulfed in Flames*

James Thurber, *Thurber on Crime*

Tina Fey, *Bossypants*

Barbara Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior*

Howard Zinn, *The 20th Century*

John Grisham, *Innocent*

Cecelia Kane

Here's my book list for 2013 favorites:

A Death in the Family-Karl Ove Knausgaard

The Golden Notebook-Doris Lessing

A High Wind in Jamaica-Richard Hughes

The Lathe of Heaven-Ursula LeGuin

The City-China Mieville

Dissident Gardens-Jonathan Lethem

The Tenth of December-George Saunders (Collection of Short Stories)

Tinkers-Paul Harding

Brazen Throats-Bill Nixon

Tao Te Ching-Lao Tsu (New translation by Ursula Le Guin)

Gilead-Marilynne Robinson

Elyse Defoor

Both of these books meant the most to me this year. I have underlined too many pages to ever let anyone borrow them.

"The Language of Flowers" by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

"Bad Boy: My Life On and Off the Canvas" by Eric Fischl and Michael Stone

Robert Cheatham

Time seems to be compressing or contracting, can't tell which or when exactly I read some of these.

1. Number one because most recent is the second book of Allen Shelton, called *Where the North Sea Meets Alabama*. I was so impressed with his first book called *Dream Worlds of Alabama*, that I was anxious to read this one. It was so interesting I called him up cold and he was very gracious to

attend a FORT@/da party for him to do a reading as he was coming from Buffalo NY to Athens GA---about, sort of, an Athens artist who committed suicide.. Very soothing southern/non-southern but with delicious nugget of Walter Benjamin within also.

2. *Zona*, Geoff Dyer. I had heard much about essayist Dyer but upon seeing that he had written a book on the film *Stalker* by Andrei Tarkovsky, I had to read it. Beautifully written meditation on the film and not really a technical 'film appreciation' sort of thing.

3. *Puppet: An Essay on Uncanny Life*, Kenneth Gross. Having facilitated a book of essays called *The Doll Universe* how I could not read this? A numinous account of, as the subtitle says, the uncanny pull that the double of human life, the puppet, has on us. Fascinating.

4. *A Time for Everything*, Karl Ove Knausgaard. Knausgaard is more known for a series of Proustian portraits of his life minutely examined, called *My Struggle*. I have the first volume which I have yet to read, but I have read I guess a side novel, called *A Time For Everything* and is apparently the story told of the first books of the bible as a novel but that shouldn't scare you away. I wouldn't consider it a religious book. It's not experimental or anything but it held an odd power over me even though I never quite finished it. But it's still on the stack.

5. *Derrida, Benoit Peeters*. A very long book on deceased French philosopher which is really the first true biography. I guess a specialized piece of literature but a fascinating account of his life and struggles. Sort of a sad book actually.

6. *Ceasing to Be Human*, Gerald L. Bruns. Although his books are always about some issues or authors in so called Continental Philosophy they have a clarity that is sometimes not in the primary texts (I don't consider difficult writing a problem but some folks hate and are suspicious of it). Deals with issues of identity and non-identity through, viz, Foucault, Derrida, Blanchot, etc:

"So here we are again at a border crossing: the anomalous space-between in which no one is anything, neither human nor nonhuman but inhuman or ahuman—perhaps one could also say “prehuman” or (as

many now say) “posthuman”: anyway, without horizons or signposts of any kind.”

If you like that sort of thing, you'll like this sort of thing.

7. *Operation Trojan Horse*, John Keel. An older book, written in the mid-sixties and a different like of UFO book (yes, that again); but then John Keel wasn't your typical UFO nut assuming that phrase even makes any sense.

8. *Church and Kingdom*, Giorgio Agamben. Ok, I read anything by Agamben, ok? This one is a very short book, a jeremiad against the Church as it is for not getting out of the way of things and letting stuff happen. more than that of course. Interesting for onlookers and innocent bystanders.

9. *Wild Materialism: The Ethic of Terror and the Modern Republic*, Jacques Lezra. Here's one of those difficult books but the title drew me in as well as an attempt to see how terror is part of the modern republic:

' “The modern experience of ‘terror’ is the residue, or marks the reemergence, of an incomplete desacralization of the ‘terror’ invested in, and provoked by, the sovereign body in premodernity.” My goal is to provide an answer on a different level to these two questions: What form of political association is appropriate to the smoothed, radically deterritorialized landscape of the postnational age? How does ethico-political life learn to guard terror? What I call the modern republic—Sadean, terrible—is the answer I propose to the first question; as an answer to the second, I suggest the methodological principle this book seeks to outline and to practice: a wild materialism, nondialectical, historical, aleatory.'

10. *New Medium*, Craig Dworkin. A book I have just started and have great hope for, ostensibly art criticism, but is difficult going at the moment...hasn't yet started to breathe for me. But I like the language.

11. *Wisdom as Practice*, Peter Sloterdijk. A great, easy to read book, deceptively profound. Not QUITE what the topic would indicate.

12. *Wittgenstein's Mistress*, Steven Moore. Sort of a recursive experimental novel that's been around but which I'm just getting to. Is it really about Wittgenstein's mistress?

13. *Late Kant: Towards Another Earth*, Peter Fenves. About a quixotic comment Kant made in his final years, concerning another race which will supersede this human one.

14. *Death's Following: Mediocrity, Dirtiness, Adulthood, Literature*, John Limon. I had read another book by Limon called *Standup Comedy in Theory*. Hard to describe in few words. But just read the title again and you have it . sort of. From the back cover:

"Mediocrity is the privileged position for previewing death, in Limon's opinion: practice for being forgotten".

plus a ton of others I won't bore you with, which I seem to be interminably reading always, going back to, fiddling with, reading the intro or prologue or what ever, my own little paper web with a couple or three themes woven through like that zig zag part of the web in the garden spider, waiting for some more nibbles off of another paper/pixeled chunk.

Vicki Bethel

Rogue Island by Bruce De Silva

A murder mystery set in Providence, Rhode Island. I used to live there so I loved all the local color.

All the King's Men by Robert Penn Warren

A classic and for good reason. This is the second or third time I've read it. Beautifully written.

The Northern Clemency by Philip Hensher
Fiction about families in Sheffield during the Thatcher era.

A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush by Eric Newby
Nonfiction account of the author and a friend going mountain climbing in Afghanistan in the 1950s. They were woefully inexperienced and much of it is a comedy of errors. Also very interesting peek into tribal life in that part of the world - especially in light of our country's recent experiences there.

The Lost Painting by Jonathan Harr
Nonfiction account of finding a lost Caravaggio painting. It reads like a mystery novel, but it's all real.

Pandra Williams

Emily Dickinson The Gorgeous Nothings
ed. Werner, Bervin
New Directions

Emily Dickinson's friends and family knew she wrote some verse; a dozen or so poems were published while she was alive. Someone close might get a poem in a letter or attached to a bouquet of flowers. A lot of people have always dabbled in verse.

After Emily's death in 1886, Lavinia Dickinson went into her sister's room to carry out her request to burn all her correspondence. During this painful rummage she opened a trunk and found roughly forty neatly hand-bound books of manuscript. One thousand eight hundred or so poems were neatly inscribed within: no one knew. The trunk also contained other "loose papers." Lavinia did not burn these.

Some of those "loose papers" are the peculiar and wonderful envelope poems that Lavinia chose not to burn. There are 52 envelope manuscripts depicted in this beautifully bound book. It could be called a picture book, it can be called a facsimile, but these envelopes are the surfaces Emily Dickinson

decided to write on in the last several years of her life. Not a neatly bound transcription from a draft; this was her final format. How else should we read these poems?

These repurposed, flattened, sliced and torn envelopes cease to be able to contain anything but stamps, marks and words. Writing alternately flows and sprawls across these odd, sometimes clumsy paper shapes. The paper is stained or rough and brown or soft and white with old adhesive gum evident on some flaps. Poems start, cross out, continue upside down on a different corner. Sometimes the writing is almost illegible, hurried, sometimes not. The whys and wherefores of Emily Dickinson are enigmatic; these amazing manuscripts are a puzzling pleasure to linger over.

The Seed Underground A Growing Revolution to Save Food

by Janisse Ray
Chelsea Green

In 1903 7,260 varieties of food, vegetables and grain, were being grown in the United States. One hundred years later in 2004, only 430 varieties of seed were available commercially, a 94% drop in food diversity. Accelerating and exacerbating this situation, Dow, Monsanto and the rest of the enormous Biotech/Big Ag machine are buying up every little independent seed company that they can. Buying out diverse genetics in order to create enormous, vapid sameness.

There is another, non-GMO, side of the coin. Gardeners and farmers across the country are searching out old varieties hiding out in small towns and elderly gardener's freezers, and doing their best to bring them back.

Stubborn and determined individuals with personal vision fighting for food with flavor and sustenance, wow.

The author of "Ecology of a Cracker Childhood," Janisse Ray interviews farmers and gardeners who have made it their business to be the "anti-Dow," to find and foster the endangered genetics represented by heirloom food varieties. Her visits to various projects, farms and amazing gardens around the US are lovingly penned and easy to read. Ms. Ray lays the historic context for today's food quandary, and she has a point. I don't know about you, but I like a tomato with sass, and it ain't Monsanto and Big Ag's latest pale and mealy offering.

A short list of Books for the Artist/Naturalists amongst us:

It was an AMAZING year for mushrooms. My husband Mike and I picked pounds and pounds of chanterelles out of our woods this year. For those of you who would like a guidebook that doesn't suck, we have a couple of recommendations:

A Field Guide to Southern Mushrooms

Nancy Smith Weber
Alexander H. Smith
University of Michigan

This field guide may not have as many photos as the Audubon guide, but both Mike and I think that the information is clearer and more concise. It is also small enough to carry around on a day's ramble.

Another 'shroom book, not so easy to carry about, but really good:

Mushrooms of North America

by Roger Phillips
Little Brown and Company

This book is much more comprehensive species-wise than the previous book, but is too large to pack on a hike, at least I wouldn't want to. Roger Phillips is a renowned mycologist and gives excellent information with several different photographic views to help ID an errant fungus.

The Natural Communities of Georgia

Leslie Edwards, Jonathan Ambrose, L. Katherine Kirkman
The University of Georgia Press

This is a big fat volume, 678 pages, with lots of pictures and fairly broad descriptions of the various ecosystems that exist in Georgia. Georgia is a big state, with a wide variety of terrains from the Blue Ridge Mountains in the northwest, through the hilly granitic terrain of the Central Piedmont to the flat and sandy Coastal Plains. All of these varied habitats have resulted in an amazing amount of biodiversity.

If you hike or camp, and you wonder about the forest or dunes surrounding you, this book will fill in the blanks. Pretty pictures, too.

Allen Welty-Green

Lots of music bios:

Uptight - The Velvet Underground Story by Victor Brockris and Gerard Malanga (oddly enough, I finished this one week before Lou Reed passed away)

Tony Iommi - *Iron Man* (he was actually LESS articulate than I might have thought!)

How Music Works - David Byrne (every bit as articulate as I might have thought, and very ADD)

Abbey Road to Ziggy Stardust - Ken Scott (maybe the most influential engineer/producer of his era).

and a non- music book -

The Works - Anatomy of a City - Kate Ascher (all of the things you've wondered but never knew about urban infrastructure)

Don Dougan

This year has been very busy (day-job-wise) for me, and my reading has mostly been escapist fiction, with an emphasis on mysteries and (hard) science fiction. When I find an author I like I tend to search-out and acquire a number of their works and save-them-up for reading as a successive group whenever possible. The books that I have read which I consider to be just so-so or worse are not listed — only the six-star and better ones are included . . .

<i>title</i>	<i>author</i>	<i>edition date</i>
<i>The Blood Doctor</i>	Barbara Vine (aka Ruth Rendell)	2002

a perennial favorite author, Carl Hiaasen over-the-top Florida books only recently acquired:

<i>Hoot</i>	Carl Hiaasen	2002
<i>Star Island</i>	Carl Hiaasen	2010
<i>Proteus Combined</i>	Charles Sheffield	1994
<i>Space Lords</i>	Cordwainer Smith	1965

another perennial favorite author Donna Leon, with her wonderfully evocative of Venice mysteries (*really! Venice becomes a character*) with Commissario Brunetti — books recently acquired:

<i>Through a Glass, Darkly</i>	Donna Leon	2006
<i>The Girl of His Dreams</i>	Donna Leon	2008
<i>A Question of Belief</i>	Donna Leon	2010

perennial favorite author, Dorothy Sayers — all 12 of her Lord Peter Wimsey books were reread in chronological order this year:

all the Lord Peter Wimsey series	Dorothy Sayers	1923-1940 (1961-1965 editions)
<i>Sentinels from Space</i>	Eric Frank Russell Frederick Pohl & Jack Williamson	1953 (1986 edition)
<i>Farthest Star</i>	Frederick Pohl & Jack Williamson	1975
<i>Wall Around a Star</i>	Williamson	1983
<i>Red Dwarf: Infinity Welcomes Careful Drivers</i>	Grant Naylor	1992
<i>Red Dwarf: Better Than Life</i>	Grant Naylor	1993

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a recently-found author, Hennig Mankell — with his troubled protagonist Kurt Wallendar series of books:

<i>Faceless Killers</i>	Henning Mankell	2003
<i>The White Lioness</i>	Henning Mankell	2003
<i>The Dogs of Riga</i>	Henning Mankell	2004
<i>Return of the Dancing Master</i>	Henning Mankell	2005
<i>Before the Frost</i>	Henning Mankell	2006
<i>The Man from Beijing</i>	Henning Mankell	2010
<i>The Fifth Woman</i>	Henning Mankell	2011
<i>The Troubled Man</i>	Henning Mankell	2011

another perennial favorite author, Ian Rankin (*especially enjoy his flawed protagonist Rebus series*) — books only recently acquired:

<i>Watchman</i>	Ian Rankin	1988
<i>Dead Souls</i>	Ian Rankin	1999
<i>The Falls</i>	Ian Rankin	2000

another perennial favorite author, Michael Connelly, (*another flawed protagonist*) books only recently acquired:

<i>The Closer</i>	Michael Connelly	2005
<i>The Black Box</i>	Michael Connelly	2012

a recently-found author, some of which are a series of books, some one-offs (gotta admit I like the series better):

<i>Birdman</i>	Mo Hayder	2000
<i>The Treatment</i>	Mo Hayder	2001
<i>The Devil of Nanking</i>	Mo Hayder	2004
<i>Pig Island</i>	Mo Hayder	2006
<i>Ritual</i>	Mo Hayder	2008
<i>Skin</i>	Mo Hayder	2009
<i>Gone</i>	Mo Hayder	2010

Pandora's Star	Peter F. Hamilton	2004
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another perennial favorite author, R.D.Wingfield, a book in his Inspector Frost series only recently acquired:

<i>A Killing Frost</i>	R.D.Wingfield	2008
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<i>Let's Kill Constance</i>	Ray Bradbury	2004
Ship of Fools	Richard Paul Russo	2002

the only non-fiction to make my list:

Krakatoa	Simon Winchester	2004
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another perennial favorite author, Steven Saylor, books about or set-in a meticulously-researched ancient Rome.

Roma and Empire tell the story of Rome from it's virtually pre-historic beginnings through to the death of Emperor Hadrian through the successive members of a single family. The others are from his '*Gordianus The Finder*' series of mysteries

A Gladiator Only Dies Once	Steven Saylor	2005
Roma	Steven Saylor	2007
The Triumph of Caesar	Steven Saylor	2009
Empire	Steven Saylor	2010
The Seven Wonders	Steven Saylor	2012
Murphy's Gambit	Syne Mitchell	2000
Technogenesis	Syne Mitchell	2002
The Last Mortal Man	Syne Mitchell	2006

Ed Hall

Because I spent most of the year reading manuscripts for the anthology Bill Campbell (the novelist, not the ex-mayor) and I just published, I read one novel in 2013: *The Magicians* by Lev Grossman, a hard-nosed, sex-fraught high fantasy (yes, I know what an oxymoron that phrase seems to represent) about a school for wizards. Is it like Harry Potter? I must confess, I have no idea. It's a damn good book that held onto me and that explored the poetry of genre. Wait till you see what Lev does with the name *Pangborn*, for example. I'm looking forward to its sequel, *The Magician King*.

Thomas Deans

Here are a few that come quickly to mind--to be a good sport and participate:

1. **Barbara Pym: *A Glass of Blessings*.** Lark's tongue to be sure, but for Pym fans, at least, a window into post-war Britain seen through the eyes of an upper-middle-class protagonist with high-Anglican leanings (like most Pym).
2. **Evie Wyld: *All the Birds, Singing*.** The Un-Barbara-Pym. A stunning, tersely told, gritty second novel by this brilliant young British author (recently featured in the NY Times as one of Granta's top talents). The novel simultaneously moves forward (on a lonely island off the English coast) and backward (in the Australian outback). The protagonist, a female sheep-shearer, is a character both sympathetic and profoundly disturbing. (If you haven't read Wyld's prize-winning debut novel, *After the Fire, A Still, Small Voice*, about several generations of Australian men "not talking to each other," I highly recommend it.)
3. **Lion Feuchtwanger: *The Oppermans* (Die Geschwister Opperman).** A chilling story of a prominent Jewish family in Berlin destroyed by National Socialism and the Nazi's sudden takeover of power. More disturbing still: Feuchtwanger's novel was published in 1933 (!), soon after Hitler's assumption of power. He saw the future with unnerving clarity. Stripped of his German citizenship while abroad, Feuchtwanger was on Nazis' 10-most-wanted list. His internment in France (1940) and his dramatic escape to the USA through the personal covert intervention of Eleanor Roosevelt is told in another book:
4. **Lion Feuchtwanger: *The Devil in France: My Encounter with Him in the Summer of 1940*.** (Der Teufel in Frankreich). Little known in the USA, Feuchtwanger is widely read in Germany and northern Europe where he is greatly admired, for both content and style. He was one of the most outspoken of anti-Nazi writers and intellectuals. His novels and were best sellers and a number were made into films. His success allowed Feuchtwanger to live comfortably in California in a villa by the sea for the

rest of his life, following his arrival in 1940. Today, his home, Villa Aurora, offers up to 12 fellowships, of three months each, to artists working in film, literature, composition and the arts. His papers are in the USC library.

Also read, *The Jew Suess* (his most influential early novel), *Success [Erfolg]*, and *The Ugly Duchess*.

5. Robert Craft: *Stravinsky: Glimpses of a Life*. A grab-bag of articles by Stravinsky's Boswell, Robert Craft. As with all Craft's writings, beautifully crafted (cheap pun not entirely intended). Part anecdote, part analysis, part outright gossip, but at least based on fact. Sheds some interesting light on the composer's habits, superstitions, and personal life (though we've read much of it before). What was new to me was Stravinsky's relationship to his (often-ignored) first wife and children, and the children's relationship to their stepmother, the composer's second wife, Vera. No one, it seems--and especially the greatest artists--escapes dysfunction.

That's a few.

Happy Holidays. Happy Reading.

One further must-read book. (Ed. Note—6.)

"I Will Bear Witness: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer, 1933-1945"

These secret diaries of the Nazi years by a noted Dresden-based academic, provide a shattering look into the terrors of daily life within the Third Reich. Klemperer was an assimilated Jew, married to a Gentile. Because of this "mixed marriage," he was exempt from deportation almost to the end of the war, when orders came for "re-settlement" of Jews in mixed marriages. He was saved only by the fire-bombing of Dresden just days before he was to report to the Gestapo. The diaries, written on scraps of paper and smuggled by his wife to a complicit friend on the outskirts of Dresden, would have meant death, if discovered. He paints a graphic picture of the gradual tightening of the Nazi noose through increasingly stringent and humiliating edicts: first the loss of his university position, then the loss of library privileges, of the right to own a typewriter, drive a car, buy newspapers. Confiscation of his home and relocation to a "Jews House," with many other

occupants, who slowly disappear from the scene, along with virtually all of Dresden's Jewish community--with whom, as a practicing Lutheran, he'd had little contact. By the time he and his wife had decided to give up all they loved and emigrate, it was too late. Throughout the diaries, one sees the belief, or vain hope, that the Nazi regime would collapse, even before the start of the war--that a regime so unthinkable could long survive. The diaries also graphically paint the terror of non-Jews, many of whom risked their lives to perform even the most simple acts of kindness. He and his wife survived the fire-bombing (bending to light a cigarette from burning corpse, not realizing it) and spent several weeks on the run West, hoping to find the allied troops, before being discovered. Eventually, they returned to their home in Dresden suburb of Doelchen, which had miraculously survived the bombs. This book is unforgettable.

Peggy Dobbins

Novels Mike and I read out loud to each other this year:

Patricia Sprinkler. *Murder in Buckhead*. Just fine local cosy.

Kiran Desai. *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*. A great read. Funny.
Philosophic. India

Iain Sinclair. *Ghost Milk*. The guy can turn a phrase. Reminds me of Robert. About London Olympics . . . and other things. We kept putting it down for something lighter, tho we really "grok" him

Carl Hiaasen. Anything. Great story teller. Mystery, Florida real estate v Environment

That's all that pops in head quickly

Wendy Meyer

For grown ups: *Tom's River* by Dan Fagin - you will never drink tap water again

Lost Memory of Skin by Russell Banks

For tweens (and their parents): *Out of my Mind* by Sharon Draper and *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio

I'll second the Hiassen nomination, forgot all about that.

Any and all are fun reading, especially if you love South Florida or are wary of development.

My 11YO and I have been working our way through his young adult series (*Hoot!*, *Scat!*, *Flush!*) this year.....

Al Matthews

Hey lovely list! I love this occasion. I don't presume to recommend any longer but these are things I liked or else look forward to people talking with me about.

Return to the Postcolony : specters of colonialism in contemporary art. TJ Demos. <http://www.sternberg-press.com/?pageId=1415> .

Worthy Software Studies: A Lexicon. Matthew Fuller, ed. <http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/software-studies> . Pick and choose Muntadas on translation : paper BP/ MVDR : [intervention in the Mies

van der Rohe Pavilion]. Antoni Muntadas. Emory has this. Mies' archive and the odors nearby

War Games: A History of War on Paper. Philipp von Hilgers.

<http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/war-games> . Wittgenstein's war diaries (he was an artillery scout) as subtext

An Atlanta Poets Group Anthology: The Lattice Inside. UNO Press. ??

<http://www.amazon.com/An-Atlanta-Poets-Group-Anthology/dp/1608010643>

Livecode - self help:

Programming for Musicians and Digital Artists

<http://www.manning.com/kapur/> . I like Chuck now better than I had recently.

<<< stop >>>;

Livecode - self promotion

I am workshopping the livecode thing in Atlanta this spring if I'm lucky. I'll say something else about this on the artnews list.

Possibly Chuck will be the vehicle.

Chuck: <https://soundcloud.com/fatmilk/v/asdfghjkl9static> (using only the prefab samples.). I've actually run this particular version for two hours without issue.

Alternately Alex McLean's Tidal <http://yaxu.org/cp0x0d/> which I think is more work to learn and teach but probably more rewarding for dedicated performers.

Maybe in the "class" we'll install both or use one to investigate the other? If you're interested in any of this or you wish to offer perspective please say hello.

<<< go >>>;

Software!

For anyone ever jumping from the deep end into Haskell 2010

<http://www.haskell.org/haskellwiki/Haskell>,

Alex (1/3 of slub) recommends this, and he's right, it seems to me excellent for Haskell 98,

<http://www.amazon.com/Programming-Haskell-Graham-Hutton/dp/0521692695>

as is Learn You a Haskell for a Great Good <http://learnyouahaskell.com/>

Sara Schindel

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay by Michael Chabon

Marcia Wasserman

Of the books I've read this year, these are the ones I would recommend the most:

Swamplandia by Karen Russell. The premise sounds corny, but she creates a whole world in the Florida swamp that is mesmerizing and throws in a lot of commentary about the environmental disaster that is the Everglades. She just won a MacArthur genius grant.

The Warmth of the Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson. About the African-American diaspora from the south in the decades after the Civil War. An eye-opening account of Jim Crow years in the South.

A Field Guide to Getting Lost by Rebecca Solnit. Her essays focus on issues of environment, cultural history, and art criticism. Thoughtful writer.

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck. (Hey, I never read it.) Wow! Loved this book. Just read it. Things haven't changed that much.

Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. An engaging account of ordinary people living through the tragic Biafra civil war in the 60s. She also wrote *Americanah*, which I'm looking forward to reading, and was just put on the NYT best 10 list for 2013.

A Visit from the Goon Squad by Jennifer Egan. Smart and insightful. About the music business starting in the 70s and ending in the near future. But really a commentary on the soullessness of capitalism.

A Hologram for the King by Dave Eggers. Post-recession, hollowing out of American manufacturing base. Globalization, out-sourcing. Middle-aged guy trying to cope with economic (and personal) loss in Saudi Arabia while trying to close a deal. Liked, didn't love.

Buddhism with an Attitude by Alan Wallace.

Jena Sibille

A fabulous book was "The Round House" by Louise Erdrich

Also loved "The Stonecutter" by Camilla Lackberg

Patty Nelson Merrifield

Walter Potter's Curious World of Taxidermy, Dr. Pat Morris with Joanna Ebenstein, Constable 2013. An incredible collection of photographs that celebrate and preserve what once was a strange, but beloved Victorian museum's collection of fantastical work by amateur taxidermist, Walter Potter.

Buried in Books, A Reader's Anthology, Julie Rugg, Frances Lincoln Ltd, 2010. With chapters titled, 'Treat personal book recommendations with the suspicion they deserve,' and 'The books that you read were all I loved you for,' this anthology is both a witty friend and a reliable resource. (Ed. Note—Love this!!)

1Q84, Haruki Murakami, Knopf 2011. Finally got over my hesitation to read this book just last summer, not because it is a *huge* book (originally published in Japan in 3 separate volumes), but because I loved Murakami's *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* so much and didn't want to be disappointed. I was not; I think I loved this beautiful, imaginative novel even more.

Jon Ciliberto

I had school more or less non-stop from January to December 2013, thus not too much time for extra-curricular reading.

Buddhist Art

Faces of Compassion: Classic Bodhisattva Archetypes and Their Modern Expression — An Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism, by Taigen Dan Leighton

Religious art's purpose is, obviously, religious. *Faces of Compassion*, by Zen teacher Taigen Dan Leighton approaches iconography from this

direction, and moves from the often distanced, scientific approach to images commonly found in volumes on Buddhist art to engaging directly the religious efficacy of observing and using images. Images in Buddhist art are a means, not an end. His approach is fresh, and of great usefulness to modern readers: by seeking for archetypes in real, familiar, modern day individuals, he provides those seeking models for a compassionate live ready and understandable guides. Full review at <http://buddhistartnews.wordpress.com/2013/10/31/book-review-faces-of-compassion/>

The Buddha and Dr. Führer: An Archaeological Scandal, by Charles Allen

Buddhist art began with relics: bits of hair and bone purportedly from the Buddha or other figures that gave practitioners something on which to focus, or acted as talismans or objects of veneration. There are myriad things to say about the European explorers, military men, colonial administrators, and scholars who unearthed the antiquities of Egypt, Palestine, India, et al... certainly they were industrious! As much as they uncovered the past, they wrote it. This book is about one particular excavation, in 1898, of a reliquary that was trumpeted as holding the ashes of the historical Buddha himself. The discovery soon became the source of controversy and confusion when a German archaeologist (Dr. Führer), who became associated with the find, was involved a separate archaeological scandal, tainting the 1898 discovery. "Führer wanted," writes Allen, "to believe that the sacred landscape explored [...] in the fifth and seventh centuries still existed in that same idealized form in the last decade of the 19th century. So strongly did he believe this that he sought to make it so." Allen has written a very detailed book, with quite a bit of background history.

