



OCTOBER '17

Her Body and Other Parties: Stories

By Carmen Maria Machado

"Reading the stories in *Her Body and Other Parties* has been among the greatest literary pleasures of 2017 for me. Carmen Maria Machado writes with fearless exploration, precision, and tenderness, which would prompt envy if gratitude and admiration weren't first to arrive on scene. From the lovely apocalyptic love story 'Inventory' to the dizzying and original 'Especially Heinous,' Machado's work is curious, inventive, and thrilling. It's feminist and pop culture, classic and weird; the stories are complex and the characters are haunting. What a debut!"

—Chorel Centers, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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The Last Ballad: A Novel

By Wiley Cash

"Ella May has never had much of anything. She labors long hours in a textile mill in North Carolina trying to feed her four young children on nine dollars a week. When Ella sings one of her songs at a meeting of workers who are hoping to form a union, she finds herself something of a local celebrity. Written in beautifully evocative prose, this novel about bigotry and labor unrest in the 1930s exerts a powerful impact that pulls the reader into the vortex of the struggle for social justice. It deserves a place of honor in the canon of great Southern literature."

—Alden Graves, Northshire Bookstore, Manchester Center, VT



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Manhattan Beach: A Novel

By Jennifer Egan

"Jennifer Egan's *Manhattan Beach* captures a time and place on the verge of momentous change. Set in Brooklyn in the 1940s, the novel tells the story of Anna Kerrigan, a young woman who has dropped out of Brooklyn College to contribute what she can to the American war effort. Unsatisfied with her job of inspecting and measuring machine parts, she attempts to enter the male-only world of deep-sea diving. *Manhattan Beach* is rich and atmospheric, highlighting a period when gangs controlled the waterfront, jazz streamed from the doors of nightclubs, and the future for everyone was far from certain."

—Mark Laframboise, Politics and Prose, Washington, DC



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The Rules of Magic: A Novel

By Alice Hoffman

"In a dazzling, emotive prequel to her bestselling novel *Practical Magic*, Alice Hoffman brings the reader back into the world of the Owens family. *The Rules of Magic* takes us back two generations with practical Franny, who must learn how to love; sensitive Jet, who must learn how to persevere; and restless Vincent, who must learn how to be happy. Hoffman's writing is frank, tender, vivid, and elusive all at once. Full of sorrow and beauty and courage, *The Rules of Magic* is a delicious, satisfying read."

—Heather Herbaugh, Mitzi's Books, Rapid City, SD



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The Twelve-Mile Straight: A Novel

By Eleanor Henderson

"When asked what defines 'Southern' literature, most would put land and family on the top of the list. These also define Eleanor Henderson's *The Twelve-Mile Straight*, a story set in the 1930s in Georgia, where George Wilson owns the cotton mill and most of the land and Juke Jessop is a sharecropper on land that wouldn't support his family, but his renown fills the gap. Full of entanglements, violence, and vivid characters, both white and black, this gripping saga starts with a lynching and weaves back and forth in time and voice until a stasis, if not resolution, is reached."

—Ann Carlson, Waterfront Books, Georgetown, SC



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The Glass Eye: A Memoir

By Jeannie Vanasco

"*The Glass Eye*, at its heart, is a memoir of Jeannie's relationship with her late father and the grief she experienced after his death. But it's also about her half-sister, Jeanne, who died before she was born; it's about mental illness; and it's about family and what that means. This is memoir at its best. The prose is powerful and often breathtaking—it'll make your heart break, it might make you cry, and you'll probably even laugh a few times. This is an elegy fierce and lyrical and raw, like none I've read before."

—Sarah Malley, Newtonville Books, Newton Centre, MA



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Going Into Town: A Love Letter to New York

By Roz Chast

"Having grown up in Mark Twain country on the Mississippi River, New York City was as foreign to me as Cairo, Egypt. Due to the dumb luck of having a very intelligent and ambitious relative, I was able to go to New York City when I was a very impressionable and enthusiastic 14-year-old. The experience changed my life. Roz Chast's *