From Stone to Flesh: A short history of the Buddha, by Donald S. Lopez (ed.)

I am still reading it. A biography of the biography of the Buddha. Lopez is the key scholar for seeing how Buddhist history was written: by western scholars, many of whom exerted their own views on how that history should be read, based on individual predilections. This book meticulously relates the various biographies of the Buddha given to the West.

Thawan Duchanee: Modern Buddhist Artist, by Russell Marcus

A small volume on the contemporary Thai artist who works in with Buddhist themes, combining traditional and modern artist forms. The book is not a scholarly appraisal, but rather a praising presentation of the artist's works.

Law

There is little reason or time for reading secondary materials in law school. Professors acknowledge that journal articles are mostly useless for students (or for anyone else, c.f., Rodell, Fred, "Goodbye to Law Reviews" (1936). Faculty Scholarship Series. Paper 2762.

http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3794&context=fss_papers, and more recently: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/22/us/law-scholarships-lackluster-reviews.html>). I did, however, do a little reading out of curiosity inspired about Constitutional law:

Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution, by Forrest McDonald

It is needless to say that the academic battles over what the people who founded this country were thinking are thick and complicated. This volume by "one of the foremost historians of the Constitutional and early national period" argues, moderately, against the "ideological" school for its "fail[ure] to distinguish among the several kinds of republicanism that were espoused by various Americans, which by and large reflected regionally different social and economic norms." The book is dense with primary source material, but very skillfully written.

The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787, Vol II & III, by Max Farrad (ed.)

The four volumes in this series gather the vast range of materials written by the participants to the Constitutional Convention.

A Matter of Interpretation: Federal Courts and the Law, by Antonin Scalia, Amy Gutmann, et al

Judges interpret laws. The question of what interpretation actually is, and how or whether judges ought to go about it, is explored here in the form of an essay by Justice Scalia and responding essays by several scholars in the field. Scalia, say what you will about his weird and crazy ideas (e.g., that the Devil exists and that the reason we don't see as much demonic possession as compared to the old days is that the Devil has gotten 'wilier'

[\[http://www.abajournal.com/news/article/scalia_the_devil_is_getting_wilier_and_society_is_getting_coarser\]](http://www.abajournal.com/news/article/scalia_the_devil_is_getting_wilier_and_society_is_getting_coarser)), Scalia is a brilliant thinker -- reading SCOTUS opinions, his are almost always the best-reasoned. The trouble I have with his views in this volume is: he somehow fails to see that his non-interpretative approach is an interpretation nonetheless, i.e., it is impossible to read and not interpret. They may be someone else's words on the page, but my mind has to form the ideas. How I do that -- by reference to what understandings, memories, fears, desires—is interpretation. Any claim that there is an originalist way to read the Constitution (e.g.) reveals a person who believes he or she can approach old text and come away believing no interpretation is occurring. It is: 'my way is right, and so it isn't really MY way, it is THE way.'

Math

The History of the Calculus and its Conceptual Development, by Carl B. Boyer
A really wonderful mathematical history.

Fiction

The Adventures of Alyx, Joanna Russ

I am a huge HUGE fan of Fritz Leiber. His stylish, literate writing style, combined with a strong storyteller's charm, really appeal. I'd heard on several occasions over the years a character (Alyx, a woman thief and adventurer) who appeared by name in a couple of Leiber's "Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser" stories was actually another writer's. This imprimatur by Leiber motivated me to seeking out "The Adventures of Alyx". This is a fantastic piece of writing, an example of what genre writing can achieve by hewing true to the format's avenues of imaginative exploration by expanding it not just to Fantastic Worlds, but to the inner life of human beings. (C.f., James Tiptree, Jr.,

Theodore Sturgeon.) The book gathers short and long stories, framed around sword and sorcery/science fantasy themes, but in fact much wider ranging excursions, and more often very little about swords or fights or magic or aliens. I am going to scan a passage from one of the stories (in which the titular character has hooked up for a spell with Bluebeard, the pirate). I thought this description of sea battles amazing, not romantic or heroic, but rather poetic and sensual and painterly:

<http://www.jonciliberto.com/russ.jpg>

The First Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, the Unbeliever (Lord Foul's Bane, The Illearth War, The Power that Preserves), by Stephen R. Donaldson

Like so many others, after reading *The Lord of the Rings* I was thirsty for more! The Covenant saga appeared not long after I first read Tolkien. It seemed very weird to me back then, and certainly not another entry into a Middle Earth-ish place. Re-reading these books 30 or so years later, I felt the same frustration with the anti-hero -- why can't he just get OVER the unbelief! -- and also the at times annoyingly purple prose. But also, I really appreciated the innovative idea that a person from our world, one in which the disconnect from (and war on) the natural world, would feel completely disoriented in a place where nature is immediately visible, palpably to the senses and mind. The intoxication of that experience nearly drives Thomas Covenant mad, and certainly explains his often bizarre behaviour in *The Land*.

Stories & Early Novels, by Raymond Chandler. A smart, painterly writer.

Arcadia, by Sir Philip Sydney.

I didn't read it. I had to find out something about *Arcadia* this summer. Excellent introduction and I did read parts of it. There wasn't time for a dip into Elizabethan literature.

The Pleasure of My Company, by Steve Martin

A comedic novel about a (seemingly) autistic protagonist. As someone who grew up on Martin's standup records, it was hard not to 'hear' Steve's voice as I read the book... which perhaps made it more funny.

All Fires the Fire, by Julio Cortázar

Jimmy Lo is a big fan of Cortázar. I've only read a few of the stories in this collection. please see Jimmy's excellent reviews on his GoodReads page, the entire reason this book leapt out at me at the library book sale.

Diane Hause

I have recently discovered, and absolutely fallen in Love with, the author Terry Tempest Williams! I started with her book **“Refuge”** followed by **“Finding Beauty in a Broken World”** and just finished her latest book, **“When Women Were Birds-Fifty-Four Variations on Voice”**....oh my goodness! What an extraordinary Woman...her courage to live her life the way she has, so open to new and extremely difficult and hard circumstances, and then to weave them all so brilliantly and poignantly in her books has been so uplifting!

I was amazed how I could become so engrossed in her journals she kept while observing, from a swaying platform over Bryce Canyon, the remaining habitat of the endangered Prairie Dog, or as she refers to them, as “Prayer Dogs.” I could not wait to crawl into bed and catch up on the antics of each Prayer Dog she observed. I worried, with each predator that wandered across

the field, about the babies that had just been born and came out rollicking from underground. I even had to Google the little creatures to look more closely at their features that I thought, perhaps, I knew but not in the way I do now.

And in this same book, “Finding Beauty in a Broken World” Terry is next invited to leave Bryce Canyon to join three other people as one of the “Barefoot Artists” that spend time in Rwanda with the survivors of the genocide as they begin a project of creating a memorial incorporating all the thousands and thousands of bones left behind the mass killings. This was such difficult reading...you think you have a sense of what this must be like for the survivors, even today, but not until you sleep in a hut alongside Terry, one with the sheet metal roof letting in the night stars for the dozens of bullet holes that perforate the roof. And yet, Terry has a way of weaving the beauty of the people, the survivors, the brilliant smiles and the open hearts alongside the horror, the living and continued horror. Churches, still seeped in the blood red color on the walls where most of the machete executions of children and women took place. At times you feel you can't breathe as you read, just like the days she wants to flee and regrets having joined in this quest, other times you know and understand exactly why she stayed.

And finally, “When Women Were Birds”...her most recent beautiful and powerful book that to me, seems to best express the heart and soul of this author. She was raised in a Mormon family in Salt Lake City. Mormon women were required to keep journals. Her beautiful Mother who died of cancer, and her Mother's Mother before her (most believing the long history of cancer in the family is/was a result of the nuclear testing that went on in Utah in the 50's) both kept journals. Her Mother left Terry all her journals with instructions not to read them until after she died, all 3 bookshelves of journals. It wasn't until after her Mother's death that she sat down to read

them that she discovered they were all empty! And so became Terry's center for this latest book, her contemplation of "absence and presence in art and in our world."

And on a last note...I also Loved Eve Ensler's latest and most recent book, **"In the Body of the World."** It too is a small book that packs a powerful awakening. It reminds me so much of Terry's writing style that I wonder if Eve has been influenced by Terry's books. Eve weaves together her cancer diagnosis and treatments 3 years ago (and like she says, ironically, cancer that took hold and root in her vagina!) and weaves this episode of her life with that of her work in the Congo, and most importantly with "The City of Joy" that she facilitated in opening for the women in the Congo as a safe refuge. And, like Terry, she writes about the last days of her Mother's life, and being with her Mother when she died. Very powerful reading. I read this book in 2 nights and could not put it down.

What might seem so dark and depressing, in the hands of these two women authors, becomes so uplifting and hopeful and reveals the reality that we are one big organism that has to wake up to that reality, soon, very soon!

Susan Todd-Raque

Photography Changes Everything by Marvin Heiferman

A compilation of essays on the impact of photography on the arts, society, culture and our way of thinking.

The New Mind of the South by Tracy Thompson

Not as comprehensive as the original *Mind of the South* by W.J. Cash but a fascinating read and follow-up about the ramifications of religion and the handling of race in the New South.

The Forger's Spell by Edward Dolnick

A historical narrative of Vermeer, forgery and the Nazis.

Marriage, A History: How Love Conquered Marriage by Stephanie Coontz

Gives an idea why after thousands of years of arranged marriage why we struggle today with the idea of marrying for love and why even if it is more satisfying, it is even more fragile.

Cezanne's Quarry by Barbara Corrado Pope

For those who know Cezanne, this murder mystery is set in his hometown and yet because of the developed characters one really falls back into that time and space.

Lisa Alembik

Books on my shelf for this coming year:

The BBC television production of *Wallander*, with Kenneth Branagh playing the detective Kurt Wallander, has made a serious impact on me. I won't go into all of the details, except that I have been using stills from the show as source material for my drawings and paintings. The novels they are based on are supposed to be pretty darn good. I picked up the first in the series by author Henning Mankell, titled *Faceless Killers*. Next on my "to do" list is to sketch out a story these have inspired, of an artist/detective living in a Southern city, solving salacious art crimes.

John Adams by David McCullough. The smartest folks I know, know history. I am completely ignorant on the subject if it is not connected to a work of art. My goal this year is to begin walking the road towards becoming a smart person, starting with US history. Any recommendations on these travels are encouraged (Looks like Howard Zinn will be be next.).

Looking for *David Hockney's Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering Techniques of the Old Masters*. If you know where I can find a copy....

The Poetics of Space, Gaston Bachelard. I don't know why I haven't read this yet—to better understand and discuss the spaces that I draw.

Art in Theory 1900 - 2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas, eds Charles Harrison and Paul Wood. May be this year I find time to hit this.

Jimmy Lo

Favorite Reads of 2013

Whenever I encounter an all-time favorite book for the first time, it is always a blessing and a curse. The blessing is obviously the enjoyment of the book itself. But then comes the curse... pretty much everything I read for weeks afterwards seems bland in comparison—just something to pass the time. I didn't read too many books in 2013, and this is mostly because I encountered three of these life-changing books, all of which incapacitated me for a time to further voracious reading. I had to take a break, a breather if you will. Three separate times. Here are those three books:

The Book of Ebenezer Le Page – by G.B. Edwards

Probably more than any other character in literature, Ebenezer Le Page comes to life as the most flesh-and-blood real. He's an ornery old man who's lived his whole life on one of the channel islands (Guernsey) and through an accumulation of stories he slowly reveals a full and rich life. His voice is unique, with a charming patois and much humor, and his story is an extremely moving one, with real characters you fall in love with. This is the only book the author has ever written. Read it. My full review:

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/469820382>

Double Oblivion of the Ourang-Outang – by Helene Cixous

I'd only heard the name Cixous associated with literary theory, and that's not an area I cared for much. However, I had the good fortune to discover that she also wrote novels... many of them, which are mostly ignored by her more academically-inclined fans in American Educational Institutions. Well, I say "novels" but really this is a blend of novelistic fiction, memoir, literary essay, poetry, and pure creative thinking through and through. A truly uncategorizable book that had me riveted. My full review:

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/631682830>

Joseph and His Brothers – by Thomas Mann

A 1,500 page re-telling of Genesis 27-50 does not sound fun, but that's exactly what this book is. It was a page-turner, full of philosophical goodies, action/adventure, dramatic twists and turns. Even if you know the story (as I did, vaguely), this will give you new perspective. What is most impressive about this book is that Mann was able to inject every little detail of the story with moral ambiguity and human complexity. He really just uses the Bible story as a springboard for something much greater. My full review:

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/335101476>

Very Honorable Mentions:

- *Lands of Memory* - Felisberto Hernandez
- *Malina* - Ingeborg Bachmann
- *The Bachelors* - Adalbert Stifter
- *The Day I Wasn't There* - Helene Cixous
- *Zeitoun* - Dave Eggers
- *Impossible Object* - Nicholas Moseley
- *A Place in the Country* – W.G. Sebald

You can find my reviews for all of these books and more on my Goodreads page: <https://www.goodreads.com/jimmylorunning>

ARTNEWS READS 2012

For many reading is lifeblood, whether you inhale words at an unstoppable rate or slowly etch through a book a year, Having my peers and neighbors recommend books helps build community for me. Thank you for sharing your reading experiences.

--Lisa Alembik, list compiler

QUOTE OFFERED BY SUSAN CIPCIC

"Travel is like a good, challenging book: it demands presentness---the ability to live completely in the moment, absorbed by the words or vision of reality before you. And like serious reading itself, travel has become an act of resistance against the distractions of the electronic age, and against all the worries that weigh us down, thanks to that age. A good book deserves to be finished, just as a haunting landscape tempts further experience of it. Travel and serious reading, because they demand sustained focus, stand athwart the non-existent attention spans that deface our current time on Earth."

From **Being There** by Robert D. Kaplan

JIMMY LO

Mount Analogue by René Daumal

Hands down my favorite read this year. Playful and soulful. Daumal died before he finished it, so it ends in mid-sentence, which is itself a perfect analogy of the accessible yet impossible Mt. Analogue that is at the center of the book.

There but for the by Ali Smith

An engaging novel about language, society, the overlooked, and so much more. Almost no plot to speak of, this novel sounds academic, but is actually a riot to read.

Piano Stories by Felisberto Hernández

The story 'Stray Horse' alone makes this one of the best books ever. The inner-life of objects, memory, and the battle between versions of the self slowly sprawls itself across this long meandering story. What a delight.

Gazelle by Rikki Ducornet

What I loved most about this book is that it showed me the real world in a magical way. It's not magical realism, it's just a magical perspective. I felt like a kid again.

Midwinter Day by Bernadette Mayer

A long poem written over the course of one day, this book hijacked my own thought patterns and made me live under the haze of its strange continuous rhythms of mundanities and insights. Awesome.

Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf

Re-reading this has been an eye opening experience on how much I missed the first time through (in my 20s), and how much more emotionally close to home these people's lives and stories are now. I was totally blown away and need to revisit all of Woolf's catalog now.

I have longer reviews of these books and many other ones on Goodreads:
<http://www.goodreads.com/jimmylorunning>

SUSAN TODD-RAQUE

Read a lot of books this year but not much I could really recommend, except for **A State of Wonder** by Ann Patchett. Love the twists and turns as well as depth of intrigue.

ALICIA ARAYA

Been mostly reading stuff around the house - all of it with weird dark undertones for some reason

Bones: A Forensic Detective's Casebook Dr Douglas Ubelaker -

<http://www.amazon.com/Bones-Detectives-Dr-Douglas-Ubelaker/dp/0871319047> weird gruesome but fascinating look into human remains, especially in a criminal/foul play context. No walk in the woods will ever be the same after reading this book

The Myth of Repressed Memory by Dr Elizabeth Loftus -

http://www.amazon.com/Myth-Repressed-Memory-Memories-Allegations/dp/0312141238/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1355548290&sr=1-1&keywords=myth+of+repressed+memory

I remember the brouhaha in the late 80s re sexual/ritual abuse, and the controversy over certain therapeutic methodologies. Book provided an interesting history, alongside useful insights into physiological workings of

memory. Not for the faint of heart

Ponzi's Scheme Mitchell Zuckoff -http://www.amazon.com/Ponzi-Scheme-Story-Financial-Legend/dp/0812968360/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1355548461&sr=1-1&keywords=ponzi%27s+scheme+the+true+story+of+a+financial+legend+mitchell+zuckoff
an eminently human story; compared to today's white collar crooks, this guy was a prince. You almost want him to win in the end

The Devil's Star Jo Nesbo - great piece of scandinavian mystery reading
Redbreast Jo Nesbo - ditto

Vanity Fair Thackeray - first time actually reading this book.
Recommended

Our Mutual Friend - one of 2 Dickens I read this year. Great book! One of his last ones - gripping story and his writing style more fluid.

Also read 20+additional crime/mystery/spy/noir novels of various stripes - memorable ones being **The Big Sleep** (Chandler), **The Confidential Agent** (Greene), & **And Then There Were None** (Christie)

PATTY NELSON MERRIFIELD

I can offer three titles that I loved this year off the top of my head ~~

Edible Selby by Todd Selby , Abrams 2012. Part journal, part photography, part cookbook... visually delicious.

A Trick of The Eye, Eckhard Hollmann, Prestel, 2004. A truly astonishing book on one of my favorite subjects ~~ the history trompe l'oeil painting.

Both Flesh And Not, David Foster Wallace, Little, Brown, 2012. Essays... collections of words, phrases... dizzying and compulsive...can't stop reading it over and over.

Of course, there are many more...but the deadline approaches...

DIANE HAUSE

“**Wild**”-by Cheryl Strayed.

An incredible memoir about Cheryl's 1995 solo hike across the 1,100 mile Pacific Crest Trail when she was 22 years old. This is one of those stories that you become so absorbed and immersed that you feel you've got the blisters and loss of toenails right along with her from wearing hiking shoes that were too small! Cheryl had never hiked very much in her life when she decided to do this to struggle and rise above the loss of her mother, her heroin addiction and failed marriage. Oh my. Day one of her trip, as she packs and gets ready to leave her motel at the foot of the trail, she cannot even lift her backpack off the bed. She has to get on all fours, get under it and heave herself up holding onto the bed. Oh yeah, 1,100 miles to go! And who in the world packs 40+ condoms “just in case”...well, maybe a 22 year old! A great read of perseverance and courage in the face of obstacles much more fearsome than her encounters with rattlesnakes and bear!

VICKI BETHEL

By far the best thing I read all year was the old favorite **Mansfield Park** by Jane Austen. In recent years the deluge of dramatizations of her books has overshadowed the books themselves. It was unadulterated pleasure to go back to the source.

Other good reads:

Mrs. Bridge - Evan S. Connell

Arthur and George - Julian Barnes

The Inheritance of Loss - Kiran Desai

ROBERT CHEATHAM

0. don't know that I would recommend ALL these but they are one's I've found interesting in one way or another. Unfortunately (or fortunately depending on how you look at it) not much commentary this time.

1. **Wisdom as a Practice**, Peter Sloterdijk. I just finished this and found it compelling for it's account of why and how the idea of a 'contemplative life; gave way, under the auspices of secularism, to ideas of a committed life/active life. The owls are not what they seem. Perhaps.

2. **Mourning Sickness: Hegel and the French Revolution**, Rebecca Comay. Ok this was hard going, as you would suspect of anything involving

Hegel, but in a very pleasurable way. Fascinating account of beheadings and the guillotine therein.

3. **Theory and the Disappearing Future: on de Man and Benjamin**, Claire Colebrook, Tom Cohen and J. Hillis Miller. Dealing with the problematic heritage of Paul de Man (mostly) and with his relationship to Walter Benjamin's essay on translation. very interesting if that is the sort of think (sic) you are interested in. which obviously I am. ('Problematic' because of de Man's endorsement of the idea of language as inhuman.)

4. **Cruel Optimism**, Lauren Berlant
should also be placed with:

5. **Bright-sided: How Positive Thinking is Destroying America**, Barbara Ehrenreich, with Berlant's being the more academic tome.

6. **Kraken**, China Mieville. Giant squid cults and weird goings on in London.

7. **IQ84**, Haruki Murakami, It's own enfolding oddness.

8. **Obsidio**, Sean Q. Beeching. The first 'novel' on FORT!/da Books . The inestimable Fehta Murghana said of it: the duality starts with the title. 'Obsidio' means the siege of a city. but also point phonetically to 'obsidia' and 'obsidian' the black glasslike substance which sheaves into a very sharp edge used by tribal people and the Aztecs and Mayans especially. A dual historical vision (historical yet also somewhat autobiographical), being here, now but also elsewhere proceeds throughout the book. "The return of the gods, to a corner near you."

9. **The Siren and the Number**, Quentin Meillassoux. The philosopher who has become the darling of the new Speculative Reality movement has a new book coming after, 'After Finitude' and one which wasn't expected, I should say. A study of Mallarmean poetics, especially the poem *Un Coupe de Dés*. Enigmatic to say the least, Meillassoux loses god and finds it in it's inexistence and alluded to by a ciphered number in the poem which QM decodes. Something that perhaps only a French philosopher could have written.

10. **The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Genealogy of Economy and Government**, Giorgio Agamben. Another very erudite book in a long series devoted to the theological underpinnings of the modern idea of economy. similar in its emphasis on the Church but dealing in larger issues is

11. **The Church and the Kingdom.**, Agamben. Short and elegantly written, he takes the Church to task for a multitude of sins, maybe even holding back the Second Coming.

12. **The New Model Army**, Adam Roberts. What if...armies could be called up in an instant from a population and then sink back into the population? The true citizens army, completely decentralized.

13. **Yellow Blue Tibia**, Adam Roberts. What if...the Soviets actually invented the idea of the UFO/flying saucer and then it came back to bite them?

14. **The Rebirth of Pan: Hidden Faces of the American Earth Spirit**, Jim Brandom. inexplicably out of print for many years, a fascinating look at many odd things of a Fortean nature ...and finds a singular aspect in most of them.

15. **Zona: A Book about a Journey to a Room**. Geoff Dyer. Marvelous book about one of my favorite films, *Stalker* by Tarkovsky.

currently reading in rotation as it were:

On Ceasing to be Human, Gerald Bruns,

The Immortalization Commission, John Gray,

Adoration: the Deconstruction of Christianity, Jean-lu Nancy

Improper Life: Technology and Biopoitics from Heidegger to Agamben, Timothy Campbell

The Ontology of the Accident, Catherine Malabou

The Politics of Insects: David Cronenberg's Cinema of Confrontation, Scott Wilson.

TOM FERGUSON

Dispatches by Michael Herr (on Vietnam by screenwriter for *Platoon* & *Heavy Metal Jacket*)

The Untold History of the U.S. by Oliver Stone et al.

Joseph Anton, a memoir by Salman Rushdie

Phish by _____ (*ed. Note*. Parke Puterbaugh?)

Pearl Jam by _____

Pearl Jam by Pearl Jam

Carbon Free and Nuclear Free, A Roadmap for U.S. Energy Policy by Arjun Makhajani (free download www.ieer.org <<http://www.ieer.org>>)

A New Earth by Eckhart Tolle

Hegemony or Survival by Noam Chomsky

Superpatriotism by Michael Parenti

Dream of Fair to Middling Women by Samuel Beckett

Nightwoods by Charles Frazier

Complications by Atul Gawande (medical adventures of a doc)

The Life and Times of Thelonious Monk by ____ ed. Note. Robin Kelley?) various crime fiction esp. George V. Higgins, Peter Robinson, John Harvey, Mankell Henning, Jo Nesbo...

Arrival by Tom Ferguson(!) (lulu.com)

JONATHAN CILIBERTO

Law School:

Casebooks for Contract Law and Property Law. The wonderful thing about first year Property law is how many cases are presented which deal with fraudulent art sales. (Wait, Jon, there are any other kind?) Our casebook included: the "Red Elvis" case, in which an art dealer sold a Warhol he didn't own for \$2.9 million, keeping the money and not telling the true owner (she found out about it years later when the sale was mentioned in an art magazine); a case in which Georgia O'Keeffe tried to get possession of some paintings stolen decades earlier; a case in which an antiquities dealer sought to sell some Egyptian artifacts; a case in which a father gave a Klimt worth \$2.5 million to his son, but the gift was contested after his death, etc.) Sales of art are basically the wild west: no one has to show any sort of provenance or proof of ownership. This makes sense, given that art's true value is strictly non-material.

The Idea of Cultural Heritage, Derek Gillman. An overview of the state of the field. 2012 saw the repatriation of various ancient antiquities (from Greece, e.g.), as well as requests from Turkey et al that Western museums return them -- Western museums basically admit they were stolen. Those were the good old days, when cultural credibility and currency could be built simply by taking from poorer folks and declaring authority. Oh

wait... that **is** still how those things work.

Buddhist art:

The Black Hat Eccentric: Artistic Visions of the Tenth Karmapa, Karl Debreczeny. Another well-researched, thorough volume from the Rubin Museum. The Tenth Karmapa Chöying Dorje (1604-1674) famously declared, "I have come into this world to paint paintings." These words are revealing: the Karmapa is a reincarnate being (like the Dalai Lama), and so one would naturally presume that the reason the Karmapa came into the world as the 10th reincarnation would be to: work compassionately for all living beings. Through the biographical chapters, one sees that (of course) incarnate beings are human beings, who act in human ways. The Karmapa was an artist would could not not make art. Also, his life reveals the place of art in Buddhism as an agency for enlightenment, perhaps a more efficacy one than words. A far-reaching volume, it includes images of all of the paintings and sculptures posited to Chöying Dorje, as well as others attributed to him, and chapters by several luminaries in the field.

Buddhist Practice and Visual Culture: The visual rhetoric of Borobudur, Julie A. Gifford. I haven't read too far into this one. It is a dissertation expanded into a book, fairly technical.

Mirror of the Buddha: Early Portraits from Tibet, David P. Jackson.

Journeys on the Silk Road, Joyce Morgan & Conrad Walters. Directed to a popular audience, about the explorer and archaeologist Aurel Stein and his discovery at Dunhuang of the oldest printed book in the world, a copy of the Diamond Sutra. This isn't a poorly-written book, but it is a bit rough. The author's try very hard to convey the world in which Stein lived, and they are successful. I think that 'kids these days' might not have the sort of wonderment with the idea of buried cities in the sand, but that is what compelled Stein to traipse across trackless Central Asia (with his hardy terrier, Dash !) and discover ancient sites along the Silk Road. If you don't know the story, this is a good introduction, focusing on Stein.

Other things:

Borges and Memory, Rodrigo Quian Quiroga. This book was gifted to me. I like Borges. It is by a neuroscientist who noticed parallels between recent advances in the field and the character in Borges' famous story 'Funes the Memorious' who is unable to forget anything. The book is from MIT Press, and seems to be evidence that a neat idea, although without substance or substantial exploration, is enough to get published. The first half of the book is about Borges, and is what one might expect from a scientist writing about Borges. The second is an overview of the weird and astonishing from the history of neuroscience: the real life "Rain Man"! The man who couldn't remember more than 15 seconds ago !

Hawaii Pono, Lawrence H. Fuchs. I picked this 'social history' of Hawaii up at Goodwill. Is it just me, or are Thrift Stores the only used book stores that remain? This book was written in 1960, and after a brief review of pre-20th century Hawaii, covers 1900-60. The main theme thus far (I am only a third into it) is the racial basis for many aspects of the

Islands' history.

Coleridge: Darker Visions, Richard Holmes. This is the second volume of a biography largely from primary sources. The first was wonderful, and the second continues. The author exposes, rather than extrapolates, the poet's mind.

Fiction and Poetry:

Mount Analogue, Rene Daumal. An unfinished adventure story, involving mountain-climbing explorers' search for 'Mount Analogue', the connection point between the real and the noumenal worlds. Amazing, wonderful, recommended to me by Jimmy Lo.

A Month in the Country, J.L. Carr. A slim novel, about a hint of romance around a young conservator's work in a small English village, uncovering a medieval wall painting.

White Noise, Don DeLillo. Fun! Although... the darkness through light approach did wear me out here and there.

Rocannon's World, Ursula K. LeGuin. LeGuin is a supremely skillful writer, so I had no reason to be surprised that this early work in the non-standard-to-her genre of science fantasy vein proceeded so well.

Cugel's Saga, Jack Vance. I am one of those people who, despite reading a good amount of genre fiction as a young person, never read any Jack Vance. Like Fritz Leiber, Vance is strong on story and language.

The Anome, Jack Vance

River of Smoke, Amitav Ghosh. Second volume in his historical fiction trilogy, centered on the Opium Wars.

Eephus, Kevin Varrone. From the lovely Little Red Leaves Textile Series chapbooks -- a poem about baseball.

20 Spanish Baroque Pieces, arranged for Uke, Gaspar Sanz. Few things are more pleasurable to me than learning pieces on classical guitar. But, where is the time ?? Classical transcriptions for ukulele are easily sight-read, better for quick musical restoratives.

THE END

ARTNEWS READS 2011

Seventh Annual book recommendations

LISA ALEMBIK

My brain has not been able to focus on much reading, so instead I have been obsessing over various BBC tv series (MI-5, Waking the Dead, Downton Abbey, etc.). But here goes:

Brain Rules for Baby John Medina (fascinating reading on the developing brain. No need to be connected with children to find interesting.)
<http://www.brainrules.net/>

Just Kids Patti Smith (she rocks)

All ages: Douglas Florian's books, esp. *Dinothesaurus*

Read again: *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* Annie Dillard (always crazy about her writing)

On the bedside table:

The Silver Swan Benjamin Black (Pen name for Booker Prize winner John Banville. Detective novel, 2nd in series—loved first, *Christine Falls*)

The Importance of Being Iceland Eileen Myles

ALICIA ARAYA

almost too late for me to - but I really DO have to add Herbert Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man* to the mix. Could prob. do more but as it is... <http://www.marcuse.org/herbert/pubs/64onedim/odmcontents.html>

ROBERT CHEATHAM

hard to get it together this year for some reason but there goes,
at least some of the more recent books that have lodged in my increasingly inelastic
memory:

1. Ventrakl/ Christian Hawley / Ugly Duckling Presse

A fabulous but hard to describe reading of the German poet Georg Trakl

2. Dreamworlds of Alabama/ Allen Shelton/ University of Minnesota Press

A book I wish I had written -- and attempted only a small bit in *Metaphysical In Mississippi*, A Biographical exploration of being, in Alabama by a farmer turned professor of sociology, by way of the works of Walter Benjamin. Affecting, poetic, theoretical and melancholic.

3. *Fighting Theory*/ Avital Ronell in conversation with Anne Dufourmantelle/
Illinois

Behind the scenes with the irrepressible Ms. Ronell

4. *Tears and Saints*/ E. M. Cioran/ Chicago

Although everyone now seems intent on battering religion, no one does it better than Cioran while simultaneously seeming to believe. Perhaps its a Easter European thing. A beautiful book though.

5. *Queen of Terrors*/ Robert Kelly/ McPherson and co.

I don't think there is any book by Kelly that is less than beautiful. But for some reason I prefer his prose. This time a series of short to very short vignettes, taking one to other places.

6. *The Messianic Reduction: Walter Benjamin and the Shape of Time*/ Peter Fenves/ Stanford

A formidable book from Mr. Fenves. Not for the newbie to Benjamin--and not for the non-marxist inclined, given some of its negative press.

7. Continental Divide: Heidegger-Cassirer-Davos/ Peter Gordon/ Harvard.

A book on the epoch-making debate 1929 between two famous philosophers with two very different world Philosophies.

8. Alchemical Mercury: A Theory of Ambivalence/ Karen Pinkus/ Stanford

An odd but intriguing book on alchemy and its current consorts, primarily with the idea of 'money'.

9. Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey/ Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht/ Stanford

An author I didn't know much about but am glad to have discovered...allowed me to see some of my ideas in a different fashion, always a good thing.

10. The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty/ Eric Santner/ Chicago

If you know who Ernst Kantorowicz is you will want to read this. Or if you know who Daniel Paul Schreber is also. or if you're interested in the genesis of Freud's idea of psychosis or or or....

11. Junkware/ Thierry Bardini/ Minnesota

Another fantastic book, in more ways than one. Explores the adventures of the concept of 'junk dna' as it has made its way through culture. Outrageous, scientific, poetic, weird. This book has it all.

12. Where Art Belongs/ Chris Kraus/ Semiotext(e) Interventions

Interesting little book on different art practices. One of the profiles of a group in LA reminded me very much of eyedrum.

there are more but ... so many books, so little time.

JON CILIBERTO

The Origins of Yoga & Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century, by
Geoffrey Samuels

I appreciate scholars who are willing to admit: we don't really know. Samuels is exploring the basis of Yoga/Tantra in India, and repeatedly offers the multiple explanations that scholarship has given, concluding that "we might never know." I am nearly through it, and was shocked when, in chapter nine, he advanced a strong claim regarding the use of mandalas in tantric art. Mandalas of various kinds have a long prior history as meditational tools. Samuels claims that "the idea of the mandala in which the central figure represents a supreme deity, and the directional figures are subordinate aspects, seems a natural development in view of the political situation of the time", namely the rise of strong autocracies. Evidence for this is paralleled in Buddhist texts which advocate Buddhism as protectors of the state and the king. "The fully-fledged Tantric mandala is a model of a specific kind of state."

Speaking of the transgressive aspects of tantrism/shamans: "The significant issue is that these are all, indeed, practitioners, with high levels of performative skills, who are carrying out pragmatic services for the surrounding population, yet are not really trusted by them." Sounds like society's relation to the artist !

Portraits of Chogen: The Transformation of Buddhist Art in Early Medieval
Japan, by Rosenberg

In Brill's "Japanese Visual Culture" series. Rosenberg is a distinguished scholar, and this volume is less about a strong argument, and more about a detailed analysis of texts which describes the culture in which art was made. Chogen (1121-1206), a monk, was asked to head up a massive restoration project: to rebuild and recreate the many temples and artworks destroyed in warfare in Nara, Japan in the late 12th century. Todaiji, a vast temple complex and the center of Japanese Buddhism "was largely reduced to ashes." The main object of worship, the gigantic bronze Daibutsu lost its head and arms. Records show that Chogen

worked to create more than 100 statues and 100 buildings. The repair of the Daibutsu, judged impossible by craftsmen initially, was the great achievement of this project. The book's title indicates that the author uses these statues (and buildings) to describe Chogen and the world in which he operated. This is a really strong volume, well-illustrated and researched.

Nara Buddhist Art: Todai-ji, by Takeshi Kobayashi

In the superb Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art series.

The Weaving of Mantra: Kukai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse, by Ryuichi Abe

Kukai is a near-legendary figure in Japanese history. He traveled to China in the 8th century and brought back Buddhist texts, as well as the esoteric lineage which became Shingon in Japan. He is also credited with inventing the Japanese syllabary system (and the well known 'iro ha' song). This book includes a biography of Kukai and a long, detailed, and dense exposition of his importation of a new 'discourse' in Japanese Buddhism.

This book gets into some modern philosophy territory, the region I think of as "French". Abe argues that Kukai imported Japan not only new forms of Buddhism, but a new kind of discourse...

Early Buddhist Art of China & Central Asia, by Marilyn Martin-Rhie

The Third Volume in Professor Rhie's massive survey of Early Buddhist Art for Brill.

I started this book in January, and it was for many months a great pleasure to sink into its depths, a little bit each day. This is not a colorful, exciting read. It is dry and technical. But like exercise, I found delight in the routine and the challenge.

This book is big: 1,000 if one includes the huge series of color and black-and-white plates.

I cannot examine the details of the author's argument, involving as it does specialized research on ancient texts and physical remains. The former, deeply contextualized by cultures and philosophies incompletely re-created, are examined as possible source material for imagery. The activity of translators in nearby Chang-an, and the prominence of sutras in Gandhara during the 3rd and early 4th centuries combined with the steady traffic from Western China, make it reasonable to presume the importance of certain texts to the creators of Buddhist art in Western China.

It covers the Western Chin period (317 - 429 AD). It proceeds through detailed object-oriented analysis, largely of a single cave at a single site in Kansu.

Extra-Buddhist context is limited to a description of the founding story of the Ch'i-fu (the large reptile) and description of the Ping-ling-ssu as associated with extra-worldliness, and the presence of immortals (hsien) and spirits (kuei). There are no further references to local influences or considerations of non-Buddhist elements.

Instances of multiple Buddha sets are the most significant iconographic consideration. These are linked both to visual elements from Gandhara and to texts. Kumarajiva and Buddhahadra, early translators of these key texts, both worked in Chang-an, near the Ping-ling-ssu cave site.

Many Chinese monks traveled to The Western Lands (Central Asia, Gandhara, India) with religious aims: 1) to visit places associated with Shakyamuni, 2) to seek teachings and texts, 3) to view and venerate relics and stupas. Kansu was the portal that many travelers passed through, so it is unsurprising that iconography and ideas would accumulate there.

I haven't quite finished this; instead the intermediary of both the Samuels and the Abe are adding some additional context...

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya, by Maurice Walshe

I saw a meetup group whose purpose was to read the Pali Canon. It was

ambitious, and I said, SURE! We only met once, and then it fell apart! I'd read some of these early Discourses, and mainly they are interesting for showing a slice of life amongst some early Buddhists.

Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music, by Derek Bailey

I've had this book for years, and I read more of it than ever before when writing an article for artscriticatl.com

<http://www.artscriticatl.com/2011/08/invent-room-pop-review-part-awkward-blind-date-part-falling-in-love-music-making/>

Mystical Poems of Rumi, First Selection, translated by A.J. Arberry

The Well-Wrought Urn: Studies in the Structure of Poetry, by Cleanth Brooks

I borrowed this from a friend's shelves while dog-sitting. I don't know very much about structure in poetry, although I do often end up writing in certain forms (abcbac line scheme is fun). Sometimes little things from a book leap out, seeming to refer to exactly what I am thinking on some wholly different subject.

Bobby Fischer Goes to War, by David Edmonds and John Eidinow

About the famous chess match between Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky. Lots of fun!

An Elemental Thing, by Eliot Weinberger

Jimmy loaned me this. It is filled with short bits. He is SO MUCH a better reviewer of books than I am, I would say... go look him up on GoodReads!

Absolute Friends, by John le Carré

I like spy fiction. I hadn't read any in years, and here was this in my parents bookshelves.

Stars in my Pocket Like Grains of Sand, by Samuel R. Delany

A major work of science-fiction I'd not read. Disch is a poetic writer, not a nuts-and-bolts writer, and so the plot -- while there certainly is one -- is not so much the thing. His is the sort of world into which the reader is thrust, without introduction or translation. This is effective, if at times confusing. I think this confusion is not a flaw -- life is confusing and often disorienting, so why should a novel not be?

Camp Concentration, by Thomas M. Disch

Fantastic. I recommended this book to Eggtooth after I'd only read 20 pages.

several books by Jack Vance

Ed Hall's enthusiasm was catching!

The Return of the King, by J.R.R. Tolkein

I hadn't read this in ages, certainly not since Peter Jackson's film trilogy. But, there it was on a friend's book shelf (another pet-sitting) I I was pulled right in.... the worlds of our youth, right?

TOM FERGUSON

Naomi Klein - Shock Doctrine

William Manchester - A World Lit Only By Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance, Portrait of an Age,

Tim Weiner - Legacy of Ashes, The History of the CIA

Noam Chomsky - What We Say Goes Carbon-Free and Nuclear-Free, A Roadmap for U.S. Energy Policy (free download www.ieer.org)

bio on David Bowie

memoir, Keith Richards, Phish

Crime Fiction: Mankell Hemming Peter Robinson John Harvey Maj Sjowall-Per Wahloo George V. Higgins and of course,

Tom Ferguson's Arrival

and always, Eckhart Tolle's A New Earth & The Power of Now

ED HALL

Because I've been busy trying to write a book, I have read almost no book by anyone else in its entirety for almost a year. With that caveat in place, allow me to point you toward some things I did read in part that have left me eager to finish them--plus the one novel I managed to complete during Thanksgiving weekend.

Horns by Joe Hill. The second novel by Joe Hill opens with its protagonist, Ignatius Perrish, awakening from bender to find he has sprouted a pair of horns from his brow. What follows is by turns gripping, hilarious, and tender. The horns cause people in Iggy's presence to confess their darkest wishes to him--many of which involve the tortures his supernaturally affected friends, neighbors, and kinfolk want to inflict upon him for a rape-murder he is innocent of but nonetheless presumed to have committed. Worse, when he touches someone, he sees the worst thing the person has ever done. Not merely a worthy successor to Hill's first novel, *Heart-Shaped Box* (the second-scariest book I have read, surpassed only by *The Shining*, which is appropriate as Hill is the son of author Stephen King), *Horns* is a remarkably assured progression beyond its predecessor.

Also remarkably, the most outstanding horror writing I read this year was not *Horns*--was not even fiction: *Mirrors: Stories of Almost Everyone*, by Eduardo Galeano, is a book of historical sketches and meditations. It reads easily in pieces, as do other nonfiction works in Galeano's oeuvre. Beware, though, for sometimes it's tough to put the book aside once you dip into one of the author's vivid evocations of such things as stalactites and stalagmites, which 'spend thousands of years reaching down or reaching up, drop by drop, searching for each other in the darkness.' His recurring subjects, though, are the enduring cruelty and capricious stupidity of nations, the grinding up of women, of dark-skinned peoples, of the powerless and the disenfranchised. In describing nineteenth-century travel scribe Pierre Loti's trip through India by train, Galeano writes, 'More penetrating than the roar of the locomotive was the pleading of children, or rather the skeletons of children, their lips purple and eyes out of orbit, peppered by flies, beseeching alms. Two or three years previous, a boy or girl cost a rupee, but now no one wanted them even for free.' He finds gleaming bits in the rubble, too, including the life and career of Alexander von Humboldt, whose name we now attach to the famous current and a less famous squid, and whose progressive beliefs demonstrate how slender a defense it is to speak of his meaner coevals as merely clinging to the beliefs 'of their time.' *Mirrors* is a work that invites opening it and reading at random, and one that is sure to beckon me back for rereading and reconsideration for the rest of my life as a reader.

The twenty pages I read of Jacques Barzun's *Simple & Direct: A Rhetoric for Writers* gave me hope for our future as a writing culture. I recognize the perpetual flux that is spoken language, as well as the way that its constant change affects written language (and vice versa). I also recognize my own conservatism in matters of written and spoken communication, and why that conservative impulse is doomed to disappointment. Barzun delivers sound guidance on jargon, diction, punctuation, and much more I haven't gotten to yet. I treasure each opportunity I get to delve deeper into this clarifying work.

Yet more anecdotal history fills the pages of *The Disappearing Spoon and Other True Tales of Madness, Love, and the History of the World from the Periodic Table of the Elements* by Sam Kean. Again, I did not get to read all of them, but had I read only Kean's bit on the town of Ytterby and its role in the discovery and

naming of the so-called rare earth members (including yttrium and ytterbium) of the periodic table, I would have felt well rewarded. Further riches await me here, and I mean to return to this book as soon as I can.

Finally, no book I have ever read has done more to abet my understanding of who I am and why I behave the way I do than *Excess Baggage: Getting Out of Your Own Way* by Judith Sills. The author is a clinical psychologist who probes the human verities of our need to be right, our dread of rejection, our creation of drama in our own lives, and our ability to cling to our own rage. As Sills notes, not everyone bears every piece of personal luggage that she examines here. Each of us is likely to tote at least one, however. My better half read this book in a single sitting. I have dawdled over it (perhaps because of what the author dubs, in her postscript, the anxiety of change), despite the insight I find every time I reopen it. I hope it will be the next book I finish reading.

CECLIA KANE

My top picks from what I read in 2011:

"The Savage Detectives", Roberto Bolano

"Three Junes", Julia Glass "

"A Visit From The Goon Squad", Jennifer Egan

"The Wisdom Jesus", Cynthia Bourgeault

"A Field Guide to Getting Lost", Rebecca Solnit

JIMMY LO

full reviews of all books mentioned can be found at:

<http://www.goodreads.com/jimmylorunning>

Trying something different this time... I'm going to actually list these in a somewhat loose order of personal significance.

The Man Without Qualities by Robert Musil

in which a difficulty is earned not by modernist wordplay, but by tackling mercurial and impossible ideas head on, and not without humor. A novel of ideas that is (among other things) also an argument *against* ideas (or at least against systematizing or simplifying them).

My Friends by Emmanuel Bove

in which the most simple, self-evident language is contained in a perfect novel of quiet humor, sadness, and crystallized beauty; a criminally underread masterpiece.

Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius by Ray Monk

in which the life of one uncompromising SOB is laid out, showing all the seeming contradictions therein, which in the end turns out to be the perfect vehicle for his ideas (or perhaps the idea itself). A thought provoking book, in which I saw many parallels to Musil's musings.

Hopscotch by Julio Cortázar

in which the trick of hopping around randomly is ultimately trumped by the non-trick of great writing. A very serious game, as one Cronopios was known to say, one that you can put your whole life into.

The Unconsoled by Kazuo Ishiguro

in which a frustrating amount of things keep getting added to the to-do list, though nothing that truly matters is every addressed; the uneasy feeling produced by this novel rings true for me, and in the end, though nothing is solved, I feel refreshed as if emerging from an ineffably sad dream.

The Atoms of Language by Mark C. Baker

in which a linguist explains the curious logic of all languages, how even the most radically different ones are made up of similar ingredients in different ratios.

Also: find out why English is more similar to Indonesian than any other European language.

The Principles of Uncertainty by Maira Kalman

in which Ms. Kalman charms us with her drawings of dodos and superfluous tassels and ladies with big hair from the back and hats hats couches hats. A year of jottings and journalings by a quirky and interesting woman.

g-point almanac: passyunk lost &

g-point almanac: id est by Kevin Varrone

in which is found the best contemporary poetry I've read in the last 5 years or so.

Visitation by Jenny Erpenbeck

in which time-lapse photography is transfigured into written form, the episodes building one on another like a photograph superimposed, significances becoming apparent that aren't there for the myopic characters themselves. Surprisingly affecting.

Speaking of the Rose by Robert Walser

in which sentences are like contortionists, able to keep your interest in all ways but what is actually being said (and sometimes in that way too).

A Few "I Must Also Mentions" (in no particular order):

How Should A Person Be? by Sheila Heti

Wittgenstein's Mistress by David Markson

In the Land of Invented Languages by Arika Okrent

Winter's Journal by Emmanuel Bove

Illuminations by Walter Benjamin

Out of Sheer Rage by Geoff Dyer

Malone Dies by Samuel Beckett

The Tanners by Robert Walser

Fermat's Enigma by Simon Singh

WENDY MEYER

For adults: *Walking Through Walls - A Memoir* by Philip Smith

For Kids: *Even Higher*, Richard Ungar

ANTHONY OWSLEY

Actually, with dealing with all that's been going on this year, and spending most of it hunched over the drawing table illustrating books, I never got around to reading much. I did finally get a chance to read Hollis Gillespi's "Bleach Haired Honky Bitch" which, while written a lifetime ago, still made me chortle heartily. I'm hoping against hope that next year will be free of crises and distractions where I can actually sit down with something.

SUSAN TODD-RAQUE

***The Social Animal* by David Brooks**

About people, how we relate to one another and how we are all connected. A lot to think about so it is a good book to read and pause to think. For a while I couldn't go anywhere and meet people without thinking about what kind of social animals we were.

***Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Curating* by Hans Ulrich
Obrist**

A bit thick at times but has valuable experienced insider viewpoints.

ALLEN WELTY-GREEN

Bill Bruford - *The Autobiography*

Not just a collection of anecdotes from his time with Yes, King Crimson, Earthworks, etc., but also some insightful meditations on the nature of music, improvisation, being a musician, etc. with references from Slominsky, Chernoff, Zappa, and many other great musical thinkers.

Americapedia: Taking the Dumb Out of Freedom

Andisheh Nouraei, Daniel Ehrenhaft & Jodi Lynn Anderson

Ostensibly aimed at young adults but eminently readable by us older types.

Remember Nouraei's CL column "Don't Worry?" - This is like that column on steroids.

PATTON WHITE

Walden or A Life in the Woods, by Henry David Thoreau. I find it fascinating that much of what he has to say is very timely--that many of the same issues we are facing now, with the extremes of wealth and privilege, he saw present over 150 years ago.

ARTNEWS READS_2010: *the sixth annual book recommendation list*

BAILEY BARASH

Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons

The Invisible Gorilla: And Other Ways Our Intuitions Deceive Us

TEMME BARKIN-LEEDS

Mira Schor, "A Decade of Negative Thinking"

VICKI BETHEL

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Sister Carrie - Theodore Dreiser

re-read this classic. found it fresh and amazingly up to date. and this time i saw the humor in it.

The Lover - Marguerite Duras

conjured up an exotic land and time way outside my scope of experience. nice to see a view of Vietnam before the 1960s war news.

The Good Terrorist - Doris Lessing

one of her best.

bookstore - Atlanta Vintage Books

on Clairmont near Dresden. <http://www.atlantavintagebooks.com/>

PODCASTS

Science Magazine Podcast (it's free)

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/science-magazine-podcast/id120329020>

and the free weekly podcast from This American Life

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/podcast>

PAUL BOSHEARS

I highly recommend *Follow Us or Die* edited by Vincent W.J. van Gerven Oei and Jonas Staal. Living with the onslaught of populism across the West Vincent and Jonas's book asks us to read and consider the claims in the writings of the adolescents that perpetrated the slaughters at their local schools: Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris of Columbine High School, and Seung-Hui Cho of Virginia Tech for example. In reading the output of these killers the reader is also confronted with their same questions.

Less diabolical and more loving is Mike Young's collection of poetry *We Are All Good if They Try Hard Enough from Publishing Genius*. I saw Mike read from his book earlier this year at Solar Anus and it included a poem recited by two action figures. The language is earnest and playful and profligate in its connections to all other words. A thrumming collection of human warmth.

Methland by Nick Reding. Atlanta has become the hub for east-west, north-south distribution of narcotics and the suburbs here have been the site of the largest methamphetamine busts in U.S. history. Reding's book gives a great narrative of drug abuse in the heart of the U.S.

Related to Reding's book, I also recommend reading both Avital Ronell's *Crack Wars* and Jacques Derrida's *Plato's Pharmacy*. Derrida's [essay](#) (.pdf alert) analyzes several texts by Plato and points out that there can be no concept of Greek society without the *pharmakoi* (scapegoat, a class of person kept in the heart of the city so that every year they can be thrown out of the city in a cleansing ritual). Ronell's book in similar fashion asks what a narcoanalysis of being might look like? Can we have culture that is not always already a drug culture?

ROBERT CHEATHAM

This is proving to be a more difficult assignment this year. Mostly, not because of any surfeit of material but because of too much. Alas, my attention span has been greatly attenuated because of our two-year old child Rowan, so very little in the way of comments on individual books this year. And no, many of these books haven't been bought but have come through other channels. I realize that these are fairly – or severely in some cases - specialized books but so it goes; they suit my purposes. They are in no particular order.

As regards small bookstores: A Cappella Books in L5P comes immediately to mind. Running a small bookstore now is a very hard gig; I know because I was the manager of one for a few years. And of course the Poem88 Store is very cool but not open all the time.

1. The Scorpions, Robert Kelly.
2. Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetriere, Georges Did-Huberman
3. Contactees: A history of Alien-Human Interaction, Nick Redfern.
4. The Angel of History: Rosenzweig, Benjamin, Scholem.
5. Nudities, Giorgio Agamben
6. What is an Apparatus and other essays, Giorgio Agamben
7. Arresting Language: From Leibniz to Benjamin, Peter Fenves

8. Infidel Poetics: Riddles, Nightlife, Substance, Daniel Tiffany.
9. The Doll Universe: The Terrifying Joy of Matter, Robert Cheatham, ed.
10. Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma, Ulrich Baer.
11. Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art. Georges Didi-Huberman.
12. Catastrophe and Survival: Walter Benjamin and Psychoanalysis
Elizabeth Stewart
13. On Futurity: Malabou, Nancy and Derrida, Jean-Paul Martinon.
14. Camera Lucida, Roland Barthes.
15. Intellectual and Manual Labor: A Critique of Epistemology. Alfred Sohn-Rethel.
(This is actually a small classic I read years ago and which was very influential for me – as I recall anyway; I’ve come across it again and am reading again.)
16. The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable, Nassim Nicholas Taleb

Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Cave Temples of Xiangtangshan

I'll start with what I am reading right now, the superb catalog to the exhibition of Chinese Buddhist sculptures presently on view at the Smart Museum of art (University of Chicago). The show has 20 items originally from the Xiangtangshan caves in Hebei province, as well as computer-generated reproductions which bring together fragments to give the viewer a sense of how things once looked. As with so much of the ancient (and not so ancient) art in museums in America and Europe, these fantastic pieces of Buddhist art were pillaged and sold in the early part of the 20th century. This catalogue painstakingly traces their subsequent history. One aspect of the exhibition is "digital caves," rooms with huge LCD screens that recreate the original look of the site.

<http://buddhistartnews.wordpress.com/2010/09/24/echoes-of-the-past-the-buddhist-cave-temples-of-xiangtangshan-september-30-2010-%e2%80%93-january-16-2011/>

Reading Zen in the Rocks: The Japanese Dry Landscape Garden, by Francois Berthier, translated and with a philosophical essay by Graham Parkes

The title essay is an overview of karesansui, the Japanese rock gardens familiar from the world famous Ryoanji. The essay by Professor Parkes places dry landscape gardens in the wider context of Chinese rocks and stones, with reference to Western philosophy (Emerson, Thoreau, Goethe, Nietzsche). Really excellent, highly recommended.

Shots in the Dark, by Shoji Yamada

A study on the selection by 20th century Japanese of a "view" of themselves presented by the West through two cultural artifacts: the rock garden at Ryoanji and Japanese archery. The author argues that aspects of each of these (the "Zen" of them) only came to be after each was described as such by Westerners.

Yasodharā, the Wife of the Bodhisattva: The Sinhala Yasodharāvata (The Story of Yasodharā) and the Sinhala Yasodharapadanaya (The Sacred Biography of Yasodhara), Translated with an introduction and notes by Ranjini Obeyesekere

A translation of the Sinhala folk poem and prose biography. Reviewed here:
<http://buddhistartnews.wordpress.com/2010/12/07/yasodhara-the-wife-of-the-bodhisattva/>

Life of the Buddha, by Ashvaghosa, translated by Patrick Ollivelle

I read this one as part of a two-session course at Emory University, led by Professor McClintock. (It was me and a roomful of Emory professors and staff.) This is the first extant Sanskrit biography of the Buddha. The edition we read is from the Clay Sanskrit Library a very fine project. The same reading group (called "Emory reads!" I think?) is reading a translation of the Book of Job in the spring...

BOOKS I READ IN THE MONASTERY

I was teaching in a remote Himalayan monastery this summer. I only brought two books with me on this trip:

Metamorphoses, by Ovid, translated by Charles Martin

and

The Gift, by Marcel Mauss

The first is a recent translation by, quite readable. I sent it back via India Post long before I reached the mountains (trying hard to keep my baggage light).

The Gift (subtitle: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies) was a good companion through the entire nine-week trip. It is dense enough to stretch out, with an argument that allows for slow and careful consideration, and as a book on cultural practices, served well as I found myself in one after another situation on the receiving end

of gifts. The author's principle argument is: the gift is an example of a "total social phenomenon" and a system of gift-giving exists in all archaic cultures, in which the receiving of a gift includes the requirement to give another (better) gift in return. A concise and fascinating analysis, it includes a short final section with some "moral conclusions," including the obvious one: that the idea of "progress" from exchange societies to currency societies is false, constructed by western civilization as a means of elevating itself above "primitive" ones.

Once I arrived at the monastery, *The Gift* was the only book I had. I am good with free time -- there is drawing, writing, walking about the fantastic landscape (thin oxygen made such walks short), and of course chatting with the nuns and locals, and I didn't really pine for books until the third week or so. I'd had a few glimpses of the "library" in the monastery, and was promised that there were teaching materials in there, also that I was supposed to get the key upon arrival. However, once I got there and had a glimpse into the library, the key to the room was "lost". (I later figured out this was perhaps true, or perhaps had something to do with the desire to keep that room to themselves, since the key was "found" as soon as they need to get in there to use the room to host some visiting Lamas.)

The library had mostly books in Tibetan, also several shelves of English language materials, and a couple of shelves of books in English, likely volumes left by previous volunteers. From these I read the following (voraciously):

Kim, by Rudyard Kipling

Way back in high school I went through a Kipling reading phase (I think inspired by the film, "The Man Who Would be King"), but couldn't make it very far into *Kim*. In the intervening years I gained a knowledge of Buddhist art and archaeological sites in India, also read several books on "The Great Game". Situated in remote Spiti valley (the scene of one of the most exciting episodes in this novel) and also having experienced travel in India, especially on the trains and in the cities, I now found the contents of this book clear and marvelous. *Kim* was a great treasure for me, reading it by LED headlamp and in my "cave" high above the monastery, with a fire burning, it made much more sense.

Oryx and Crake, by Margaret Atwood

I had never read anything by Atwood, based mostly on a (probably inaccurate) feeling regarding mainstream writers dipping into speculative fictional waters. This is a

dystopian/post-apocalyptic novel, which also suited by place (no electricity, running water, etc.). I enjoyed it, perhaps in a beggars-cannot-be-choosers role, with some provisos: 1) at times, her neologisms and corporate/product name inventions sounds like an aged rocker trying to sound 'current.' 2) While the female characters in the book are romantic visions and noble paragons, all of the male characters are despicable... I guess that is a kind of feminism...

The Blue Flower, by Penelope Fitzgerald. I'd read it before. It is a marvel, a construction from the biography of Novalis, beautiful, historical (without long-view dressing-up).

Pompeii, by Robert Harris

Sort of scratching the bottom of the barrel here in terms of the books available in the monastery library, but far better than expected! This is a blockbuster novel on the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, with a admirable amount of research evident on Roman life and aquaducts and volcanology. Pliny is one of the characters and he is delightful. Although the hero and his love live, most everyone else buys the farm -- hurray! Again the apocalyptic tone suited me.

Kensho, The Heart of Zen, Translated by Thomas Cleary

Between a Rock and a Hard Place, by the guy who got trapped while rock-climbing and had to cut off his own arm. I can't recall his name.

Once a week, I took the (once daily) bus into Kaza, the district capital. With a population of several thousand, restaurants and shops (and tourists), and electricity at night (sometimes... actually, rarely), Kaza was CIVILIZATION compared to the monastery. From the German bakery I borrowed

The Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy, by Douglas Adams

Which I hadn't read in many years. Still fun, but I admit not as humorous as it was when I was in college.

When I left the monastery after five weeks, I went to Manali, and there (finally!) found a good bookstore (Tusita books in Old Manali). I picked up an Indian publishing house version of:

Relics of the Buddha, by John S. Strong

This is a superb scholarly study of relics in Buddhism, generally considered to be the basis for a large part of Buddhist art (mandalas seem to derive from older yogic (or Persian?) traditions).

BACK IN AMERICA

The Thousand Deaths of Mr. Small, by Gerald Kersh

I used to be a big fan of the author Harlan Ellison ("used to be" as he no longer seems to be writing). HE says that Gerald Kersh is his favorite writer. I picked up this novel some years ago, read it this fall. Fantastic, filled with black comedy, frustrated desire, irony, oppressive Jewish mothers, and unrequited love. The grim childhood at the start is tough-going, but forge on for the many hilarious comic settings laid out with skill and artlessness.

Supernatural Love: Selected Poems by Gjertrud Schnackenberg

Life Along the Silk Road, by Susan Whitfield

Written by the director of the Dunhuang Project, this is a collection of historically-fictionalized biographies ("The Merchant's Tale", "The Monk's Tale", etc.) of individuals from the range of cultures that mixed along the old Silk Road from China to Europe, from the 8th through 10th centuries AD.

The Voyage of the Space Beagle, by A.E. van Vogt

Excellent, heady science-fiction from the "Golden Age", a collection of related stories about a scientific expedition sent out to explore alien world. Includes what many feel is the basis for the movie Alien.

ELYSE DEFOOR

Did not want to read it: "**Zeitoun**", a narrative non-fiction work by Dave Eggers. Based on the experiences of an American Muslim family during Katrina, this rich read knocked my socks off.

ED HALL

[One Drop: My Father's Hidden Life--A Story of Race and Family Secrets](#) by Bliss Broyard

Bliss Broyard's biography of her father, Anatole Broyard, charts the labyrinth that is race in America through one family's tale. Anatole, a native of New Orleans and a product of its multigenerational ethnic mishmashery, became the first writer of color at the New York Times. Whether he passed to do so depends on whose version of his life the reader chooses to believe. Certainly, though, on his death bed he found himself unable to reveal this lifelong secret to Bliss and her brother. That job fell to Anatole's widow, and her revelation to her daughter ultimately propelled Bliss into the writing of this book, which describes racial states of being that many Americans never imagine.

[Pattern Recognition](#) by William Gibson

This first volume of a trilogy about the wilds of twenty-first-century marketing, written by the author of *Neuromancer*, is a masterpiece. Gibson's work before this book is transformative, but none of it has the power he injects into the quest Cayce Pollard undertakes here to find the source of (a) cryptically produced and distributed cinematic artifact(s) dubbed "The Footage."

TOM FERGUSON

Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*

William Greider, *One World Ready or Not: the Manic Logic of Global Capitalism*

Aldous Huxley, *Point Counter Point*

Eckhart Tolle, *A New Earth*

DEVIDYAL GIVENS (yes... it's Givens now, I was married this year)

***Motherless Daughters* by Hope Edelman** is one of the most powerful books I have ever read. This was a re-read for me. To some it may do very little but to other women in my place I highly recommend it. It's a research study. Hope Edelman interviewed something like 200 women that all grew up without a mother either physically absent or emotionally

absent. Some lost their mothers to death others divorce others insanity or alcohol and the list goes on. The study was seeing how adult women cope in the world having grown up without that positive nurturing mother figure. This is in my top 5 best reads ever (maybe even top 3.)

I read *The Good Earth* by **Pearl S. Buck** for the first time this year. Wow. It was rough. I really enjoyed the story line but the writing style was hard on me. It took me as long to read one chapter of this book as it sometimes does and entire book! I did enjoy it.

As a huge **Christopher Hitchens** fan I have decided to read his books. The first I read was *God is Not Great* then *Letters to a Young Contrarian*. I enjoyed *God is Not Great* a little more but both are definitely worth the read.

My husband's best friend gave him *Burmese Days* by **George Orwell** because he said a character in the book reminded him of my husband. My husband never read the book but I did. Read it.

MICHELLE JORDAN

Here are my favorite two of the books I read this year:

Children's

Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery - an oldie, but goodie that is great to read out loud. I have read it aloud to the girls in the past, but they asked for it again this year.

Adult:

Skeletons at the Feast by Chris Bohjalian

CECELIA KANE

My favorite reads this year were (in no particular order):

Freedom- Jonathan Franzen

Renato's Luck-Jeff Shapiro

Unaccustomed Earth-Jhumpa Lahiri

The Reader-Barbara Schlink

The Corrections-Jonathan Franzen

The Story of Edgar Sawtelle-David Wroblewski

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

The Great Failure-Natalie Goldberg

Living Color: A Writer Paints Her World-Natalie Goldberg

The Life of Pi-Yann Martel

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay-Michael Chabon

Wonder Boys-Michael Chabon

Lost in America: A Journey with My Father-Sherwin Nuland

A Thousand Acres-Jane Smiley

JIMMY LO (full reviews of all these books can be found at <http://www.goodreads.com/user/show/1325473>)

NONFICTION

The Shadow of the Sun by Ryszard Kapuściński

in which Ryszard shows us Africa around the end of colonialism (not that it ever ends). He makes it a great read as it is satisfying in many ways: as history, as memoir, as anthropology, and as travel writing.

Kabloona by Gontran de Poncins

in which Gontran, being French, and the year being 1938, travels to arctic Canada to study the Eskimos and writes this piece of anthropological gem, both interesting as a study of his whitey attitudes and as a study of the local population and their strange habits. This one is special, people... a highly entertaining book.

Broadsides from Other Orders: A Book of Bugs by Sue Hubbell

in which each chapter is lovingly dedicated to explaining away one little critter, often as common as the daddy longlegs or the less heard-of camel cricket which I'm sure lives in your basement as we speak, although "explain away" is inaccurate as there's still so much we just don't know about them.

ALMOST NON-FICTION

Emigrants by W.G. Sebald

Austerlitz by W.G. Sebald

Vertigo by W.G. Sebald

in which Winfried Georg, being German, being inscrutable, lulls me into deep meditative conversation in which I stop caring what is being talked about. He often writes from a very serious place, of memory and architecture and place; his fiction is a combination of essay, memoir, old photos, and a lot of walking.

I Love Dick by Chris Kraus

in which Chris and husband decide to woo an acquaintance, Dick, by writing him love letters. This novel, which is obviously thinly veiled nonfiction, soon leads to a series of postmodern investigations taking the form of epistolary novel, feminist manifesto, art criticism, tell-all memoir, critical theory, personal essay, and diary. Bonus: makes for great reading in the men's locker room.

FICTION

Recollections of Things to Come by Elena Garro

in which magical realism was written before magical realism was even defined. Yes by wife of Octavio Paz, who I've not read yet, and oh she does it so well, so much better than mr. marquez. This story, a political one but not in an annoying way, is told by the town itself. It is a devastating story, and one that made me read nonstop.

The Confusions of Young Törless by Robert Musil

in which you will think it is another coming of age boarding school novel, but this one searches so deeply it reminds me of Rilke's poetry, in its ability to wrestle with the most complex spiritual, philosophical, and psychological themes.

Go Tell It On the Mountain by James Baldwin

in which Fate smiled down on me and told me I had to read it as the copy I bought for \$5 in Chicago was SIGNED by JB himself with the note: "for Jimmy or be that James". A novel about religion but also about many things, he goes down deep into the empathy of every character and the result is powerful.

The Summer Book by Tove Jansson

Sun City by Tove Jansson

in which Ms. Jansson writes about childhood and old age with equal skill and a light touch; this writing serves its function without an ounce of fat. The episodic tales unwind around flawed yet human and lovable characters.

The Time of the Doves by Mercè Rodoreda

in which this Catalan writes about devastation in a series of incremental impressions from a naive character, but one whose grief, though she doesn't understand it herself, also catches the reader by surprise.

Skylark by Dezső Kosztolányi

in which a very ugly daughter and her parents have their routines disrupted when said ugly daughter leaves to visit a relative. A funny, sad book.

Pan by Knut Hamsun

in which Mr. Hamsun outdoes his own masterpiece *Hunger*, having written here an even better, more complex portrait of the mind's infatuation and raw feverish irrationality.

SHORT FICTION

Selected Prose of Heinrich von Kleist

in which so much is merciless and violent, and the people in these stories, poor things, are moved around by cosmic forces into monsters without their knowing it, swept up in the reconfiguration like a bit of bread in the bowels. *The Marquise of O...* in particular is one of the best stories I've ever read.

NON BIG BOX BOOKSTORE, etc.

Atlanta Vintage Books (3660 Clairmont Road) and Books Again (225 N McDonough St).

Also, don't forget the DeKalb County Public Library (where I work). We love you.

ANTHONY OWSLEY

The Billionaire's Vinegar: The Mystery of the World's Most Expensive Bottle of Wine

by Benjamin Wallace.

This book has it all: American History, International Intrigue, High Society, deception, villainy, and really old wine. And it's all non-fiction!

BARBARA SCHREIBER

THIS YEAR'S FAVORITES:

Sargent's Daughters: The Biography of a Painting by Erica Hirschler

I'm not a big Sargent fan and never gave much thought to the painting that is the subject of this book. But this is a small, well-crafted document of a time and a social class, the story of the dissolution of an idle, wealthy family.

The Ecology of Fear by Mike Davis

This book—about how unsustainability and inequality intersect in Los Angeles—starts out strong, and it's up and down from then on. Davis seems to leap into tin-foil hat territory a few times, but his chapter on the fire ecology of Malibu and the arrogance of the wealthy homeowners who have no business living there redeems the whole thing. This could be a great thinking person's beach read.

The Stories of John Cheever

Cheever Cheever Cheever—1,000 pages of him. Unputdownable, but in the interest of good mental hygiene I probably should have put it down occasionally and read something else.

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

I also loved:

Slouching Towards Bethlehem by Joan Didion

Pictures of Nothing by Kirk Varnadoe

MOST OVERRATED:

Freedom by Jonathan Franzen

One of the worst books I read this year, although I might have liked it had it not arrived in a big smelly box of overheated praise. The last 75-100 pages are very moving; they speak directly to people who have experienced the profundity of a long marriage. Unfortunately, the end of the book doesn't make much sense unless you have endured the first 400 pages.

MAXWELL SEBASTION

BOOKS

all this crap is in no particular order, but stuff that i really liked reading, that i can remember right now

"the book of vice; very naughty things (and how to do them)"

by Peter Sagal

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

" Saint Genet, comédien et martyr"

By Jean Paul Sarte

"revolutionary wealth"

by Alvin and Heidi Toffler

"the disappearing spoon"

by Sam Keene

"The greatest show on earth"

by Richard Dawkins

"city of thieves"

by David Benioff

"Antoine's Alphabet: Watteau and his world"

by Jed Perl

PODCASTS

again in no particular order, but these are podcasts i listen to ALL the time

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

"Fast Karate for the gentlemen"

for anime and video game nerds. funny and great

"News Dissector"

great left leaning look at the weeks news

"the moth"

great stories

"WNYC's radiolab"

just go listen

"this american life"

you probably already know this one

"greatest movie ever"

funny "reviews" of "great" possibly overlooked movies. very funny

"freakonomics radio"

just like the title says

"G7 welcoming committee"

amazing and you need to go listen

"national gallery of art behind the scenes"

great lectures on art

"naked archeology"

good collection of "naked"podcasts, this is my favorite. check out the site. they have naked astronomy and different topics that are all good and interesting

"stuff you missed in history class"

just like it says. interesting historical tidbits.

Audiobooks

these three were audiobooks, and ones whose narrator did not annoy the shit out of me...

"revolutionary wealth" by Alvin and Heidi Toffler

"the disappearing spoon" by Sam Keene

"The greatest show on earth" by Richard Dawkins

DENISE STEWART-SANABRIA

I just picked up Steve Martin's "Object of Beauty". I'm having trouble putting it down.

ARTNEWS_READS_2009

the fifth annual book recommendation list

Local bookstores

Michelle Jordan's Used Book Store recommendation: Atlanta Book Exchange near Babette's on N. Highland.

Other non-Big Boxes: A Cappella Books, Books Again, Charis Books, Criminal Records, Eagle Eye Bookshop, Little Shop of Stories, Outwrite Bookstore

DEIRDRE AIMS

I'm reading a book on decline in bee population. *A Spring Without Bees* by Michael Schacker. It's factual but very readable.

Also, *Beowulf* translated by Seamus Heaney

LISA ALEMBIK

An especially mainstream year, where art books generally took a break...

“*Avant-Guardians: Textlets in Ecology & Art*” by Linda Weintraub. Great for artists and educators interested in addressing sustainability and environmental issues through art.

“*Zen Shorts*” by John Muth (‘children’s’ book). This was a great gift to get/give. A joy to read out-loud to both little and big ones and the images inspired me to pick up my ink brush. (And, get this, the Panda’s name is StillWater.)

“Runaway Bunny” by Margaret Wise Brown (‘children’s’ book). Barring the stalker-ish quality of the text, a memorable story about how mom will always be there. Always. No matter how hard you try to get away.

Maurice Sendak’s “Nutshell Library” (‘children’s’ book). I woke up reciting “Going once, going twice, going chicken soup and rice.” That is not even the exact line in the book—but it took me a couple of weeks of having the ditty chew on my brain and all of the hullabaloo over “Where the Wild Things Are” to remember where the verse came from. (Thanks A. Owsley—“The Art of Maurice Sendak” came in handy!) As I re-read the four small (I mean, tiny—4” x 2.5” x .5”) books I was stunned to recognize the deep impression they had made on me as a child—possibly because the yiddishe kop who wrote them used language/images I recognized from my own household. The series includes “Pierre” (‘I don’t care’) and “One Was Johnny.”

“The Baby Book” by William Sears & Martha Sears. If you are pregnant, have a friend who is with child, or recently gave birth, this book is it. The authors have a relatively holistic way of informing you of what to expect and recommendations of what to do. I call it the Baby Bible.

Of the books I’ve started this year, these are ones I hope to finish next:

“The Yiddish Policemen’s Union” Michael Chabon

“The Rabbi’s Cat” by Joann Sfar (graphic novel)

“The Omnivore’s Dilemma” Michael Pollen

Wish List (heard both of these folks on Bob Edwards Weekend)

“The World Is Blue: How Our Fate and the Ocean's Are One” by Sylvia Earle

“Lighting Their Fires: Raising Extraordinary Children in a Mixed-up, Muddled-up, Shook-up World” by Rafe Esquith

PAUL BOSHEARS

Eichmann in Jerusalem - Hannah Arendt. This book continues its four decades of controversy as Arendt's works are slowly being translated into Hebrew and published in Israel. While the book has clear problems in it does reveal a central concern for us today: when the laws of a nation are criminal and thus only criminals behave morally, how do we put them on trial? I'm here thinking of America's new torture policies.

Torture Taxi: On the Trail of the CIA's Rendition Flights - Trevor Paglen & A.C. Thompson. This is excellent resource as it is a discussion of methodology as well as an excellent history of America's torture program over the past 8 years. A must read.

State of Exception - Giorgio Agamben. Presents the first history of "the state of exception" as he simultaneously lays out the case that governance and sovereignty are experiencing a paradigmatic shift. While the state of exception used to be exceptional and thus was presented as the grounds for the repealing of civil liberties and the extension of executive power; today we see that the exception is becoming the rule.

Giving an Account of Oneself & Precarious Life - Judith Butler. How is nation-building possible if those that are supposed to comprise its constitution are not able to be mourned in their loss or recognized in their living? What are the constituent elements of how we come to understand the notion of "I" or "me"?

Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics - Martin Heidegger. These are Heidegger's notes to his 1929-30 lectures first translated in the 1990s; they are critical for several reasons; for me personally I have been most interested in his theory of profound boredom which is discussed in depth here.

Scorch Atlas - Blake Butler. Atlanta's very own. Here's a novella written by a guy who loves books so much he ate one. His language work is pretty fantastical and perhaps this is a novella written by someone who is slowly losing their mind. Were there a soundtrack to this work it surely would have been written by Stockhausen &/or In/Humanity.

American Gods - Neil Gaiman. I am rereading this because I think Gaiman's a fun read.

The Dream Songs - John Berryman. An epic drunk. An excellent collection of poetry exploring life and mourning.

The Pedagogy of the Oppressed - Paulo Freire. We've begun a reading group and this was recently suggested. I really appreciate a book that seriously discusses love and communication.

ROBERT CHEATHAM

At the moment, I'm juggling a number of books. Last night I started reading again *THE CITY AT THE END OF TIME* by Greg Bear, one of my favorite science fiction writers. Although I had a very difficult time getting into this one, it seems that it will be worth the effort. In the other hand, i'm not sure I can say the same thing for *ANATHEM* by Neal Stephenson, although I have liked some of his earlier books (*SNOW CRASH*, *THE DIAMOND AGE*, etc.). For one thing, as is the style now it seems, it's very long and at the moment of halfway through it, I don't know if it'll be worth it to finish.

A while back I finished *PULSE OF THE DRAGON: The Secret Knowledge of the Pirates*. occult investigations by Eugenia Macer-Story. A very odd book. The back cover puts it this way: " Pulse of the Dragon is a journey into difficult, 'forbidden,' and 'unspoken' areas of the planet earth and the knowledge and experience of the rogue

inhabitants of this planet as this may relate to intelligences from other worlds and/or dimensions of existence." Ok, that's a tall order and the only way that gets even close is through a weird sort of dissociated writing style, perhaps echoing Walter Benjamin's famous comment in his essay on surrealism, to the effect that the surreal takes place through the haunted stagings of language.

I'm still in the process of moving though GIORGIO AGAMBEN: A Critical Introduction by Leland de la Durantaye, perhaps my favorite commentator on Agamben.

I also just finished reading the most recent Agamben book, THE SIGNATURE OF ALL THINGS: On Method, by turns difficult and intriguing, even Orphic; engages with Foucault quite a lot also...still waiting on his book on the administration of/by angels (actually, on the bureaucracy of the Church -- and hence secular life).

I very much admired Daniel Tiffany's previous book Toy Medium: Materialism and Modern Lyric so I was very curious about his new one, INFIDEL POETICS: Riddles, Nightlife, Substance. Any book that includes Leibnitz, the origin of the riddle/puzzle form in language, the idea of obscurity, and the language of those who inhabit the linguistic margins has got to be solid in my book.. and it very much is, but too difficult to categorize in one sentence. sigh. too academic for most I suppose. even with 'nightlife' on the cover...speaking of cover, great old WeeGee photo for cover.

I used to read a John D. McDonald Travis Mcgee detective books every summer years back (the ones with a color in the title) and I picked up THE LONELY SILVER RAIN at what was basically a garage sale...florida in seventies.

Speaking of piracy, so far I've only read the preface/intro to Daniel Heller-Roazen's new book THE ENEMY OF ALL: Piracy and the Law of Nations but he always has interesting takes on what he writes about so I'm looking forward to it . He is also a translator of Agamben so I'm sure there will be much of sovereignty, the exception of the ruler over the ruled, the old distinctions of 'barbarian and citizen' which the Greeks promulgated and so on. Throw in a little bit of kant on cosmopolitanism and there you have it.

Also, two very thin books by Jean-Luc Nancy, one called LISTENING and the other called THE FALL OF SLEEP, on sleep of course, both phenomenologies of their respective subjects; generally, dense but lapidary--sort of preferred the sleep book

though. I also started a downloaded version of a newly released but old book of his called *The Discourse of the Syncope: Logodaedalus on style (or lack thereof) in Kant and the literary*. And actually I've started probably half a dozen other books as pdfs...but--only so much time stolen from here and there to read.

And last but not least (and probably not last either, just can't remember/find the others), *BUILDERS OF THE PACIFIC COAST* and *HOMEWORK: Hand built Shelter* by Lloyd Khan. Both beautifully illustrated with amazing building projects, the likes of which you just don't find around here. These definitely represent a different mindset from what you are used to in the ol' ATL.

There is no doubt some madness in the method of the non-path though these books and vice versa, each book being a rather short stick when it comes right down to it...don't know how much this list constitutes recommendations tho---just what i've been reading.

JOHN CILIBERTO

Buddhist Art News review copies:

I've read a great many of the books received for review, but I have yet to write a great many reviews. In August, the site was hacked, which has slowed me down. Most of these were published in 2009.

The Four Great Temples, by David McCallum.

This examines the titular temples, a grouping that has not received a great deal of

attention in Japanese art history since all four of these early temples exist only as ruins (if at all), while many quite fine temples exist intact in Japan. The author proceeds from some very recent archaeological expeditions, and makes claims for the location and scale of Kudara, etc. It is a dry and technical read, but appreciated in English.

Buddha, by Osamu Tezuka, vol 1-3.

Tezuka is the father of Japanese manga, the creator of Astro Boy. His style has come to influence countless other comic artists and animators. Late in his life, he created a series of manga on the life of the Buddha, and it is amazing. The drawing is superb: the cartoonized characters and animals, the more literal architecture, and the fantastic landscapes and vegetal life. While remaining a manga in spirit -- broad slapstick and moments of levity -- a quite full telling of the life of the historical Buddha is presented. I have only read three of the twelve total volumes...

Ajanta, Vol. IV: Year by Year, by Walter Spink.

Published by Brill, this is one of five volumes in Spink's series on Ajanta, the vast cave temple complex in India. Spink has worked in the caves for decades, and is the acknowledged expert on the subject. Hence, these volumes present a very particular view on their history. The fourth volume is a year by year chronology of the "Golden Age" of the caves, which the author situates in time somewhat differently than accepted history. Very specialized book.

Buddhist Sculpture of Korea, by Kim Lena

Buddhist Architecture of Korea, by Kim Sung-woo

Handbook of Korean Art: Buddhist Sculpture by Youngsok Pak & Roderick Whitfield

Fifty Wonders of Korea; Vol 1: Culture and Art

The first two are matched volumes published in the "Korean Culture Series". It is needless to say that the creation of the canon of art in Asia was one dictated by the

particular interests of certain groups. At top, Japanese scholars recognized the significance of art as a cultural commodity once Japan began to discover Europe. The canon of Japanese art thus was a creation of the 19th century, designed to win Japan influence in the West by hewing to Western models. Meanwhile, Japan maintained a superior political and military position with respect to Korea. For this latter reason, the writers of Asian art history initially gave short shrift to Korea. Further, over the centuries since the heyday of Korean culture, much of the country has retreated into deep isolation, while in the 20th century, the Northern part of the Korean peninsula nearly disappeared from the eyes of scholarship. Despite this, the fact is that Buddhism and many of its associated artforms (and techniques, e.g., casting) were imported into Japan directly from Korea, and a great deal of Japanese aesthetics is derived from Korean (and Chinese) models. These two volumes (and the entire series) are one of many recent attempts to provide some balance to this history. These are relatively dry in delivery, with a shaky design sense, but their content is extremely useful.

The Handbook is designed as a 'field guide' to Korean Buddhist sculpture, a wonderful idea and very well executed. Small in size, the book packs a punch with a selection of the most significant objects. Each is considered in terms of iconography, but also with an eye on spiritual aspects, something which is crucial to understanding such sculpture. In most cases, multiple views are given.

<http://www.laurenceking.com/product/Buddhist+Sculpture:+Handbook+of+Korean+Art.htm>

The last named is another evidence of Korea's quite useful process of presentation of its cultural heritage to the West.

Gandhara: Legends, Monasteries, and Paradise.

Against great obstacles, a traveling exhibition of Buddhist art from the Gandhara region (Pakistan) was assembled by a combined team of German and Pakistani curators. Gandhara is noteworthy for melding together cultural influences from India, Persia, and Greece, the latter provided by the incursion by Alexander the Great to the region in the 4th c. BC. Upon the western discovery of Buddhist art, a great deal was made by many western scholars of this latter influence, claiming at the extreme that the creation of figurative images in Buddhist art was due solely to the influence of Greek models. This view has gradually relaxed, but one is still struck by the evidence of Greek (and Roman) styles in the art of the region. Many of the great works from Gandhara were long ago

removed to Western collections, while over the intervening years archaeological work has uncovered many amazing finds. The world's attention was brought to the region with the destruction in 2001 of the monumental Buddhas at Bamiyan, and it is in the context of the cultural warfare ongoing in the region that this exhibition made its way to museums. The catalogue is superb, with 30+ essays by many of the luminaries across the range of the field, great maps and figures, as well as countless images of the works themselves.

The Art of Buddhism: and introduction to its history and meaning, by Denise Patry Leidy

Surprisingly, until this year, only one survey of Buddhist art existed (Thames & Hudson). This volume, published by Shambhala fills that gap a bit. The book is designed for an undergraduate level readership and covers Buddhist art from its earliest instances to the 20th century, but with greater emphasis on periods of particular flourishing. Only tangential attention is given to the pre-Buddhist art of regions subsequently producing objects devoted to that practice, which I consider a flaw. The author's principle thesis is to relate the practice of Buddhism to its art, a very appropriate approach. There are the absolute minimum of notes, and the author passes over historiography and partisan disputes, often giving the impression that a stated position is the accepted or only version. As a single volume history it is useful and much-needed.

Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment, by Audrey Yoshiko Seo

Also published by Shambhala, this small paperback volume offers a selection of enso from Japanese art. These are the now ubiquitous blank ink (sumi-e) brushstroke paintings of circles. The book is small and attractive... with biographies of artists and an forward by John Daido Looi, who passed away in 2009.

Patron and Painter: Situ Panchen and the Revival of the Encampment Style, by David Jackson

I haven't read this catalog to an exhibition at the Rubin Museum of Art. It features scholarly work by Jackson which refers to original sources, a practice not commonly employed since the early days of Tibetology.

buddhas, by Nancy Tingler

Exhibition catalog.

Sutasoma, translated by Kate O'Brien

Translation of Javanese Poem 'Sutasoma', a Buddhist tale from the 14th c.

c.f., <http://www.library.ohiou.edu/sea/blog/?p=474>

Fathering Your Father, by Alan Cole

I only read about half of this. It is what I am coming to understand is the modern French historical approach to lineage in Tang Chan Buddhism.

<http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/11077.php>

The Heart of the Continent, by Francis Edward Younghusband

Account of the great British officer and explorer's part in the early days of the Great Game through his travels in central Asia.

Later in life, he pursued a spiritual life:

"During his 1904 retreat from Tibet, Younghusband had a mystical experience which suffused him with "love for the whole world" and convinced him that "men at heart are

divine." [11] This conviction led him to regret his invasion of Tibet, and eventually, in 1936, to found the World Congress of Faiths (in imitation of the World Parliament of Religions)."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Youngusband

Other Art books:

Hundertwasser: Complete Graphic Work 1951-1976, by Wieland Schmied

A fantastic jewel of a book, small format, printed on black paper in six colors with multiple foil emboss...

„If you and your neighbour are creative,

we need not travel far.

We need not walk far, because paradise is

right around the corner.“

http://www.hundertwasser.at/index_en.php

Athenian Black Figure Vases, by John Boardman.

The thorough work over many centuries on this genre has yielded surprising intimacy and detail regarding the creators of the ancient objects.

African Masks, by Franco Monti

Art of the Byzantine Era, by David Talbot Rice

I had a paperback of this and then picked up a hardcover from Books Again in Decatur for \$1. A fine, handbook-sized survey.

The Best American Comics: 2006, by Anne Elizabeth Moore

I am happy to pick up these volumes, even a few years later (cheaper). Although a recent addition to the "Best American" publications, they already are getting a bit hidebound... and institutional.

Fiction, Poetry:

Galactic North, by Alastair Reynolds

Revelation Space, by Alastair Reynolds

My pal Lary gave me the first one, a short story collection set in the Universe of the Revelation Space trilogy. I hadn't read any hard sci-fi, or space opera, in many years, and the short story collection was a good way to get into this. This writer is credited with reviving the hard sci-fi genre, and he does so with some skill with characters and plot. The stories provided enough context to get me in, and I was willing to plow all the way

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

through Revelation Space (it is 700 or something pages), thoroughly enjoying it.

<http://voxish.tripod.com/>

<http://thewertzzone.blogspot.com/2009/06/revelation-space-books-by-chronology.html>

Concrete Island, by JG Ballard

I read this one while staying at Nisa's house. It is fun to browse other people's book. This is the typical Ballard delicacy, the shockingly rapid slide into barbarism from the everyday.

Tiny Bedtime Stories, by JS van Buskirk

JS kindly gave me one. I have a find place in my heart for her, as it was in one of the early info demos that I first performed musically in Atlanta.

Opera, Q. Horati Flacci

Parallel text, as always evokes me desire to brush my Latin.

Mystical Poems of Rumi 1; First Selection, Poems 1-200, by Rumi, Jalal al-Din,
translated by A. J. Arberry

University of Chicago Press

Mural, by Mahmoud Darwish

I Can't Go On, I'll Go On, by Samuel Beckett

History:

Crusaders in the Holy Lands, by Meron Benvenisti

I haven't very much Crusade history lately, but I came upon this in McKay's Used books in Nashville and it was unfamiliar and a bit unusual. (McKay's are great stores; why not one in Atlanta?) The author was the Deputy mayor of Jerusalem in the 1970s, and this book proceeds from his architectural and archaeological access. It includes lots of population data and things of that sort...

Atlas of Ancient & Classical Greece

In the Everyman's library, a nice early 20th c. edition of maps related to ancient/classical history, includes military history maps.

JERRY CULLUM

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Orhan Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence*

Charles Wright, *Sestets: Poems*

Cathy Gere, *Knossos and the Prophets of Modernism*

Therese Lichtenstein, *Twilight Visions: Surrealism and Paris*

I'm sure I'll think of more later, but Cathy Gere's book is particularly fine.

{And later...}

I also meant to recommend, very highly, Henry Adams' new book *Tom and Jack*, a significant re-reading of the influence of Thomas Hart Benton on Jackson Pollock. You'll never look at a Benton painting or a Pollock painting the same way again, and you'll pick up some gorgeous stories about the utterly forgotten modernist school of abstraction called Synchronism.

DEIRDRE AIMS

I'm reading a book on decline in bee population. *A Spring Without Bees* by Michael Schacker. It's factual but very readable.

Also, *Beowulf* translated by Seamus Heaney

BILL GIGNILLIAT

***1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* (2005)**

Charles C. Mann

This book will revise your thinking and perceptions about the new world.

What you learned in school is historically wrong based on new findings.

1421 The Year China Discovered America (2003)

Gavin Menzies

Another interesting version of who discovered the new world.

EDWARD A. HALL

Not only would I reread my friend Nicola Griffith's Aud Torvingen novels--two set in Atlanta--I did, as I was writing a biographical profile of her for a reference series called *Newsmakers*. The first book, *The Blue Place*, embroils Aud ("rhymes with shroud") in an international drug-dealing/art-smuggling morass. Aud cuts through underbelly Atlanta as easily as she navigates (and sometimes breaks into) the mansions of the city's elites. She takes on the job of protecting an art consultant named Julia but finds herself otherwise entangled with this formidable woman. Meticulously observed and, at times, powerfully erotic, *The Blue Place* presents a dangerous vision of our town through the eyes of an outsider who can open all doors.

The first sequel, *Stay*, is a bit of a ghost story, as well as a missing person investigation. What's really fascinating here is the extent to which Aud realizes that she is the person who is really missing, even as she searches for a woman she has no desire to find. Her quest leads to one of the most horrifying episodes of violence I have ever read, in part thanks to the restraint exercised in its description.

The next book, *Always*, splits its narrative between Atlanta and Nicola's current home town, Seattle. Here, Aud teaches a bunch of Southern women the very-much-not-gentle art of self-defense; there, she probes a scheme involving real estate (hers--Aud is wealthy) and sabotage on a film set. Aud loses some of her near-superhuman aura in this book, to her benefit.

What distinguishes these novels is their right-word-right-order evocation of everything from the natural world (whether yards in Lake Claire or Norwegian glaciers) to fights with weapons or without--though Aud is *never* without weapons. And for anyone who knows me and is already familiar with these books, or who becomes so in the future: Yes, their Eddie character is based on me.

MICHELLE JORDAN

Children's book (but not for a sensitive child):

Love that Dog by Susan Creech

Adult book:

Peace like a River by Leif Enger (most people have probably already read this book since it was a national bestseller awhile back ago, but I read mostly used books or library books so I am behind most folks)

DEVIDYAL KHALSA

A Short History of Tractors in Ukranian by Marina Lewycka

A Virtuous Woman by Kaye Gibbons

How the Irish Saved Civilization by Thomas Cahill

Lunch at the Piccadilly by Clyde Edgerton

Stiff by Mary Roach

The Delivery Man by Joe McGinnis Jr.

Flight by Sherman Alexie

I'm Down by Mishna Wolff

Arming America by Michael A Bellesiles

LEIGH KIRKLAND

In the order I read them this year, not a hierarchy of preference or quality:

Benjamin Black, *Silver Swan*

Marilynne Robinson, *Home*

Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth*

Natalie Goldberg, *Wild Mind: Living the Writer's Life*

John LeCarré, *The Tailor of Panama*

Joseph O'Neill, *Netherland*

Paule Marshall, *The Fisher King*

Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middlesex*

Julian Barnes, *Arthur & George* Michael Ondaatje, *Divisadero*

Jerry A. Coyne, *Why Evolution is True*

Nadine Gordimer, *My Son's Story*

Jason Goodwin, *The Janissary Tree*

Ursula K. LeGuin, *Steering the Craft: Exercises and Discussions on Story Writing for the Lone Navigator or the Mutinous Crew*

Jason Goodwin, *The Snake Stone: Investigator Yashim Returns*

Russell Banks, *Continental Drift*

Steven Millhauser, *Dangerous Laughter: 13 Stories*

Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*

Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Telling*

Jim Harrison, *Dalva*

Muriel Barbery, *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*

Patrick O'Brien, all of the Aubrey-Maturin book, most of which I reread this year

Jane Smiley, *Ten Days in the Hills*

DEB LACATIVA

I'm new to the list so this call is new for me too.

Your appeal to oldtimers got my attention.

Made me wonder about the future of print and reading in general.

I've been giving a lot of my books away via the shared reading shelf at my workplace. I work with a lot of young people and it's very gratifying to see them pick up and read books that moved, instructed or entertained me in years past. We are a captive audience at a call center, sometimes there are long minutes to fill. Imagine seeing a 20-something reading "The Tempest" probably for the first time and only because it was a thin volume with an interesting cover and they missed that it was written by William Shakespeare.

On the other hand, there are a lot of books that I can't seem to

part with because I could read them again sometime.

Andersonville by MacKinlay Kantor. Care anything at all about the Civil
ware and historical fiction? This guy did it to the tune of the Pulitzer
Prize for fiction in 1956.

The Stars My Destination by Alfred Bester - just waiting to be written
into a blockbuster starring Bruce Willis..wait, he's too old now.

Fall on Your Knees by Ann-Marie MacDonald - another dark film in the wings,
How family shame and disfunction reverberates down through time and history.

there are more on the shelves somewhere in here, I'm sure.

JIMMY LO

NOVELS:

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

- An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter by Cesar Aira
- How I Became a Nun by Cesar Aira

Last year I discovered Thomas Bernhard. This year, it's Cesar Aira who is rocking my boat. These short, weird novels are unique in their blend of lyrical attention, shape-shifting narratives, and philosophical insights. It's hard to describe, just read them, start with "Landscape". My full review: <http://tinyurl.com/zyyucdh>

- The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge: A Novel by Rainer Maria Rilke

A free form novel incorporating history, folklore, memories and ruminations on poverty and death, with a dash of metaphysics thrown in for good measure. This novel feels like a well-woven tapestry told with urgency.

- A High Wind in Jamaica by Richard Hughes

Like no other book I've ever read, a zany adventure on the high seas... children and pirates and animals! But told in this strange haze of a child's perspective. Truly bizarre and wonderful. Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/ykpelwb>

OTHER NOVELS:

- Two Serious Ladies by Jane Bowles
- Frances Johnson by Stacey Levine
- Stoner by John Williams
- A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith
- Madame Bovary by Gustave Flaubert
- Moviegoer by Walker Percy

NON-FICTION:

- The Story of Mary Maclane by Mary Maclane

Mary Maclane was a nineteen year old stuck in Butte Montana in 1901. But she was extraordinary. In fact, she was a genius, and she knew it. She wrote this memoir (for the lack of a better word), which is more like a manifesto, or a definition of herself. It's one of the strangest books I've read. My full review: <http://tinyurl.com/yf8sljw>

- Cries Unheard: Why Children Kill: The Story of Mary Bell by Gitta Sereny

I guess it is the year of reading about Marys. Mary Bell was eleven when she killed 2 boys (ages 3 and 4). Through interviews with her, this book takes a look back on her life after many years of incarceration. It's a haunting spellbinding book into the reasons children kill, and the consequences of judging their acts without first understanding why they did them.

- Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

- Breaking the News: How the Media Undermine American Democracy by James Fallows

POETRY:

- Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke

The other person I discovered this year is Rilke. Not sure why I've never read him till now, but he is now probably my favorite poet. I was blown away by the Duino Elegies.

- The Making of the Pre by Francis Ponge

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Steig Larsson The notes on the back cover sum it up: "At once a murder bystery, family saga, ove story and tale of financial intrigue wrapped into one satisfying complex and entertainingly atmospheric novel."

A few pages of really creepy sadistic events.

BARBARA SCHREIBER

This was my year of Jewish books, among them:

The Yiddish Policemen's Union by Michael Chabon. The first 80% is rich and dense; the remainder is annoying. I adored this book, although I suspect it's incomprehensible to anyone unfamiliar with Yiddish or the minutiae of Orthodox Judaism.

For the Relief of Unbearable Urges by Nathan Englander. A beautiful, bitter little collection of short stories by a writer both shaped and haunted by his Orthodox upbringing. As if I needed yet another reminder of why I now have a Christmas tree.

Portnoy's Complaint by Philip Roth. After 40 years, still dirty.

I also loved:

A Field Guide to Getting Lost by Rebecca Solnit. Loopy, irritating, inspired.

And how about a sub-category for most overrated book? My pick is:

A Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole. Perhaps if I'd read it when it first landed on my bookshelf 25 years ago, I would have been enchanted by this colorful picaresque novel written by a brilliant soul who died young. But many years and many books later, I found it indulgent and overwrought. Take out the clichés and the adverbs, and all you have left is a pamphlet.

ROBERT SHERER

We Boys Together: Teenagers in Love Before Girl-Craziness by Jeffery P. Dennis, Vanderbilt University Press

"Teenage boys are wild about girls. When their hormones kick in at puberty, they can think of nothing else, and that's the way it has always been-- right? Wrong. This book explores romantic relationships between teenage boys as they were portrayed before, during, and immediately after World War II." It proves that *Girl-craziness* is not '*natural*' but is entirely a Cold War era social construct fomented by heterosexist parents, teachers, psychiatrists, and especially the mass media.

Mary Oliver: New and Selected Poems, Beacon Press

She is the Bard of Provincetown and, like any good Druid, she lets nature be her teacher. Each summer on Cape Cod I reread her life's work. She is so thoroughly sewn into the fabric of the region that I can hardly fix upon any subject or object without hearing her meditations upon it.

DENISE STEWART-SANABRIA

World Made by Hand James Howard Kunstler

Seven Days in the Art World Sarah Thornton

KAREN TAUCHES

--*Mitakuye Oyasin* ("we are all related"): *America before Columbus, based on the oral history of 33 American Indian tribes.* by Dr. A. C. Ross (kind out-there & self-published 1989)

1989 (bought several of these at Atlanta Vintage Books--just north of Buford Hwy on Clairmont road. my new favorite spot.)

Somehow the subtitle doesn't do it justice. If I had to sum it up. . .it's a very interesting thesis that draws correlations between Jungian psychology and American Indian culture and practice. Dr. Ross drops some good references to like-minded books. He claims that the "doorway to the collective unconscious is through the right brain." (!!) Also included are maps of lost continents Atlantis and Mu.

--*The Secret Teachings of All Ages*

by Manly P Hall (huge book. . .take it one chapter at a time :)

--*Adventures of a Brownie* -- original story from 1872 (London) by Dinah Maria Mulock Craik (1826-1887)

folktales. awesome illustrations. "He is a sober, stay-at-home household elf--nothing much to look at, even if you did see him, which you are not likely to do--only a little old man, about a foot high, all dressed in brown, with a brown face and hands, and a brown peaked cap, just the colour of a brown mouse. And like a mouse he hides in corners--especially kitchen corners, and only comes out after dark when nobody is about, and so sometimes people call him Mr. Nobody."

("brownies" are known to be seen in Southern Appalachia. . .)

--*The Fourth Dimension: A Guided Tour of the Higher Universes*, Rudolf Rucker (author), David Povilaitis (illustrator)

--*The Singularity is Near*, By Raymond Kurzweil (nano tech freaks me out!) (there's also: *The Age of Spiritual Machines: When Computers Exceed Human Intelligence*)

--*The Inner Life*, C.W. Leadbeater (prolific theosophist)

--*Truckers*, Mary Richardson (photos and journalistic accounts)

--Thomas Demand, *Nationalgalerie* Catalogue with "Captions" by Botho Strauß, ISBN: 978-3-86521-941-1 English

*Botho Strauss's "captions" are austere and philosophical prose poems! absolutely incredible words.

here's a list of his works that are on my radar/wish list:

The Young Man, translated by Roslyn Theobald in 1995,

cultural essay "*Anschwellender Bocksgesang*" (Swelling Goat Song) a critical examination of the modern civilisation. . .(is there an english translation?)

Living, glimmering, lying translated by Roslyn Theobald (1999)

Three Plays (The Park, Seven Doors, Time and the Room) translated by Jeremy Sams (2006)

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

(tangential) wish list. . .

--(looking for a free copy of) Jonathan Franzen's essay in Harper's magazine, October 2005. (maybe at a real library? . . .) a philosophy of written fiction.

--*THE IRON WHIM, A Fragmented History of Typewriting*, Darren Wershler-Henry

--The Esoteric World of Madamn Blavatsky, collected by Daniel Caldwell

--Bertolt Brecht "The Book of Changes" (fragment also known as Me-Ti), also *The Popular and the Realistic*.

--A Journey Through Other Spaces: Essays and Manifestos, 1944-1990, Tadeusz Kantor

SUSAN TODD-RAQUE

Plutarch's Morals: Ethical Essays.

So much to think about when reading it.

I think someone on artnews suggested this book and just started it but it already "has" me (irony is the reality of this world runs counter to Plutarch)

Seven Days in the Art World by Sarah Thornton

MANDIE TURNER MITCHELL

Bridges of Skin Money - Harry Polkinhorn

That's Blaxploitation!: Roots of the Baadasssss 'Tude (Rated X by an All-Whyte Jury) - Darius James

The Hundred-Headed Woman - Max Ernst (1929)

Realizing the Impossible: Art Against Authority - MacPhee & Reuland

Hell - Robert Olen Butler

I Am America And So Can You! - Stephen Colbert

Gypsy Girls Best Shoes - Ann Rockwell

Collage: Critical Views - Katherine Hoffman (Ed.)

A Perfect Mess: The Hidden Benefits of Disorder - Abrahamson & Freedman

Optics of Redemption - Walter Benjamin

The Adventures of Darius and Downey: and other true tales of street art, as told to Ed Zipco - Leon Reid

What Should I Do If Reverend Billy Is In My Store? - Billy Talen

When You Are Engulfed in Flames - David Sedaris

Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey - Isabel Fonseca

CAMERON WOODALL

The prophet by Kahlil Gibran

ARTNEWS RECOMMENDS BOOKS IV 2008

Cecelia Kane

The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle by Haruki Murakami

Translated into English in 1998.

Murakami plays with reality, the nature of existence and the world of dreams. He's a great storyteller. The novel is set in a suburb of modern Tokyo and Manchuria during Japan's campaign there in the 1930s. The book is a combination detective story-psychological thriller, populated with bizarre characters, a haunted house, prophet bird and deep wells that lead to the mind.

Gillian Gussack

For light reading, I crave more Christopher Moore. He wrote "Lamb, the gospel according to Biff, Christ's childhood pal"

After reading "A Dirty Job", junk shopping has a new dimension.

I relish Umberto Eco and am reading "The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loana"

I also enjoy the eye candy of the 500 book series and studying other contemporary craft work.

Tom Ferguson

I re-read *Steppenwolf* (Herman Hesse) this year and was impressed by his lucid take on militarism etc; written in 1928. Also stumbled upon a short autobiography by Colin Wilson... these two writers were influences on the shaping of my world view, esp. Hesse, so it was interesting to find both writers striving yet missing, inconsistently expressing what I find and re-find complete and clear in re-& re-reading Eckhart Tolle's *A New Earth* and *The Power of Now*.

Eddie Morton

A favorite, reading for the second time...

The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight by Thom Hartmann

Robert Sherer

Shooting Rats at the Bibb County Dump by David Bottoms

In a U-Haul North of Damascus by David Bottoms

Oglethorpe's Dream by David Bottoms

Armored Hearts by David Bottoms

Vagrant Grace by David Bottoms

Waltzing Through the Endtime by David Bottoms

I reread all of these this year. He exalts the commonplace to the sublime. He is the Poet Laureate of Georgia and so much more!

Reflex - A Vic Muniz Primer

A great artist and writer. He writes about art without sounding like a pretentious fool.

The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen

Arguably the finest war poet in the English language.

Confessions of a Mask by Yukio Mishima

An attempt to resurrect from memory hints of his impending homosexuality.

Julie Puttgen

This year's great novels in my life:

Siege of Krishnapur by JG Farrell

Sea of Poppies by Amitav Ghosh

Netherland by Joseph O'Neill

Hopeful Monsters by Nicholas Mosley

Anthem by Neal Stephenson

Dharma Book:

Hearwood of the Bo Tree by Buddhadasa Bhikku

Debra Gavant

I heartily recommend the book:

Making Up the Mind - How the Brain Creates our Mental World

by Chris Frith

The bits of info that is your conscious mind is actually an

interpretation/rationalization of what your subconscious brain arrived at moments before you were even aware of the thought. This may seem simple, but a totally different way of understanding conscious experience. Better explained in book length! Know thyself, and then some....

Sara Schindel

The Risk Pool by Richard Russo

Ed Hall

Gus & His Gang by Chris Blain: Who says the Western is dead? This brilliant, sexy sequential-picture narrative (you might choose to call it a graphic novel; I prefer not to) has a walking priapism as its title character. The eponymous Gus bears a cartoony needle-nose twice the length of his skull and pop-eyes that double as testes. Despite his appearance, though, Gus is more a romantic than a mere cocksman. In a series of linked stories, he and his fellows rob banks and hijack trains, but their real goal is gaining the attention (and attentions) of women. Blain is a cartoonist of rare talents and truly elegant lines. As much as I despise comparisons I have to say that reading this book was like discovering some lost work by the great Harvey (Mad magazine) Kurtzman. I would have been happy to read *Gus & His Gang* at twice its length.

Terri Dilling

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay by Michael Chabon

I really enjoyed this book and want to read more by this author.

From Amazon.com Review: Like the comic books that animate and inspire it, *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* is both larger than life and of it too. Complete with golems and magic and miraculous escapes and evil nemeses and even hand-to-hand Antarctic battle, it pursues the most important questions of love and war, dreams and art, across pages brimming with longing and hope.

The Sixteen Pleasures: A Novel by Robert Hellenga

A novel for entertainment, with a love story and a little mystery. The main character, Margot, goes to Florence to help restore books after the 1969 flood, and discovers a secret, erotic book in a convent that may be very valuable. I enjoyed the portrayal of art and culture in Florence.

Ann Rowles

"The Accidental Masterpiece" by Michael Kimmerman

On my "to read" list is Marilynne Robinson's "Home" - I have a copy but haven't started it. Mark and I both loved the previous one, "Gilead."

Jerry Cullum

Would definitely include Orhan Pamuk, *Other Colors* (essays, but start with the novels, especially *Snow*; *The New Life*; *The*

Black Book. The better translation of the latter is by Maureen Freely, whose own novel, *Enlightenment*, is a marvelous glimpse into the life of an American expatriate growing up in Turkey).

Also Daniel Smail, *On Deep History and the Brain*; and John H. Johnston (our own Emory prof), *The Allure of Machinic Life*, for two very different takes on how we're wired and how history unfolds because of it.

There were a lot of other books, of which the only ones that I now recall are Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World*; Geert Mak, *In Europe: Travels in the Twentieth Century*; Leonard Todd, *Carolina Clay: The Life and Legend of the Slave Potter Dave*; Pico Iyer, *The Open Road: The Global Journey of the Dalai Lama*.

Also John Crowley's complete Aegypt cycle of novels is finally available in a matched paperback set: *The Solitudes*, *Love & Sleep*, *Daemonomania*, and *Endless Things*; thus proving that all things have an end.

My favorite book this past year was "The Lovely Bones" by Alice Sebold. I had avoided it for years because I just could not deal with the brutal subject matter. (It is the story of a teenage girl who is raped and murdered.) Finally I mustered up my courage and read it this past August. It is one of the best books I have ever read. I am still haunted by the visual descriptions and its exquisite language.

Julie Stuart

I feel like I've read a lot this year but so much of it has been online.

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver—wonderful year long journal of intentional living off the land from a premier wordsmith

Presentation Zen—Garr Reynolds

The Brand Gap—Marty Neumeier

Made to Stick—Chip Heath and Dan Heath

Vicki Bethel

Let Us Now Praise Famous Men by James Agee

Have read references to it all my life and just now got around to reading it. It should be required reading for everyone.

Karen Tauches

A Planet Called Earth by George Gamow (1963).

Amazing geological stories and theories about our material planet & our solar system all the way down to the core.

Red Mars by Kim Stanley Robinson

Awesome sci-fi trilogy: *Red Mars* (1992), *Green Mars* (1993) and *Blue Mars* (1996)

London Labor and the London Poor by Henry Mayhew

A radical work of Victorian journalism. In the 1840s he observed, documented and described the state of working people in London for a series of articles in a newspaper, the Morning Chronicle, that were later compiled into book form. The articles go into deep, almost pedantic detail concerning the trades, habits, religion and domestic arrangements of the thousands of people working the streets of the city. Much of the material comprises detailed interviews in which people candidly describe their lives and work: for instance, Jack Black Jack Black talks about his job as "rat and mole destroyer to Her

Majesty", remaining in good humour despite his experience of a succession of near-fatal infections from bites.[1]

Real Magic by Isaac Bonewitz (1973)

Peggy Dobbins

Dialectics by Ilyenkov

Published in the 70s by International publishers. While it was still being published I gave copies to minds I cherished. Still my favorite philosophy book.

Situationist City by Sadler

Published in the 90s by MIT press. Mike and I are reading it outloud together now and loving it.

Mandi Mitchell

What Would Jesus Buy? by Reverend Billy

"Belief. The Fundamentalists have one rhetorical device that they use all day long. They say that we are not believers and that they are. Their entire project of consumerism and war depends on this idea."

p. 66

Robert Cheatham

The Golden by Lucius Shepard.

A fiction piece about the internal workings of a vampire clan.

Doesn't sound like the sort of thing I would read but I read everything I can find by Shepard.

Noli Me Tangere: On the raising of the body by Jean-Luc Nancy.

A philosophical exploration of the body and the further deconstruction of Christianity.

Benjamin's –abilities by Samuel Weber.

One of the great explicators of Walter Benjamin.

Faces of the Living Dead: the belief in Spirit Photography

by Martyn Jolly.

Just what it says, many b/w pixs. Explores the phenomena of Nineteenth century spirit photography.

Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials (Anomaly)

By Reza Negarestani

A fairly stupefying read which seems to be both fiction and theory and occultism, by what I suspect is a cabal of London theorists. The problem is that petroleum is a live agent which is having its way with us.

The Resurrection of the Son of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol. 3)
by N. T. Wright.

A very long book exploring all the theories about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If you have no patience with any form of theology stay away. But, as they say, it's magisterial, book award winner etc.

Reading Boyishly" Roland Barthes, J.M. Barrie, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Marcel Prout, and J.D. Winnicott by Carol Mavor.

From an academic Press, Duke, but fascinating reading, just haven't had time to continue with it.

Welcome To Mars: Fantasies of Science in the American Century, 1947-1959 by Ken Hollings

Looks to be a fascinating book but i've just started it so I can't say.

The Book From the Sky by Robert Kelly.

Yes Robert Kelly the poet. Can't say much cause just started it.

The Rebirth of Pan by Jim Brandon

I just re-read this again as a photocopied book form Emory. Fascinating look at the weirdness of ancient American artifacts, archeolastronomy, numerology, naming, bigfoot. Lots of fun to read.

Lisa Alembik

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

The Ticking by Renee French

Graphic novel with fantastic drawings.

The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick

Story told through drawings and minimal text about an orphan boy with a fictional account of filmmaker Georges Melies. Caldecott Winner

Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister by Gregory Maguire

By the author of *Wicked*. A different take on the Cinderella tale. Not the twisted wit of re-teller Angela Carter, still a damn good tale.

Christine Falls by Benjamin Black

BB is the pen name of Booker prizewinner John Banville, slumming it to write a pretty decent detective novel, the protagonist being a loveable shluby coroner.

Karen Kilimnik by Ingrid Schaffner

Encountering Eva Hesse by Vanessa Corby

Less sensational than the usual Hesse fare.

Just about to crack open Aimee Bender's *Willful Creatures* and Kelly Link's *Pretty Monsters*, both highly recommended by my buddy Amber.

Nisa Asokan

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

A few recent highlights...

Snow Crystals: WA Bentley and W.J Humphreys, 2453 Illustrations, Dover, 1962

See snow crystals here: <http://www.bentley.sciencebuff.org>

Measuring America: The Decennial Censuses From 1790 to 2000

GPO, 2002.

I have the hard copy but the book is also available here:

<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/ma.html>

Washingtons of Wessyngton Plantation: Stories of My Family's Journey to Freedom by John F. Baker

Pub date Feb 2009. Book signing at Auburn Library in Feb.

Open Face Sandwich: A Journal of Uncommon Prose

New Street/Fifth Planet Press 2008

Wake Up. A Life of a Buddha by Jack Kerouac, 2008

Walter Benjamin's Archive

Verso, 2007 -Thanks for buying it for me, Randy!

putAoring: a book-arts project

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Allison Rentz, Fifth Planet Press, 2008

Vision Antiderrapante by Pablo Vargas Lugo/ Skidproof View,

Mexico A&R Press 2007

Found in killer bookstore/bar/hotel in Playa del Carmen

House of Dolls

KA-Tzetnik, 135633

Lion Library ed. 1956 paper

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

1st Collier 1961 - found in the used bookstore at the Raleigh Durham airport

Build Your Own Stone House

Schwenke, Karl and Sue Garden Way, 1975

Found at the eyedrum book sale!

Angela Sasser

I am a graduate student and I have been working on a thesis for the past year. I thought I might send you the books from my works cited page. My thesis dealt with e-marketing for artists so it might be handy for your recommendations list, if they aren't on it already.

Abbott, Susan. Fine Art Publicity, 2nd ed. Art World Press, San Francisco: 2005.

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Smith, Constance; Greaves, Susan F. Internet for Artists 101, 2nd Ed. ArtNetwork, PO Box 1360, Nevada City, CA: 2007.

Graphic Artists Guild Handbook of Pricing and Ethical Guidelines, 10th Edition.
Graphic Artists Guild, Inc. New York, NY: 2001.

Lazzari, Margaret R. The Practical Handbook for the Emerging Artist, 2nd Edition.
Thomson Learning, Inc. School of Fine Arts University of Southern California: 2001.

Crawford, Tad. Business and Legal Forms for Fine Artists. Allworth Press, New York: 1999.

Smith, Constance. Art Marketing 101, A Handbook for the Fine Artist, 3rd Edition.
ArtNetwork, Penn Valley, CA: 2007.

Paul Boshears

Greetings from Okinawa; I hope this reaches you and yours well.

I've been loving-on the following and whole heartedly endorse:

Shalimar the Clown by Salman Rushdie

What an outstanding narrative that goes a much further distance to explaining why the war on terror is being fought in the areas its being fought in.

The Book of Laughter and Forgetting by Milan Kundera

I have been revisiting this and am doubly enriched in doing so.

What Terrorists Really Want by Max Abrahms

Outstanding research that suggests that terrorists are not at all interested in politics, they're banding together because being in a group of like-minded individuals is more rewarding and meaningful than any political agenda. This with Rushdie's book really

humanizes the whole phenomena. Available free from my blog, just click on link.

Composing the Soul by Graham Parkes

Parkes is the man, period. His new translation of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is the best there is and his work showing the harmonies between Nietzsche and Daoism are the foundation for my education. In *Composing the Soul*, Parkes gives us a more personal and psychologically coherent person called Nietzsche and in knowing this man we see that personhood is performed like a symphony's conduction; symphonic selfhood.

Minna No Nihongo - This is the best language learning book I've encountered and has to be the best way to learn Japanese.

Doko Eiku Kappa-kun, Arinji Aronji - these crafters from Japan are amazing and this photo book is both cho kawaii (really cute) and really fun to think about. It's just pictures, like a silent comic book of photos, but it says a lot about Japan today.

Don Dougan

As Above So Below by Rudy Rucker, 2002: Tom Doherty & Associates

Rudy Rucker is known as a science fiction author (many of whose works are on my bookshelf), but this atypical foray into historical fiction is complete and full-blown. It is the fictionalized account of the 16th century Flemish painter Peter Bruegel (often called 'Peasant Bruegel' or 'Peter Bruegel the Elder' to distinguish him from his sons and grandsons who also were painters). The book is arranged chronologically into chapters revolving around the creative labors and circumstances surrounding sixteen of the forty-five surviving known works by this painter of unconventional imagery. The novel spans the years just after he was accepted into the painter's guild as a Master (1551) to the year of his death (1569). It is both well-researched and well-written, and the small reproductions of each of the sixteen works illustrating each chapter will have you flipping pages back-and-forth to see the images as you have a quite enjoyable read. A hint: you may want to acquire an art/picture-book with good full-color illustrations of Bruegel's paintings to fully appreciate the references to both the works pictured as well as a number

that are mentioned-but-not-pictured in the novel.

This year has been a year for revisiting many authors on my bookshelf, and among the highlights of my revisitings I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of re-reading all the fictional works (in chronological sequence) of the authors Kurt Vonnegut, Tony Hillerman, Donna Leon, and Carl Hiaasen. They only get better the second (or sixth) time around.

As far as non-fiction revisitings this year I have concentrated upon one author, the poet-anthropologist Loren Eiseley. Three of his works in particular I feel I cannot recommend too highly: The Night Country (1971), All The Strange Hours (1975), and The Star Thrower (1977).

The first two are autobiographical in nature, while the last is a collection of the author's favorite writings which he collected together in the last year of his life (the book was published posthumously). Eiseley's writing can be described as hauntingly probing and evocative, exploring the mysteries of life and what it means to be a naturalist, scientist, poet, and humanist. From jumping freight trains with a horned toad in his pocket to doing a mating dance with an African crane in the zoo, to pondering old bones and shape-shifting dogs, Eiseley's perceptions take the reader to hidden questions and wonderful insights. These books will be on my bookshelf until the day I die.

Good reading,

Don

Becky Blankenship

Non-Fiction

Three cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson

Everyone should read this. He's made more progress in Pakistan through school building than our government ever will through the military. A wonderful way to get to know the tribal folks of that country.

The House at Sugar Beach by Helene Cooper

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

A very good book about Liberia, its problems and Cooper's drastic life change when she fled as a Liberian elite and came to the U.S. as just another black girl.

The Lambs of London by Peter Ackroyd

Short but enjoyable biography

Born Standing Up -Autobiography of Steve Martin

Everyone deserves a bit of fun and fluff.

Breaking Free by Herschel Walker

An eye-opening account of his battle with mental illness. Anyone's brain chemistry can go wrong and this book shows vividly how it can be undetected. I recommend it highly even though I'm a Tech fan.

Teacher Man by Frank McCourt

I'm still not sure how he survived it!

Prince of Frogtown by Rick Bragg

Life in dirt poor Alabama, the third in Bragg's family chronicles.

Radical Acceptance: Embracing Your Life With the Heart of a Buddha by Tara Brach

Read as part of mindfulness course I'm taking. Amazingly revealing about yourself.

Fiction:

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

The Road by Cormac McCarthy

chilling

Ordinary Heroes by Scott Turow

Nice World War II story by a favorite author of mine.

Work Shirts for Mad Men by George Singleton

A quirky fun book by this quirky author

Seek My Face by John Updike

A nice book by America's premier wordsmith

Billy Straight by Jonathan Kellerman

second time around . This book just appeals to me.

Babbitt by Sinclair Lewis

Each year I try to read at least one old classic I've missed.

Brick Lane by Monica Ali

Immigrant life in London

Wish You Well by David Baldacci

Another I had to re-read. This is not one of his mysteries but the story of a multi-generational family in coal mining country.

If you read mysteries for fun, check out Baldacci's Camel Club series. Highly enjoyable.

As for other good mystery yarn spinners, check out James Gripando, Steve Martini & Walter Moseley.

Jon Ciliberto

Here are some books I read, referred to, and enjoyed in 2008. Books related to Tibetan Art were (many of them) in writing these:

<http://www.buddhistartnews.com/ban07/?p=2360>

<http://www.buddhistartnews.com/ban07/?p=1407>

Buddhist Art

Bartholemew, T., Johnston, J. *The Dragon's Gift: The Sacred Art of Bhutan.*

This is the catalog for the exhibition of Buddhist Bhutanese art which opened in Honolulu in 2008 and is presently at the Rubin Museum in NYC. My friend John is one of the editors; I helped a very little bit with editing, proofing, and working on a lineage tree. It is a very beautiful volume.

Once the Buddha was a Monkey: Arya Sura's Jatakamala, translated by Peter Khoroche. Chicago.

A collection of Jataka (tales from the previous lives of the Buddha -- he does fun things like sacrifice his body to a hungry lioness out of compassion for her starving kittens),

elegantly translated.

Basho: The Complete Haiku (2008). Translated by Jane Reichhold. Kodansha.

The first COMPLETE edition of Basho's haiku in translation. I have not read them all: there 1012, each with notes and transliteration. A really amazing project, and for some reason the pages smell like cinnamon.

The Life of Hsuan-Tsang, translated by Li Yung-shi.

This is one of several review copies I received in 2008 from Indian publishers. Has anyone dealt with Indian books? They are different from Western published books... in just about every way. Hsuan-Tsang (Xuanzang) was a Buddhist monk who in the 7th century c.e. traveled from his native China to India to visit Buddhist sites and collect texts. He visited many kingdoms in Central Asia and is a major source for information on regions along the Silk Road at the time. This book is the biography of Xuanzang written by his students, and it is extremely reverent. His travels are also given in his "Journey to the West in the Great Tang Dynasty."

Lopez, D. S. (1995). *Curators of the Buddha: The study of Buddhism under colonialism*. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press.

Tibetan Buddhist Art

Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa. Translated (not really) by W.Y. Evans-Wentz.

The biography of the Tibetan Buddhist yogi Milarepa, from his early days as a black magician to his enlightenment, plus the coda: fighting over his remains. The translation is long in the tooth but still the standard; Milarepa's life formed a paragon for Buddhist ascetics. A Tibetan film company recently released a two-film epic of his life; I saw part one last year and recommend it AND the book.

Tucci, G. (2000). *The religions of Tibet*. The Kegan Paul library of religion and mysticism. London: Kegan Paul International.

Superb volume on Tibetan religion by the granddaddy of Tibetologists.

Klimburg-Salter, D. E. (1982). *The silk route and the diamond path: Esoteric Buddhist art on the trans-Himalayan trade routes*. Los Angeles, Calif: Published under the sponsorship of the UCLA Art Council.

Groundbreaking exhibition catalog on Central Asian Buddhist Art and the creation of its aesthetic through trade and cultural transmission.

Snellgrove, D., Richardson, H. (1995). *A Cultural History of Tibet*. Shambhala.

Linrothe, R. N., Rhie, M. M., Watt, J., & Busta, C. (2004). *Demonic divine: Himalayan art and beyond*. New York: Rubin Museum of Art.

Fisher, R. E. (1997). *Art of Tibet*. World of art. London: Thames & Hudson.

Heller, A. (1999). *Tibetan art: Tracing the development of spiritual ideals and art in Tibet, 600-2000 A.D.* Milano, Italy: Jaca Book.

Kapstein, M. (2000). *The Tibetan assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, contestation, and memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shaw, M. E. (2006). *Buddhist goddesses of India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rhie, M. M., Thurman, R. A. F., & Jackson, D. P. (1999). *Worlds of transformation: Tibetan art of wisdom and compassion = [Gnas 'gyur dkyil zin]*. New York: Tibet House in association with The Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation.

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Nebesky-Wojkowitz, R. d. (1956). *Oracles and demons of Tibet; The cult and iconography of the Tibetan protective deities*. 's-Gravenhage: Mouton.

Singer, J. C., & Denwood, P. (1997). *Tibetan art: Towards a definition of style*. London: Laurence King.

Rhie, M. M., Thurman, R. A. F., & Taylor, J. B. (1991). *Wisdom and compassion = Śes rab dan sñin rje'i rol pa : the sacred art of Tibet*. [San Francisco]: Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Pal, P., & Richardson, H. (1983). *Art of Tibet: A catalogue of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art collection*. Los Angeles, Calif: The Museum.

Otagaki Rengetsu

I am STILL working on a review of the catalog of Rengetsu's exhibition, *Black Robe, White Mist*. . . Here are some of the books I've read in this effort.

Rengetsu, Melanie Eastburn, Lucie Folan, Robyn J. Maxwell. *Black robe, white mist: art of the Japanese Buddhist nun Rengetsu*. Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007.

Johnson, Lee. *The Life and Art of Ōtagaki Rengetsu*. Thesis (M.A.)--University of Kansas, (History of Art), 1988, 1988.

Graham, Patricia Jane. *Tea of the Sages The Art of Sencha*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998.

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Baisaō, and Norman Waddell. *The Old Tea Seller: Baisaō : Life and Zen Poetry in 18th Century Kyoto*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2008.

Ueda, Akinari. *Tales of Moonlight and Rain*.

Pitelka, Morgan. *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

Graham, Patricia Jane. *Faith and Power in Japanese Buddhist Art, 1600-2005*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

Gombrich, E. H. *The Preference for the Primitive: Episodes in the History of Western Taste and Art*. London: Phaidon, 2002.

Hofstadler, Richard. *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*.

Read 1/3. Fit well with the Sarah Pallin story.

Addiss, Stephen, and Audrey Yoshiko Seo. *How to Look at Japanese Art*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.

Ramirez-Christensen, Esperanza U. *Emptiness and Temporality: Buddhism and Medieval Japanese Poetics*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2008.

Copeland, Rebecca L., and Melek Ortabasi. *The Modern Murasaki: Writing by Women of Meiji Japan*. Asia perspectives. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

Graybill, Maribeth, and Sadako Ohki. *Days of discipline and grace: treasures from the*

imperial Buddhist convents of Kyoto = Ama Monzeki jiin no hihō. New York: Institute for Medieval Japanese Studies, 1998.

Noma, Seiroku. *The Arts of Japan* [Volume 2]., Late Medieval to Modern. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1978.

Fister, Pat. *Ama monzeki to nisō no bijutsu = Art by Buddhist nuns: treasures from the imperial convents of Japan.* New York, NY: Institute for Medieval Japanese Studies, 2003.

Weidner, Marsha Smith. *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990.

Fister, Pat, and Fumiko Y. Yamamoto. *Japanese Women Artists, 1600-1900.* Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988.

Japanese Art

Hickman, Money L., Jakuchū Itō, and Yasuhiro Satō. *The Paintings of Jakuchū.* New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1989.

Rosenfield, John M., and Fumiko E. Cranston. *Extraordinary Persons: Works by Eccentric, Nonconformist Japanese Artists of the Early Modern Era (1580-1868) in the Collection of Kimiko and John Powers = [Kinsei Kijin No Geijutsu].* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Art Museums, 1999.

Levine, Gregory P. A. Daitokuji: *The Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005.

Warner, Langdon. *The Enduring Art of Japan*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952.

Ienaga, Saburō. *Japanese Art: A Cultural Appreciation*. The Heibonsha survey of Japanese art, v. 30. New York: Weatherhill, 1979.

De Bary, William Theodore. *Sources of Japanese Tradition*. Vol. 1, From Earliest Times Through the Sixteenth Century. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

Fister, Pat, and Fumiko Y. Yamamoto. *Japanese Women Artists, 1600-1900*. Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988.

Stanley-Baker, Joan. *Japanese Art*. New York, N.Y.: Thames and Hudson, 1984.

Binyon, Laurence, J. J. O'Brien Sexton, and Basil Gray. *Japanese Colour Prints*. Boston: Boston Book & Art Shop, 1960.

Graphic Design

These are some books I consulted for a course taught at GSU. I only ended up using a bit of the first of them: students bitched and moaned about anything even vaguely theoretical!

Rand, P. (1970). *Thoughts on Design*. Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Frederick, M. (2007). *101 things I learned in architecture school*. Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, ©2007.

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Roberts, L. (2006). *Good: An introduction to ethics in graphic design*. Lausanne:
[Distributed in the] USA and Canada [by] Watson Guptill.

I did read one novel in 2008:

Rushdie, Salman. *The Enchantress of Venice*.

It was okay. His misogyny is still present and annoying.

and one book of poetry:

Rumi. *We Are Three*. Maypop Books.

THIRD ANNUAL ARTNEWS LIST OF BOOKS

ALLison REntz

Then We Came to the End" by Joshua Ferris

-well crafted use of the collective person

-a yellow book

-moments of humor

-relevant to corporate "creatives"

SUSAN TODD-RAQUE

The Glass Castle

The Center Does Not Hold.

JUDY RUSHIN

I read three very good ones this past year:

1. Timothy Egan, The Worst Hard Time (non-fiction about the dust bowl)
2. Miranda July, No One Belongs Here More Than You (short stories)

3. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr, Crimes Against Nature (non-fiction about how GW and his "corporate pals are plundering our country and hijacking our democracy")

KATHERINE MARBURY

Just finished "The Time-Traveler's Wife" by Audrey Niffenegger and really liked it. The author is also a faculty member in Book Arts at Columbia College in Chicago. The plot is a kind of Mobius strip, elevating it above the usual romance--more of a "Griffin and Sabine" thing, if you remember those books.

MANDIE TURNER MITCHELL

FICTION

Crawling at Night - Nani Power

Set in Lower Manhattan mostly in the characters' flats or in the nearby Sushi restaurant. Lots of drinking and sex - not trashy but grim. Power uses lots of Japanese food references to illustrate some of the encounters and even murder in rich detail. I sensed a strange undertone of sexual angst between the Western and Asian characters that made me want to keep turning the pages. It's sad and exciting at the same time.

The Good Remains - Nani Power

This one dragged on for me and it was hard to follow but I loved the 'soundtrack' that includes Lynard Skynard. The main character is a doctor in Virginia who really likes Freebird. The music that he's listening to sets the mood in several chapters. More food references, in this case it's ham which symbolizes dying southern traditions.

Sea of Tears - Nani Power

Ordinary people and good love stories mostly in a hotel in Washington DC. Stimulating to all the senses like the first two books with more culture clashing.

POETRY

Anecdote of the Jar - Wallace Stevens

Choose - Sarah Messer

NON-FICTION

The Courage to Create - Rollo May

Somewhat existential take on courage, authenticity, and creativity.

The Sense of Beauty - George Santayana

Like other books on early modern aesthetics but easier to read.

Skepticism and Animal Faith - George Santayana

Skepticism established as a form of belief.

Epitaph for Dixie - Harry Ashmore

Recommendations and predictions for the south written in 1958.

The Last Folk Hero - Andrew Dietz

Purportedly true account of Bill Arnett's history with several southern folk artists.

Digital Diaries - Natacha Merritt

She says, "My photo needs and my sexual needs are one and the same." In this case, bad digital photos and journal entries make pornography more interesting.

High Art - Ted Owen and Denise Dickson

History of psychedelic posters from the 60's - early 90's. Mostly Alton Kelly and Stanley Mouse.

SUSANNAH DARROW

Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*

Paul Auster, *Mr Vertigo*

Zadie Smith, *On Beauty*

Best Of American Essays, Ed. David Foster Wallace

Miranda July, *No One Belongs Here More Than You*

JERRY CULLUM

nonfiction:

Diane Ackerman, *The Zookeeper's Wife*

fiction:

John Crowley, *The Solitudes*

Orhan Pamuk, *The Black Book* (Hey J.C.—*If it is a good read for you, someone will like it.*)

ROBERT CHEATHAM

This is always an interesting exercise, no less for the fact that the beginning of the year has receded from memory by this time and I'm never sure exactly WHAT I read at the beginning. I don't include here books that I read 'elsewhere,' i.e., sitting at Borders Books, such as most recently Susan Howe's book *SOULS OF THE LABADIE TRACT*, which is beautiful, or books that I have photocopied at Emory, e.g., since I don't want to wade through stacks of paper to find them. These are ones that I can readily remember as being 'recent' ... and can find!

The Inner Touch: Archaeology of a Sensation

Daniel Heller-Roazen

Herr-Roazen's previous book was *Echolalias: On the Forgetting of Language*, which was wonderful. I picked up on him because he was (is?) a translator of Agamben's books, for one, and I read a review which recommended it heavily. *The Inner Touch* I have found to be harder going. I have had the book for awhile, picked it up, put it down and have started it again. I've found it to be often the case that it takes a hundred or so pages before a work catches -- if it does. In a series of essays, the book explores what it means to have a sense that ... we have having a sense of something, no less the idea that we are having a sense of ourselves sensing. Very erudite, the essays range over the Arabic world, European middle ages, Lacan, Aristotle and the ancient Greeks and so on, weaving them all together in a prodigious bit of scholarship, much like Agamben does himself. The spread of connections is quite amazing.

Spin

Robert Charles Wilson

I just finished this Wilson sci-fi opus and was a bit disappointed, since it won the Hugo Best Novel for 2005. It felt bloated at 452 pages; in fact at a certain point I just started speed reading forward, which I rarely do and feel guilty when I do ('why the hell am I reading the book then' I sez to myself). The 'humanist' story line just felt lethargic and the overarching technical bit, the sci-fi hook, just didn't feel exciting enough or integrated enough into the whole story...just me I guess. I'm sure mainstream readers would take an entirely opposite tack.

Light

M. John Harrison

But wow, what a piece of writing this is! Harrison was part of the new stream of sci-fi writing from Britain (such as Brian Aldiss, and in the USA Harlan Ellison, Sam Delaney, etc) years ago. I remember his very vivid style from the seventies I guess it must have been. I started reading this neW book in Borders when it first came out, but it's sometimes difficult to give certain books their due in that environment. Often times I have to carry them around with me for awhile, almost like I'm letting something sink in, before I can approach them properly.

I just remembered that I also read another book of his this year, which is quite indescribable other than a 'contemporary, alienated, gnostic, mystic' love story -- of sorts. His work often reminds me of Lucius Shepard or a slightly harder edged John Crowley, both of whom one should go out of their way to search out and read. Harrison's very newest novel is Nova Swing, a sequel of sorts to Light; just out in paperback so I'm looking forward to that.

No Country For Old men

The Road

Cormac McCarthy

An acquaintance has been trying to get me to read McCarthy for years and for some reason I resisted (these things are complicated, having little to do with the intrinsic worth of anything I think). Finally I was on a construction job a few months back and a friend gave me a newly released paperback of N.C. for O.M. Quite a read. I read it at night before I went to sleep: hard to put down and very visual. In fact, visual to the point that when I just saw the Coen bros. Film adaptation of it, it was almost like I had already seen the film! Shortly after finishing the book, another friend mentioned that she had just finished *The Road* and lent it to me. It is in a venerable line of sci-fi books about *The End* but this one has all of McCarthy's considerable literary skills bearing down on it make it a particularly harrowing read. A while back another friend had given me a copy of McCarthy's *Suttree*, so I think that will be the next piece of fiction I read.

Sons of Mississippi

Paul Hendrickson

Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America

John M. Barry

I put both of these together because it's part of a reading project I started to try to gear up for a special issue of *PERFORATIONS*. The special issue doesn't seem to be happening yet, another delicate bit of negotiations with myself that I don't seem able to close on. I'm from Mississippi, from the darkest heart of it in fact, and for many years a fact that I disowned, preferring to be from Georgia (not that that was much better from the way I was thinking then). Now that I've come to some sort of terms with the idea that I'm from there, my fascination

with the state continues unabated. *Sons of Mississippi* I just happened to come across in a used bookstore. The photograph on the jacket cover is from an old *Life* magazine from the mid 60s that the author came across. It depicts a circle of men in white shirts or suits, ties, hats, in the center of said circle is the sheriff of Natchez MS swinging a small billy club and the men surrounding him, all with grins or grim determination, are sheriffs from all over the 'great and sovereign state of Mississippi.' They are gathered in Oxford MS,

where riots are happening because James Meredith is about to become the first black person to be enrolled in the University of Mississippi. The author mulls, picks, squeezes the photo (the book itself was written in 2003) and finally hauls off to Mississippi to follow the fate of either the men in the photo if they are still alive or their kinfolk. Beautifully written, and neither condescending nor exactly sympathetic, it gives a nuanced view of what I have always thought of as one of the most interesting states in the union.

The sense of mystery (and mayhem and mischief) continues in Barry's book, *Rising*

Tide. It gives some history of attempts to tame the great Mississippi river and along the way gives a history of the Delta. One thing is clear to me (though it may turn cloudy next year): there needs to be some awesome natural feature (or, lacking that, internal trauma) for certain types of creativity to develop, a bit of psychogeography to dwarf the soul, perhaps give it something to fear or maybe even aspire to...Of course there's always the stars which have always acted as

sublime beacon in former ages....and there's nothing like very large bodies of water to serve that function also. (I saw a special on caves recently and they showed the incredible systems of caves and underground rivers that underlay the Mayan territory in middle America; what is it with the water thing? If one were of a sufficiently mystical frame of mind, one could speculate about certain energies...which of course none of us are nowadays.)

The Ruins

Scott Smith

If this one doesn't become a big ticket horror movie I'll be very surprised...takes place in Mayan territory with tourists on vacation, some nice, unh, vegetation. Nothing profound but fun if you like a sort of abject, let-me-outa-here horror thing...was a big hit when it first came out, sorta does Stephen King one better. Nice, for when you wanna step out into the....Bwwwahhahahahah ...garden, for bit of relaxation.

Parrot

Paul carter

This probably won't tell you everything about parrots you want to know, but if you are into theory/philosophy, it's quite a kick, dealing with language, mimesis, the place of parrots in popular culture, even a timeline of parrots. If you are a literary type person and you only want to read one book on parrots (Carter always universalizes it: one book on parrot).

A quote from near the end, when Carter is writing on the almost overwhelming amount of information / material / paintings / etc on the parrot, and the cultural pivot on which it sits, squawking:

"Isn't this an eloquence that collapses into noise, an omniscience so superficial that it universalizes ignorance? Isn't this also the challenge of the parrot, that it defies classification, shadow-boxing our searches, tempting our fantasies and ultimately defeating our definitions? Is this the apocalypse of meaning of which the parrot has been warning ever since we caged it and, captivated by its mimicry, taught it to talk? Remember Dusky, who bides his time before beginning very slowly 'Hee ...Hee Hee,' causing his owners to 'crack up' and the whole thing to start over again? Isn't this how the whole thing will end? When humanity finally gets the joke? Isn't this what the parrot is waiting for?"

Adorno In America

David Jenemann

I'm still in the process of picking up-putting down-picking up ... Theodor Adorno was part of the big wave of German Intelligensia forced to move to America during WW II, along with, e.g., many movie directors. Adorno went to California of all places. I say that because it's a little hard to imagine this most Mandarin of German intellectuals laying on the beach, surfing with the dudes -- which of course he didn't, having much scorn for American 'intellectual,' sort of an oxymoron for him I suppose. Anyway, I gather that Jenemann is attempting to re-habilitate Adorno's rep among the populist thinkers. (Adorno was notorious for disparaging comments he made about American jazz, much preferring the thorny densities and dessications of Schoenberg, Webern, and the 12 tone avantists. Anyway, he and Walter Benjamin were pals so there you go. I love WB -- still

not EXACTLY sure why -- so I try to ferret out the side trails around Benjamin. If you like the Frankfurt School, you'll find something here no doubt ... if not stay away.

The Original Accident

Paul Virilio

I always find interesting material in Virilio but this one was tracked down and read because of writing issue # 31 of PERFORATIONS on the Inhuman; I was trying to think about the idea of accidents, hoaxes and so on. He has a somewhat (!) apocalyptic and pessimistic take on things (after all, his leitmotif has always been 'speed' and there's nothing more speedy than right NOW).

A quote: "After two millennia of experiments and failures, of accidents of all kinds, with globalization the third millennium inaugurates the paradox of the failure of success for it is the success of Progress that provokes disaster. An integral accident of a science now deprived of a conscience, whose triumph wipes out even the memory of its former benefits. This is a manor event in a long history of knowledge whose tragic nature globalization both reveals and conceals at one and the same time.

After that, it is not so much error, some system failure, or even large-scale catastrophe that brings the boom in knowledge to a close, but the very excessiveness of the feats achieved in the face of the limits of a cramped planet."

The Impossible Mourning of Jacques Derrida

Sean Gaston

Sort of a personal tour through Derrida's entire oeuvre. It's short but dense and hard going. I set it down after reading a few pages and haven't had it in me to pick it up again until just now. Nice cover photo of Jack though.

The Late Derrida

Eds: W.J.T. Mitchell and Arold Davidson

Special issue of Critical Inquiry on Derrida after his death and on his latter writings... Unlike the Gaston book, I have read many of these essays; many it's a time constraint thing... and a difficult article is easier to get through than a book. There are several other special issue of journals devoted to Derrida after his death, all of which look interesting but jeez there's only so much time in the world ... maybe even less than so much time in the world.

The End of Art: Readings in a Rumor After Hegel

Eva Geulen

The Future of Art: An Aesthetics of the New and the Sublime

Marcella Tarozzi Goldsmith

Hegel was infamous for having pronounced the continual coming of the end of art and its being taken up into abstraction, systems, philosophy and so forth. A complicated style and the translation may perhaps even further complicate it. Discusses Benjamin, Heidegger, Beckett, Adorno... almost no one on the list would find this compatible with themselves enough to get through the intro and quite a few would make fun of it. The Future of Art would not fare any better I fear---and come to think of it, looking over it, I didn't finish it either. Maybe I'll continue to slug it out soon... not a summer beach book--well, maybe for two of you out there.

Unhuman Culture

Daniel Cottom

Wonderful book, just as much of a buzz off this one as a previous one of his I read years ago; *Abyss of Reason: Cultural Movements, Revelations, and Betrayals*. Searched this one out because of, yes, issue #31 PERFORATIONS, *The Inhuman*, which Cottom prefers to characterize as UN-human. He ranges all about literary and visual arts supporting his thesis on the necessity and even inescapability of the misanthropic (VERY UN-fashionable in some circles). From the last chapter entitled, in fact, *The Necessity of Misanthropy*:

"From the outset of his career Hawthorne was drawn to demonic utopias, including the part of the New World that eventually became the United States, because he knew that misanthropy cannot be eliminated from social life any more than it can be from sexual desire or the ontology of art. The very will to eliminate it, he suggested, is not a solution but a sign of misanthropy. That is why we need art; so as not to commit the unforgivable sign of despair, which is all that remains of humanity in the absence of art's transformation of the human species through the yearning of formal differences and displacements. That is why we need misanthropy; so as not to close our hearts to the cultural hope that is to be found, both within and without us, only in what appears at any given moment to be unhuman." (You may duly note how the Hawthorne quote ties in with the Susan Howe book mentioned at the beginning of this trek.)

Profanations

Giorgio Agamben

Ok, I'm getting tired and there are still a few books to go which I will bypass and end directly on this luminous little book of Agamben's, a translation of which I have been waiting for awhile. (He has three books in the wings dealing with theological politics vis a vis the history of Christianity: when oh WHEN will they get translated???)

Those who are looking for a heavy teutonic drive will not find it here, even though Agamben was the main translator of Benjamin's work in Italy (well, Benjamin is very danceable I think, no?)

There is a disarmingly light but gnomic quality to the essays in this very slim book; the essay titles:

1. Genius
2. Magic and happiness
3. Judgement Day
4. The assistants
5. Parody
6. Desiring
7. Special Being
8. The author as Gesture
9. 9. In Praise of Profanation
10. the Six Most Beautiful Minutes in the History of Cinema

"To have a name is to be guilty. And justice, like magic, is nameless. Happy, and without a name, the creature knocks at the gates of the land of the magi, who speak in gestures alone." (last two sentences of Magic and Happiness)

Oh yes, two final ones that I'm reading now alongside the Heller-Roazen:

Hieronymous Bosch: Garden of Earthly Delights

Hans Belting

I've been in the process of re-discovering Bosch again after Chea Prince and I did a video project and I started thinking/reading about his work and specifically this painting. (BTW: that is not the title that Bosch gave the triptych; no one seems to know what the title was or even if it had a title. The current title was added later). I remember the work

form years ago in poster shops when i became for me a sort of icon for the 60s. Which was both unfair to the work but also emblematic of the power of it. Belting's take on it (and there are apparently about 20 other takes on what the painting is about) deals with utopia and the newly emergent knowledge about the new worlds being discovered then. yes. couldbe . maybe. partly.

I started reading the Belting book because of a wonderful essay I finished recently in a book called: Things That talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science

ed. Lorraine Daston

the essay being 'Bosch's Euiipment' by Joseph Leo Koerner, and a beautiful bit of writing THAT is also...anyway, I got off on Bosch and haven't gotten back to the rest of the essays, on soap bubbles, standing columns, etc.

ok ok just one last one: I for some reason have had an urge to go back and read a book I've had since 1968. (Well, I Do know why: because it doing research on psycho-geography and reading a book by Ian Sinclair called Lud Heat, sort of a very weird occultist/poetic stroll though London.) It's: The Morning of the Magicians by french scientists Pauwels and Bergier . It's a mashup of previous-civilization stuff, history of the occult, the paranormal, Chrales Fort, expanded consciousness, and many many other things...now if I can just read through the fine print on yellowed paper.

ALLEN WELTY-GREEN

I am rediscovering fiction after many years of only reading

biographies, satire, sociological, arts, how-tos, and other non-fiction books. Long overdue to explore the Phillip K. Dick oeuvre, so I started with a collection of short stories, moved on to *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?" (as a Blade Runner fan, how could I NOT read this one?!), now I'm reading "Flow My Tears the Policeman Said" - so far so good!

Latest non-fiction - "Tape Op - The Book About Creative Recording" - by Larry Crane. A collection of articles from several years of Tape Op magazine about grassroots and experimental recording artists and techniques. Inspiring!

JULIE PÜTTGEN

In the last year I've been reading a lot that's set in India and I'd say I've loved these best:

The Raj Quartet, by Paul Scott (a fantastic sweeping WWII/Raj story in 1200++ pages)

The Siege of Krishnapur, by JG Farrell (wit as dry as the dusty plains in this doomed British settlement during an uprising in the 1850's)

The Hungry Tide, by Amitav Ghosh (set in the Sundarbans, off the coast of Calcutta, and based on a true story of squatters on a tiger reserve)

DAVID HUFF

Fiction:

Anything by Tom Robbins. I started with *Skinny Legs and All* but *Fierce Invalids Home from Hot Climates* is probably my favorite. He has a relatively new (2 years?) short story collection that's great (*Wild Ducks Flying Backwards*).

American Gods by Neil Gaiman

My Name is Asher Lev by Chaim Potok

Haroun and the Sea of Stories by Salman Rushdie

Non-Fiction:

A Sweeper-Up After Artists by Irving Sandler

Postethnic America by David Hollinger

Memoirs of Hadrian by Marguerite Yourcenar

Breaking the Spell by Dan Dennett

Religious Illiteracy by Stephen Prothero

CELCILA KANE

Here's the NY Times' top 10 picks for 2007. Michael Thomas, the first author on

their list is the son in law of Sally Wylde, local Atlanta artist and Community gardener.

BOOKS / SUNDAY BOOK REVIEW | December 9, 2007

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/09/books/review/10-best-2007.html?ex=11969172>

00&en=ea3a0de43107cb41&ei=5070&emc=eta1

JON CILIBERTO

Fiction and poetry:

The Woodlanders, Thomas Hardy. I used to really like Hardy (high school -- I guess that along with the Cure et al was my form of goth??) but did not read this one. The copy I picked up in a thrift store this year details the blighted publishing history of this novel

which perhaps explains why it was so universally panned in America. I really loved the spectral and supernatural qualities of it. . . .

"They had risen so far over the crest of the hill that the whole west sky was revealed. Between the broken clouds they could see far into the recesses of heaven, the eye journeying on under a species of golden arcades, and past fiery obstructions, fancied cairns, logan-stones, stalactites and stalagmite of topaz. Deeper than this their gaze passed thin flakes of incandescence, till it plunged into a bottomless medium of soft green fire."

The Tale of Genji, Murasaki Shikibi, translation by Royall Tyler (2001). I have not read all of it. . . who has?? This new translation is excellent, with superb notes and supplementary material – I recommend the Penguin Classics "Deluxe Edition".

Fish Log, Randy Prunty. "It says right on the box / the Indian Ocean should be up by now."

A Treatise on Poetry, Czeslaw Milosz. "Why not establish a home in the neon heat / of Nature?"

Soldier, Ask Not, Gordon Dickson.

Buddhist art:

Elements of Buddhist Iconography, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. The author was one of the great scholars of Buddhist iconography, although many of his presumptions have been questioned by more recent investigators. His work always reflects his deep reading in Indian classical literature. This book examines some of the basic elements of Buddhist iconography (the lotus throne, the stupa, etc.) in terms of the pre-existing Indian tradition.

Ancient Arts of Central Asia, Tamara Talbot Rice. Of course, Buddhist iconography primarily developed outside of India -- first in the Kushan and Gandharan empires (the former bringing Indian visual elements, the latter Greek), then in Central Asia and along the Silk Road. So, while this book covers the people's of the steppes, Manichaenism, and also some Eastern Orthodox cultures, it includes some interesting chapters on Buddhist Turkestan/Serindia.

The Great Age of Japanese Buddhist Sculpture, AD 600-1300, ed. By Kyotaro and Sano, a catalog of Kimball Art Museum Show, 1972. This was the first major show of Japanese sculpture to tour outside of Japan, and included numerous major works. Most of the pieces are constructed of wood, and the particular affinity of Japanese art for this material

is evident again and again. The book has an excellent introduction with a section on the craft of constructing the sculptures.

Buddhism, Louis Frederic. This is an iconographic guide to Buddhist Art -- have not read it cover-to-cover, but rather browse and consult it on particular points. It is thorough and only occasionally academically partisan. The author leans on Japanese works: since Buddhism disappeared from its birth country (India), was decimated in Central Asia by Islam, and variously mistreated in China, the deepest and richest storehouse of Buddhist art is in Japan, where the tradition has existed since the 6th century. Also, the esoteric forms

(which have the greatest variety of images) were transmitted to Japan early and have maintained a living presence since.

Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism, Bernard Faure. This is a study of the imaginaire of Keizan Jōkin Zenji 遍禪山 (1268-1325), a Zen Buddhist monk, the second of the 'great founders' of Soto in Japan. I just got this book in the last two weeks, so I am only just into it. The preface opens: "This book was first written in

French, with a French audience in mind" and the author refers

frequently to "the French historians." That put me right in my place. His specific belief system (the French Historians) informs his inquiry, e.g. Jacques le Goff and his theory of the imaginaire. This is to say: the author's belief system provides the basis for his theory of art. I am interested to read how the argument unfolds. Thus far, the author discounts completely the reality of religious experience, e.g., "literary and artistic works of art (and in the case of a religion, ritual practices) do not represent any eternal or

unitary reality but rather are the products of the imagination of those who produce them." Contrast this with Eliade: "It would be credulous to think that one could 'understand' these yogic exercises, even by multiplying quotations from the original texts and commenting on them at length. Only practice, under the direction of an experienced master, can reveal their structure and their function." (A

History of Religious Ideas, vol 2). The author implies by his thesis, and some of the claims in the early pages, a thorough intimacy with Keizan. I am guessing this results largely from a closeness to the main text explored. . .

The Buddhist Law Among the Birds, Edward Conze (translator). A translation of a Tibetan popular Buddhist work, written relatively recently (perhaps less than 300 years ago). "In the Buddhist religion, the Dharma concept of the Buddha is not confined to [humans], but extends to all kinds of beings." In this book, Avalokitesvara takes the form

of a cuckoo (esp. respected in Buddhism for its attitude to family life) and delivers the teaching of Buddha to all the birds. Birds of various species rise and speak, including the Golden Goose:

"To hope for miraculous blessings and still have wrong opinions --

that prolongs the bondage,

To neglect those things which turn the mind toward salvation --

that prolongs the bondage,

To strive for purity of vision and yet be blinded by a faulty judgment --

that prolongs the bondage,

To give and yet be checked by meanness -- that prolongs the bondage,

To aim at lasting achievements while still exposed to this world's
distractions --

that prolongs the bondage.

To try to understand one's inner mind while still chained to hopes
and fears --

that prolongs the bondage."

Persian Miniature Painting:

Indian Miniatures, Mario Bassagli.

Turkish Miniature Painting of the Ottoman Period, Metin And.

Both of these are on the tradition of Persian miniature painting, but in areas outside of Persia. And's volume is still, I think, the standard text. c.f.,

<http://www.jonciliberto.com/drawings/2007/10-13-07-rumi-miniature.jpg>

and <http://www.jonciliberto.com/drawings/2007/10-5-07-masks-for-tournaments.jpg>

Ancient Cultural Diffusion:

Old World Encounters, Jerry H. Bentley. This is a dry but useful work offering some theoretical direction to a nascent field of study.

Religions of the Silk Road, Richard C. Foltz. Interest in the Silk Road and in Gnosticism have both grown over the last few decades. This book is an overview of the dissemination of religious ideas--Buddhist, Jewish, Zoroastrian, Nestorian Christian, Manichean, and Islamic -- along the trade routes from the Mediterranean region to the Far East, from antiquity to the 15th century. The author covers the long stretches of geography, ideology and history concisely, and while strictly an overview, his notes and bibliography are up-to-date and

extremely useful for the interested.

Shamanism, Mircea Eliade. I read most of this book in previous years, but finally got to the final few chapters in 2007. Eliade is a deep research ethnographer of religions, not so much a field worker. This book is the standard treatment of Shamanism, but in its 'root' location (Siberia and Central Asia) and in the common practices and rituals throughout the world, but, "the presence of a shamanic complex in one region or another does not necessarily mean that the magic-religious life of the corresponding people is crystallized around shamanism."

Barlaam and Ioasaph, St. John Damascene. The legend of Barlaam and Ioasaph passed into Medieval imagination: the story of a prince who encounters a wandering holy man and renounces the world. The tale, originally credited to John Damascene (7th century) but in fact written by the Georgian monk Euthymios (11th century), spread through

western Christianity. Later scholars noticed similarities in the story of these saints with the life of the Buddha, and in fact the legend is a translation of Buddhist stories to Christian contexts. . . "According to legend, a King Abenner or Avenier in India persecuted the Christian Church in his realm, founded by the Apostle Thomas. When astrologers predicted that his own son would some day become a

Christian, Abenner had the young prince Josaphat isolated from external contact. Despite the imprisonment, Josaphat met the hermit Saint Barlaam and converted to Christianity. Josaphat kept his faith even in the face of his father's anger and persuasion. Eventually, Abenner himself converted, turned over his throne to Josaphat, and retired to the desert to become a hermit. Josaphat himself later abdicated and went into reclusion with his old teacher Barlaam." (Wikipedia)

Medieval history:

Byzantium and the Crusades, Jonathan Harris. published in 2003. I'd read some Byzantine history, mostly from the mid-20th century, so it was a pleasure to read something recently published. The author's thesis, that the relations between Byzantium and the crusading West led to disaster in 1204 thanks as much to the Byzantine's sense of self as to the Crusader's zeal for conquest, is not controversial, but

he offers solid evidence in the form of Byzantine correspondence and propaganda.

The Ottoman Centuries, Lord Kinross. This is not the best single volume history of the Ottomans, but it does have charming 18th c. illustrations of the variety of hats and outfits which correspond ranks in the civil service.

Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings, Amy Kelly. Of the many books on Eleanor and her times, this one stands out for the author's total reliance on primary sources.

Modern History:

Foreign Devils Along the Silk Road, Peter Hopkirk. The author is a journalist in Central Asia. His history of the Great Game is the standard resource on the subject. This volume tells the story of treasure-seekers and archaeologists (sometimes a matter of interpretation) Sven Hedin, Auriel Stern, Albert le Coq, Langdon Warner (on whom Indian Jones is based) and the other adventurous explorers in the Taklamakan desert region at the turn of the 20th century. Their discoveries and excavations of sites buried for centuries under the sands revealed lost languages and vast increases

in ancient texts and artwork, but the removal of huge amounts of materials -- not only books and scrolls, but also statues, paintings, frescoes, etc. -- while preserving these in museums in Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Japan, etc. -- is viewed by the Chinese et al as wholesale thievery.

In the Ruins of Empire, Ronald Spector. Spector wrote a very excellent history of the Pacific War, Eagle Against the Sun. This book is a 'sequel' to it and covers the role of occupation forces throughout the Pacific region in the aftermath of WWII. I went to hear the author speak in Decatur. . .

Creatures:

Turtles & Tortoises, Vincenzo Ferri.

Simon & Shuster's Guide to Reptiles and Ambhībians, Behler (ed.).

I consulted these excellent photographic guides primarily in painting 30 or so small pictures of turtles. This set was matched with approx. the same number of paintings of manifestations of Avalokitesvara,

c.f., http://www.jonciliberto.com/drawings/2007/1-07_chelonia_avalokitesvar.jpg,

all of them for sending out at the start of 2007.

The Unknown:

Archaeological Anomalies: Small Artifacts, William R. Corliss, compiler. This is part of the author's massive Sourcebook Project(<http://www.science-frontiers.com/sourcebk.htm>). This is one volume of the Catalog of Anomalies, a 30-year effort to scour scientific journals and collect anomalies: "It is at least as important to realize what is anomalous as it is to realize what is well-explained in terms of prevailing paradigms." I picked up this volume during a visit to S. Florida last week, during which I stopped in at Arcturus books: great mail-order store for UFO, mythology, occult, et al materials. Give them a visit: <http://www.abebooks.com/home/ARCBKS/>

ALYSON LAURA

Blessed Unrest - Paul Hawken

I am a Strange Loop - Douglas Hofstadter

No one belongs here more than you - Miranda July

LISA ALEMBIK

Havent had much of the luxury to read this year, but here goes:

Johnathan Strange & Mr. Norrell by Susanna Clarke (great)

Some Things I Never Thought I'd Do by Pearl Cleage (romance-ish)

Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides (grreat)

No one belongs here more than you by Miranda July (grrreat) (also check out her film "You and Me and Everyone We Know")

Divisadero by Michael Ondaatje (grreat)

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

When the Moon Waxes Red by Trinh T. Minh-ha (heavy)

Picturing Us by Deborah Willis (v.g)

Land, Art: A Cultural Ecology Handbook (in the middle of it. A beautiful book. Commissioned by the RSA Arts & Ecology. Where is our government sponsored Arts & Ecology program, eh?)

Ecotopia (v.g.--published by the International Center for Photography)

ArtForum December issue (a must since my main mode of traveling to view art is by magazine or internet)

Oxford American Music Issue (comes with a cd that I likes)

What would you read (again)?: Artnews Recommends December 2006

DEIRDRE AIMS

Hillary Clinton's autobiography, *Living History*

LISA ALEMBIK

Oxford American Magazine--check out the 2006 Southern Music CD

Anything by Jack Pendarvis, Angela Carter, Salmon Rushdie.

Atonement by Ian McEwan

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard

If you are interested in an apocalyptic vision traveler tale Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (interesting to read just after *Cold Mountain*)

PAUL BOSHEARS

I'm really responding with enthusiasm to Robert's first author, David Wood.

I had the really good fortune of responding to his *THE STEP BACK*:

ETHICS AND POLITICS AFTER DECONSTRUCTION at this year's GA Continental Philosophy Conference at Kennesaw State University. So great was that experience, because he is such a wonderful conversationalist and damn-funny guy, that I am compelled to respond in this manner to your mention of him!

Unfortunately I will not be able to at length provide a reasonable

synopsis, something which I always enjoy when reading your posts, by the way, Robert, but I also don't want to not share some of the titles that I wish I could loan any of you here on the Listserv:

DOGS - Dan and Laura Coppinger. This is an outstanding book, written by two biologists, arguing that to believe that the best way to relate to dogs is to treat them like wolves (which is the most common statement in training literature) is obscene. As obscene as saying, "people are from apes, so when you have a child you should treat it like an ape." That's like trying to play the game with a football bat.

METAPHILOSOPHY AND CHINESE THOUGHT: INTERPRETING DAVID HALL. I love the works of Roger T. Ames, David L. Hall and Henry Rosemont, Jr - if

you would like to have a radical reinterpretation of our place in society, consult their collective vision of Confucianism and Daoism.

David Hall died just recently and this collection includes a compelling eulogy (I'd say as thought-provoking and tender as Derrida's ADIEU for Levinas).

THE DISCOMFORT ZONE - I dunno. I just like Franzen. Yeah, there's all that Oprah controversy about THE CORRECTIONS.

But, did you know this? In the first edition of THE CORRECTIONS is an erratum page where it is explained that "the text on page 430 and 431 was reversed in this printing, i.e. page 431 should be read before page 430. Y'know what? When you do this, the two parts are totally interchangeable - you'd never know unless they corrected it. His new collection of essays is just as funny.

FOCUSING THE FAMILIAR: A PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE ZHONGYONG

- Ames & Hall. I do, in fact, reread this book all the time. I feel it's the best book that Ames has co-written, and presents an outstanding reward for those who would read it.

JONATHAN STRANGE & MR. NORREL - Susanna Clarke. Who doesn't like a history of British Magic? If you read this, you should also listen to Mono (from Japan)'s newest album "You Are There" they are the perfect compliments. This likely will alter your mood, I warn you

How about the books I meant to get to?

I've picked up and put down for YEARS now GODEL, ESCHER, BACH by Hofstadter; when am I gonna learn?

There was that slim volume, LAST WRITINGS by Nishida Kitaro so that I

could finally stop using secondary material to talk about him; sigh.

I honestly only bought Heidegger's BEING AND TIME because Eagle Eye had it for five dollars (!!!!) Maybe in grad school I'll be asked to read it, shameful, just shameful.

JONATHAN BOUKNIGHT

FICTION: "The Man Who Fell in Love With the Moon" by Tom Spanbauer is like an amazing dream. And if you like tragic love stories between men (or boys) "At Swim, Two Boys" by Jamie O'Neill and "As Meat Loves Salt" by Maria McCann are beautifully written historical fictions and will completely consume you until the last page...and may leave you needing a bit of therapy.

ART: "A Storybook Life" by Philip-Lorca diCorcia, "Jenny Saville" by Gagosian Gallery, and "Portraits" by Rineke Dijkstra are all fantastic collections of the artist's work.

GLENN CARROLL

I am presently rereading "A New Earth" by Eckhart Tolle for the third time.

I will reread "The Fifth Sacred Thing" by Starhawk and advocate it to my friends.

ROBERT CHEATHAM

The Road To Delphi: the Life and Afterlife of Oracles

Michael Wood

Definitely not a new age bestseller (Wood's previous book was on Nabokov), this is still a pretty fascinating look at foretelling the future and the idea of the Oracle (although it's not a history per se) and ranges from Wittgenstein to Hamlet's three witch sisters to Kafka and on to the film *Minority Report*, etc etc.. In fact looking back over it made me want to read it again. A little difficult to pull a quote from it to do it justice but here is one:

"If an oracle is a form of words, and the fulfillment of an oracle consists in the match -- some kind of match -- between those words and an event, in the future or the present of the past, then the ultimate question about an oracle, as we have seen, is not whether it tells the truth. It is a matter of interpretation but above all a matter of reference, of how a particular piece of language hooks on to the world."

The Phenomenology of Revelation

Paul Laffoley

No, this is not a theological treatise on a book of the bible but a catalogue, (mostly) more or less, from 1989 from Kent Fine Arts in New York, with nice photos of some of the artist Laffoley's works as well as writing by him. He formed the Boston Visionary Cell with some other folks and continues to produce a form of visionary art with quite incredible schematics, machines etc. you can do a google search or got to <http://laffoley.com/>

If I have a favorite 'visionary artist' I guess Laffoley is it.

My Mississippi

Willie Morris

This has been out a while also (2000) but I just was given it as a gift recently and (being from Mississippi and attempting to negate the fact for many years), it struck quite a chord with me (hence the long quote-- nice downhome photos by Morris' son too:

'In my New York days I had a somewhat cranky and conservative movie maker friend who was an exile from Louisiana. We were having a conversation shortly after I had published a piece in my magazine, HARPER'S, about the changes I had observed in Mississippi. My flamboyant and irascible companion, who had spent considerable time in Mississippi over the years drinking mint juleps with the cousins of the Sartorises and Compsons and de Spains and who was quite conversant with southern literature, looked at me and began shaking his head> "You're crazy," he finally said, repeating it louder next time, "Crazy!" We were having a drink in the Empire Chinese bar on Madison Avenue, our magazine hangout, and even the chinese waiters, who by then were accustomed to strange outbursts from my steady clientele of writers and poets and all varieties of human fauna, turned their heads to listen. Mr. Suey Hom, the owner, came over and said, " Come on, let me buy you another drink, hah?"

"But this man IS crazy," my friend persisted.

"Why is he crazy?"

"Because he's a writer but he wants to change Mississippi. can you imagine? There he is with the most messed-up state in the union, the most fertile ground in America for a writer. The place of his own forebears. The most beautiful land in the whole damned country. The most individualistic people in the hemisphere. Cruelties right out of the Old Testament. relationships that would make Freud give up before he started. Emotions run wild. Romanticism gone amuck. Decadence and decay. Miscegenation that's the envy of Brazil. Charm. Openness. The courage of noble fools. So much hospitality you have to beg them to stop. And he wants to CHANGE it. Why, if I was a writer I'd use all the influence I had with the politicians and get them to put up big green signs at every point of entry into Mississippi, all along the borders saying 'posted. No trespassing.' "

I will have to admit that a dark and secret part of me was touched by this, and, since my Louisiana friend had worked himself into a high fever, I told him so."

and then this a little later on, which i really connected with:

" All creativity is discovery; creating is discovering something you did not know before which has sprung from the things you know very well. Mississippi is one big laboratory for breeding and cultivating the creative spirit; I could have been describing when i wrote the following in my first book. North toward Home: " There was something in the very atmosphere of a small town in the Deep South,

something spooked-up and romantic, which did extravagant things to the imaginations of its bright and resourceful boys. It had something to do with long and heavy afternoons with nothing doing, and with rich slow evening with the crickets and frogs scratched their legs and made delta music, with plain boredom, perhaps with an inherited tradition of contriving elaborate plots or one-shot practical jokes. i believe this hidden influence had something to do with the Southern sense of fancy; when one grew up in a place where more specific exercises in intellectation--like reading books--were not accepted, one had better work his imagination out on SOMETHING, and the less austere, the better."

Image, Icon, Economy: The Byzantine origins of the Contemporary Imaginary

Marie-Jose Mondzain

An Incredible book really, not for the faint of heart, difficulty wise, but a somewhat essential one for those interested in how we got where we are today...helps to have some knowledge of the Iconoclastic tradition too...

Again, hard to give justice to its complicated thesis so I'll just pick out a couple of passages that strike me. We hear a lot about 'political theology' with the Neocons but the even deeper hooks/claws/fangs of a 'theological economy'?:

"The icon does not fall within a theological mystery, but within an economic enigma

"The essence of the image is not visibility; it is its economy and that alone, that is visible in its iconicity. Visibility belongs to the definition of the icon and not the image. This is why the icon is nothing other than the economy of the image, and its task is to be faithful to the prototype of each and every economy."

too much other stuff to get me cranked up on, including the concept of 'archeipoeis', or the concept of art/artifacts not made by human hands...

On Creaturely Life: Rilke/Benjamin/Sebald

Eric Santner

Another fabulously interesting book by Santner whose previous two books were JUST as fabulously interesting (of course your mileage may differ): *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in postwar Germany*; and *My Own Private Germany: Daniel Schreber's Secret History of Germany*.

It's probably pointless to give a quote but I seem fearless today:

"It is not the mere fact of being in a relation of subject to sovereign that generates creaturely 'non-nature', but the exposure to an 'outlaw' dimension of law internal to sovereign authority. The state of exception/emergency is that aspect of law that marks a threshold of undecidability proper to the functioning of law/sovereign authority: the 'master's discourse' in the state of exception marks a sanctioned suspension of law, an outside of law included within the law. Creaturely life emerges precisely at such impossible thresholds."

The Emigrants

W.G. Sebald

You should run and not walk and pick up any copy of any of Sebald's wonderful books. The first one I read was *The Rings of Saturn*, then *Vertigo*, and now I'm, far too belatedly reading this one. He's dead now so you don't have to worry about catching up. His books are curious mixes of travelogue (lots of little quixotic pictures within), autobiography (how much is real and how much is fictive?) philosophy (but embedded in objects and places), philosophy as a form of 'homesickness,' as one of his fellow Germans once put it, and above all memory, melancholia, loss, Very european but something people really seem to connect to, given the rapid disappearance of so much:

"The moral backbone of literature is about that whole question of memory. To my mind it seems clear that those who have no memory have the much greater chance to lead happy lives."

The World Turned Inside Out: Henry Corbin and Islamic Mysticism

Tom Cheetham

this book has two interests for me: one the authors name (part of a performance project I was working on for awhile needed more of me) and of course the nature of the book itself. I put it aside for awhile but looks like I'll be coming back to it to finish it. Henry Corbin of course was the great french scholar of Islam and purveyor of a certain sort of mysticism himself.

The Neutral

Roland Barthes

A set of lectures by Barthes from 1978 but just recently released..My favorite Barthes book, still fabulous and somewhat mysterious in both form and content.

no quotes although everything in the book is quotable I guess. but here are the 'chapter' headings:

1. Benevolence
2. weariness
3. silence
4. tact
5. sleep
6. affirmation

7. color
8. the adjective
9. images of the neutral
10. anger
11. the active of the neutral
12. ideospheres
13. consciousness
14. answer
15. rites
- 16 conflict
17. oscillation
18. retreat
19. arrogance
20. panorama
- 21 kairos
2. wou-wei
23. the androgyne

PEGGY DOBBINS

Lisa, I just saw your post after pulling a book I read in 1970 off the shelf. *Looking for Dilmun* by Geoffrey Bibby. Definitely worth a reread to me for many reasons I didn't have then. I won't say anything more about it.

TOM FERGUSON

again & again: Eckhart Tolle: The Power of Now & A New Earth

ANNE FREE

Fiction:

Behind the Scenes at the Museum - Kate Atkinson

Look Homeward, Angel - Thomas Wolfe

The Women's Room - Marilyn French

The Rector's Wife (or anything by) - Joanna Trollope

The Red Tent - Anita Diamant

Fahrenheit 451 - Ray Bradbury

The Night Watch - Sarah Waters

Perfume - Patrick Suskind

The Member of the Wedding - Carson McCullers

A Christmas Memory - Truman Capote

Cold Mountain - Charles Frazier

Possession - A.S. Byatt

Tree of Hands - Ruth Rendell

Poetry:

Emily Dickinson

W.H. Auden

Sylvia Plath

NonFiction:

Listening to Prozac - Peter D. Kramer

Bauhaus 1919-1928 - Herbert with Walter Gropius, Ise Gropius Bayer

DEBRA GAVANT

Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious by Timothy D. Wilson

A must read for anyone who thinks.

KEVIN HALLER

Just finished re-reading **The Journey To The East & Steppenwolf** (Hesse)

and am still working on Plato's **Republic**. Recently re-read **Notes From Underground** and **Gilgamesh**. I've tried many times to approach/tackle **Beelzebubs Tales To His Grandson** and usually end up re-reading **Meetings With Remarkable Men** (Gurdjieff) or **Witness** (JG Bennett).

For fun I sometimes pick a random story from my copy/collection of Grimm's...

CARRIE HAWKS

"Nervous Conditions" by Tsitsi Dangarembga

(voted top 12 in African lit by Zimbabwe Intl. Book Fair)

"Female Chauvinist Pigs" by Ariel Levy

PATRICK HOLBROOK

Space Is The Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra

MARY CATHERINE JOHNSON

We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For: Light in a Time of Darkness by Alice Walker

The Accidental Masterpiece: On the Art of Life and Vice Versa by Michael Kimmelman

A Fine Disregard: What Makes Modern Art Modern by Kirk Varnedoe (This one I must admit I've never been able to finish, but I'm totally in love with anything Varnedoe does, so I make the effort every so often; I also just re-read the wonderful Adam Gopnik article about Varnedoe from *The New Yorker* - "Last of the Metrozoids" - which is being made into a film)

JUDY KUNIANSKY

I read a murder mystery Plain Truth that occurs on an Amish farm. The information about the lifestyle of the Amish is factual (author's notes). I finished this book shortly before the murders at the Amish school in Pa., and felt I understood a little more about the community and it's response to the tragedy. I liked the book, too.

I also re-read The Great Santini. It was hard to make myself read sometimes, but worth it. Everyone does not have the benefit of a "happy" childhood and parental relationships are not easy to understand.

I'll be thinking about what else grabbed me ;-)

ELIZABETH LATTA

1. West with the Night by Beryl Markham
2. Flatland/Sphereland by <<http://www.amazon.com/s/104-0281341-5142357?ie=UTF8&index=books&rank=-relevance%2C%2Bavailability%2C-daterank&field-author-exact=Abbott%2C%20Edwin%20A.>>Edwin A. Abbott
3. <http://www.amazon.com/Flatterland-Like-Flatland-Only-More/dp/073820675X/ref=pd_bxgy_b_text_b/104-0281341-5142357>Flatterland: Like Flatland, Only More So by Ian Stewart
4. Calypso by Jacques-Yves Cousteau
5. Seeing Out Loud by Jerry Saltz

JOHN LOWTHER

i just finished rereading (aloud, to my lover)

Carole Maso's AVA

i may have sent this title last year as i love the book

but right now its the sexiest most wonderful book in the world!

THE COLLECT POEMS OF FRANK O'HARA

has been a consistent fave this past few months

(but i have read this book off an on for at least a decade

and anything but Joseph Ceravolo is worth finding

but a good selection is contained in

THE GREEN LAKE IS AWAKE

HORMUZ MININA

Daniel Ellsberg's Pentagon Papers

ANTHONY OWSLEY

1. Strange Angel: The Otherworldly Life of Rocket Scientist John Whiteside Parsons

by George Pendle

Rocket scientist... poet...science fiction aficionado... occultist...Ol'Jack Parsons was a complicated man. He invented the solid fuel rocket booster, helped found the Jet Propulsion Laboratories, and conjured up the Whore of Babylon in his kitchen during his many Sex Magick rites (usually with accomplice and occasional romantic rival L. Ron Hubbard) as a follower of Aleister Crowley's Ordo Templi Orientis. Then he blowd himself up real good in a mysterious explosion that still has people debating its cause. Parson's convoluted life had all the gusto and raunch of the greatest 1930s pulp dime novel!

2. The Cats of Louis Wain

by Patricial Allderidge and the Bibliotheque de l'Image

This book collects many paintings and sketches by the 19th century cartoonist/illustrator Louis Wain.

Wain was born the only son in a reclusive family of six. Many of his sisters suffered from mental illness and melancholy and Wain himself was known to be "eccentric". After a brief marriage ended tragically when his wife died of cancer, Wain became grief-stricken and began obsessively painting pictures of his wife's pet cat Peter. Eventually his paintings evolved into whimsical illustrations of anthropomorphic cats in a variety of situations: attending tea parties, playing cricket, strumming guitars, attending the opera, etc. Wain's paintings became the toast of England and appeared in numerous postcards, magazines and children's books at the turn of the 20th Century. But his celebrity began to wane at the beginning of WWI and he eventually went insane and died a pauper in a Hertfordshire mental hospital.

3. The Golden Ratio

by Mario Livio

A book about the number phi (1.6180339887) and how it pops up in science, mathematics, nature, art and architecture. This book proves how God is both a Mathematician and a punster.

4. SUPERMAN, the dailies 1939-1942

by Jerome Siegel and Joe Shuster

Collects all the early Superman syndicated newspaper comic strips. Back before he became a demigod who stood for Mom, apple pie and Eisenhower Republicanism, Superman was a tough-talkin', blue collar champion of the oppressed. There was no X-Ray vision, no super-breath, and, startlingly, no power of flight. Instead Supes relied on a bullet-proof hide, astounding leaps, and snappy dialogue like "Cracking your head like an egg shell will be a messy job, but if you insist....." to defeat his plethora of foes (usually ranging from cheap thugs, Mobsters, calcitrant slum lords and the occasional mad scientist).

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

Some other surprising bits of trivia are revealed in this book that skew the current Superman Mythos: When baby Kal-L's spaceship crashes to earth he's rescued by a passing motorist and dropped off at an orphanage, NOT adopted by the Kents!

Clark Kent's first job is as a reporter for the Daily Star, NOT the Daily Planet.

Clark's boss is editor George Taylor, NOT Perry White.

ALLISON RENTZ

wicked

the curious incident of the dog in the night time by mark haddon

guns germs and steel by jared diamond

anything by jane austen

anything by ernest hemingway

life of pi

JONATHAN STRANGE & MR. NORREL - Susanna Clarke

JULIE STUART

Cold Mountain, and anything by James Salter--I've read his books over and over again

MANDIE TURNER MITCHELL

The God Delusion by Richard Dawkins

Down on Ponce by Fred Willard

Principles of Art Appreciation by Stephen Pepper (1949)

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

MICHAEL WILLIAMS

Fiction:

Hard Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World by Haruki Murakami

The Wind Up Bird Chronicles by Haruki Murakami

Non Fiction:

Gathering Moss by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Stranger in the Forest on Foot Across Borneo by Eric Hansen

Soul Mountain by Gao Xingjian

PANDRA WILLIAMS

Fiction:

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Soul Mountain by Gao Xingjian

Artnews Recommends November 2005

Deirdre Aims “The Master and Marguerita” by Mikhail Bulgakov

1920's, suppressed, then re-published in the 1990's, is the only serious literature I've been able to get through in a long time. It is gorgeous writing, a story that intertwines (fictional) Pontious Pilate's dealings with Jesus and what was, in the 1920's, contemporary Soviet life. It's a really beautiful book.

Anon “The Corrections” by Jonathan Franzen

Anon “Lover & Tyrants” by Francine du Plessix Gray

extremely high-end expat trash--dishy, dated (especially at the end) and very entertaining if you're in the right mood. I probably coulda skipped the last 50 or so pages and been perfectly happy.

Maggie Bethel “Black Rain” by Masuji Ibuse

first hand account of us dropping the atom bombs on japan. he's a wonderful writer and it's told in a very matter-of-fact fashion. the beauty of his writing is a stark contrast to what he is writing about. i read it months ago, but still think of it almost daily.and it's not all a "downer". it's ultimately about our shared humanity.

Charlotte Cameron “Tuesdays” Great book and a fast read

Jerry Cullum

Rebecca Solnit

“Short Guide to Getting Lost”

“Wanderlust: A History of Walking”

“As Eve Said to the Serpent: On Landscape, Gender, and Art”

Jeff D. “Edvard Munch: Behind The Scream” Sue Prideaux

Just published in October--apparently this is the first ever full bio (in english).

I loved it, plowed through it.

Tom Ferguson

Gary Zukav

1. “Seat of the Soul”

2. “Heart of the Soul”

3. “Mind of the Soul”

Ed Hall Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's “From Hell”

everything a graphic novel should be.

Diane Hause

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

1. "The New Earth" by Eckhart Tolle
2. "Conversations Before The End of Time" by Suzi Gablik.

Eckhart's book is new and a follow-up to "The Power of Now" and Suzi's is one I read back in 1995 but just recently am re-reading (and enjoying) again. Short essays and conversations with the likes of James Hillman, Leo Castelli, Hilton Kramer, the Guerrilla Girls etc.

Heather Lily Havey

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

poetry:

essential rumi

kabir - ecstatic poems

collected wallace stevens

tao te ching - stephen mitchell translation

nonfiction:

what we may be - piero ferrucci

mastery of love - don miguel ruiz

fiction:

flannery oconnor collected stories

televisionary oracles - rob brezny

dorothy allison - bastard out of carolina

gabriel garcia marquez - love in the time of cholera

etc etc etc!!! =]

Carrie Hawks

1. "The Moral Animal" by Richard Wright (not the author of Black Boy), it's a book on evolutionary/bio-psychology.

2. "Middlesex" by Jeffrey Eugenides

3. "Concrete" by Thomas Bernhard, along the themes of an obsessed musician if I remember correctly.

Laura C. Lieberman

Philip Caputo "Acts of Faith"

Azar Nafisi "Reading Lolita in Teheran"

I would also take Songlines by Bruce Chatwin and probably anything by him to a desert island.

I have also been recommending an oral history to people, Theodore Rosengarten's All God's Dangers which I just reread.

Evan Levy

1. "Art and Confrontation- the Arts in an Age of Change" translated and published by the New York Graphic Society Art Library. The book is a collection of essays by various leading French art critics, curators, theorists and arts leaders reflecting on the Paris student uprising in 1968. It will change the way you think about art and the role of the artist.

2. "Master and Marguerita" by Mikhail Bulgakov. Fantastic allegorical tale.

John Randolph Naugle *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe:

Barbara Schreiber "From a High Place" by Matthew Spender (Arshile Gorky bio)

Maxwell Sebastian Knut Hamsun - mysteries

Jan Selman “The World is Flat” by Thomas Friedman and...

“Don't Think of an Elephant” –is about language and why the Democrats can't craft a message that resonates with the public and the Republicans can. It is interesting so far, but I have only just started it.

Anne Sereg

More Serious

“Mastery of Love” Don Miguel Ruiz - very down to earth book on unconditional love

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/1878424424/qid=1132005291/sr=8-1/ref=pd_bbs_1/002-9128755-8827252?v=glance&s=books&n=507846>

“Orbiting the Giant Hairball” - Gordon MacKenzie - how to get on with being creative in a corporate setting (life at Hallmark)

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0670879835/ref=pd_bbs_null_1/002-9128755-8827252?v=glance&s=books

Anything by Fred Alan Wolf - physicist featured in "What the Bleep Do We Know?" <http://www.fredalanwolf.com/>

Less Serious

Anything by Terry Pratchett - especially discworld books - funny fantasy with strong parody/cynicism

The ones starring Death as a character are particularly funny.

<<http://www.ie.lspace.org/>>

Anything by Charles De Lint - great author writes urban mix of reality and fantasy stories <<http://www.sfsite.com/charlesdelint/>>

“Snow Crash, Zodiac” - Speculative fiction writer Neal Stephenson tweaking current trends yields interesting plots. His newer stuff is more historically based and longer winded. Not bad but different direction.

<<http://www.nealstephenson.com/>><http://www.nealstephenson.com/>

Jena Sibille “The Sparrow” by Mary Doria Russell

It was the only book in five years that everyone in my bookclub liked (and a very well read group, I'll add)

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0449912558/qid=1132063837/sr=2-3/ref=pd_bbs_b_2_3/002-6383318-5798434?v=glance&s=books>

Priscilla Smith “To Build Our Lives Together: Black Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906” by Allison Dorsey, U. of GA Press

She teaches at Swarthmore and spoke last week on a panel as part of the Southern Historical Society's Ann. Mtg. here. The panel was on the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot and she offered some serious and very stirring thoughts on the plight of black women during the riot. It's at the Druid Hills Bookstore.

Moira Steven

“To Kill a Mockingbird” – Harper Lee (I read this every couple of years!)

“The Crimson Petal and the White” – Michel Faber (Victorian-esque novel – very well written and involving)

“The Seven Ages of Paris” – Alistair Horne (a wonderful history of Paris that is enlightening and delighting)

“Possession” – A.S. Byatt (best of her novels with contemporary and historical threads)

“Alias Grace” – Margaret Atwood (historical novel of Toronto and a murder case)

Any and all of the 21 sea-faring novels of Patrick O’Brian (or at least the first 8 which I’ve read so far)

Any and all of the Harry Potters (fun and adventure and suspense and they’re well-written)

“The Life of Pi” – Yann Martel (magical)

“The Undressed Art: Why We Draw” – Peter Steinhart (marvelous)

“The Primary Colors” – Alexander Theroux (together with the following book, a wonderful, free-ranging contemplation of colors and their meaning)

“The Secondary Colors” – Alexander Theroux

Julie Stewart “Cold Mountain” by Charles Frazier

I read just a few weeks ago the novel “Cold Mountain.” I have found myself going back to certain sections and reading them over and over again. Frazier writes in a language and voice that transports you to the 19th century mountains of North Carolina--not far from where you will be. And his descriptions of the details of everyday life are extraordinarily beautiful. The story takes place at the end of the civil war, though the focus is not on battles but how the war has shaped everyone's life. I was also very affected by how closely peoples' lives followed the land and the patterns of the seasons. Frazier said that he spent two years studying plants, farming, and animal husbandry--all those things that were everyday knowledge back then that we have lost. There is an amazing amount of information about how well they knew the land where they got their sustenance. And he is a beautiful naturalist writer--his descriptions of Inman's long walk home through most of North Carolina allow you to see what the place must have looked like before the land was worked over as hard as it is now. It's utterly transporting. I read the book in less than a week because I couldn't put it down. And when I was done I wished I could go to this place he had created and linger a while to see what it was like. Since you will be in the mountains I can't imagine a better place to read a book like this.

Lynn Talley Bill Bryson's “A Walk in the Woods”

At the very top of my list, as both a hiker and a human, is. His particular peculiar insight turns the most simple things profound, with wit and joy.

Deanna Sirlin

“Do the Windows Open?” Julia Hect

Cedric Victor-DeSouza

“Crowds & Power” Elias Canetti

“Writings 1962-1993” Gerhard Richter

ARTNEWS Reads 2005-2013

“Blink” Malcolm Gladwell

“Faster” James Gleick

“Patriotism” Yukio Mishima

“Machiavelli on Modern Leadership” Michael Ledeen

Clark Vreeland

“Lullaby” Chuck Palahniuk

“The Four Agreements” Don Miguel Ruiz

Patton White “Gone With the Wind” by Margaret Mitchell

I would recommend “Gone With The Wind.” I’ve read it about twenty times, from when I was 12 to the last time i read it about four years ago. It is fascinating to me to see how I perceive the same book as I change, and my values shift and become refined.

Susie Winton

Lisa,

Leave some time open for the Hambidge library when you're there; you might find something totally unexpected but just right.

Annie Dillard *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* and *The Writing Life*--exquisitely written observations and perfect for Hambidge.

John Lowther

“Ava” by Carole Maso

a wonderful warm sexy and sad novel that is brilliant in its experimentation but not in a way that thwarts reader absorption in the book -- 6 times now i have given this as a present and i expect i will do so again. i've read it twice, that too will happen again in time.

“The Origin of Capitalism” by Ellen Meiksins Wood

i posted a review some time ago to artnews. wonderful book. i couldnt believe i was gripped and reading long into the night about agrarian land reform and early capitalism. but i was and that book has significantly altered my thinking.

“The End of Dissatisfaction” by Todd McGowan

this is lacanian cultural criticism with political resonance -- another books that really opened my thinking up to new ideas. exciting and a bit saddening. still it gives wonderful analyses of many contemporary issues and uses films and novels for examples.

“A Border Comedy” by Lyn Hejinian

LH is very famous in the poetry world and this book looks to become one of her lifetime classics, on par with the earlier masterpiece MY LIFE

“Rip It Up and Start Again” by Simon Reynolds

if you were at all into punk rock and what now gets called "post punk" then this will likely entertain and make you curious about some of those bands that you missed back in the day. the book has a misstep or two (can we really see duran duran as a post-punk group if say gang of four is a post punk group -- why bother?). still a good read that i wish i owned as i would go back to it again and again.

“The Rings of Saturn” by W.G. Sebald

i hope to read a few more of his books in time but this one is pretty wonderful. it is a novel but reads like something else, some combination of memoir and travelogue and local history. very interesting and has some pictures and such.

China Miéville’s “Perdidio Street Station” “The Scar” “Iron Council”

these three novels are related and roughly sequential, but do not have a common cast of characters, unless the city of *New Crobuzon* is a character (and it is) or the frequently killed and just as resolutely reborn radical new sheet the *Runagate Rampant*. and as these two nominees imply, all three of these books take place within the same world and so what one learns about the various races of beings and their cultures as well as the many different lands and political players in this world is cumulative & adds to the richness of each successive novel.

you will find these books in the sci-fi/fantasy section of your local (evil) chain bookstore, but their concerns are so much broader than run-of-the-mill or even better than average sci-fi or fantasy that it seems *almost* silly to name them as such. there is no space opera here and none of the *feudalism-lite* that forms the social context of most fantasy novels. but do we have nonhuman races? yes we do, many, insect-headed *khepri*, frog-like amphibious *vodyanoi*, winged *garuda*, and many more along with humans. Miéville has a gift for animating these nonhumans, of drawing the psychological consequences and possibilities that beings such as these would encounter. there is yet another more ominous and disturbing class of beings as well, the Remade, those who have been altered in the government's punishment factories, and whose sufferings and sometime manumission haunts all of these novels.

also, relatively unique in my experience of sci-fi/fantasy, there is a consistent political interest to the struggles that motivate the characters and animate the plotlines of these books. this is not to say that the books propose a politics, they do not. but the political conflicts and tensions explored in them resonate with

insights meaningful in our world, without ever being simply props meant to have political meaning for us.

beyond all of that the books are a joy to read. Miéville's style approaches high literary in places and then swerves in unexpected ways, consider this passage from page 2 of PERDIDO STREET STATION which gives a good introduction to his lovingly inventive descriptions of filth and muck;

Wires are stretched tight across the river and the eaves, held fast by milky aggregates of phlegm. They hum like bass strings. Something scuttles overhead. The bargeman hawks foully into the water.

His Gob dissipates.

at times Miéville *almost* seems to be saying 'look what I can do' but this may simply be my own relative lack of inventiveness casting aspersions. Miéville, aged a mere 33 or so and already the author of 4 novels, winner of many science fiction and fantasy prizes and awards is plain and simply; a wonderfully inventive writer. he tosses off, again and again, as simple descriptive digressions, ideas that other writers would build books if not whole series upon (in this sense and perhaps in not other he resembles Philip Dick). these books are a delight, page after page with whacky dialogue, fascinating ideas, and such a unique and engrossing vision of its world that finishing it is a moment of sadness nearing lassitude. and now, that i have read all 4 of his novels i am doubly bummed -- what now? i have to wait for what, a year or more?---*unbearable!*

in brief, PERDIDO STREET STATION concerns a bad drug, called *dreamshit*, which in proliferating causes a plague of nightmares, a scientist type who plays a decisive role in stopping the monsters that are linked with the drug. but is also a story of self-generating and unplanned artificial intelligences. of a repressive government with a secret militia and the seditionist radicals that struggle against it. of a folk hero/vigilante called *Jack-half-a-Prayer*. a delicate and carefully described love story between a human and an insect-headed *khepri* artist. oh, and there is the story line about the *garuda* who wants something that as taken from him, and how, tho he fails to gain it, his desire leads to other important results. oh, also gangsters.

THE SCAR has a tenuous connection to one character from the previous book and occurs shortly after, altho the events all take place far outside of the city of New Crobuzon and mostly at sea. this book dwells on a floating pirate colony called Armada and tho the city that so dominates the mood of the 1st books is never the scene of the action, it still manages to be a driving force of the plot. THE SCAR concerns summoning a beast from another dimension, a powerful race of spooky beings called the *grindylo*, international espionage and the deceits that accompany it, the success and failures of love between a number of characters with competing allegiances, distortions in time and catastrophes narrowly averted. oh, and vampires (who hail from the near mythic land of *Old Cromlech*). did I mention the island of the *Mosquito People*? also, i always love stories with dirigibles in them.

IRON COUNCIL is, well, sort of a western. or a story about trains. also about the love of a younger man for an older man. lots of stuff about golems and the science of golem raising, *golemetry*. the train story is one of visionary arrogance on a grand scale of the sort we associate with the robber barons and train companies of american history, which suddenly becomes something else when strikes by various groups pf workers suddenly find their universalist point and become a strike by all the workers, who take over the train and with it escape. you might be wondering how this could be possible, train tracks and all. but i wont spoil that conundrum for you as its solution acts as a sort of covert metaphor for many possibilities. this is also the story of sedition in the city and the return of this train, now called by everyone the *Iron Council* to a city wracked with civil war and a state, New Crobuzon at war with a very alien and dangerous enemy far away called the Tesh. there are also gangs and seditionist factions, an assassination, a revenge plot, soldier revolt and much else.

having taken some days now to sit back and let these books percolate in my mind, a number of similarities strikes me. firstly each book concerns a love affair which doesnt end in the happily ever after column. these loves are fraught with crossings of social barriers; between a human man and an insectile *khepri* woman, unrequired love between a human woman and a (human?) man that is sunk by irreconcilable politics and the unrequited love of a younger man for an older man where one of the two places political goals far above the romantic. thus, all of these books end with varyingly sad, bittersweet and tragic notes surround these love affairs. another common aspect has to do with Miéville's vision of, in turn, the city of New Crobuzon, the floating pirate city of Armada and the renegade train, which is a sort of city of rails, the Iron Council. in each instance, these places are lushly overgrown or perhaps ingrown, as if mutated or charged with a Batailleian excess at every turn -- a force much akin to what in the books is called the Cacotopic Stain.

it being summer, perhaps you are in the mood for a thick stack of wonderfully engrossing, action packed, yet thought provoking and politically astute fantasy that transcends the stereotypes of the genre? i have not been this excited about a sci-fi or fantasy book since... well, it probably goes back to junior high when i read the first few DUNE novels. i can only hope that Miéville remains as prolific in his vision as he is in his prose.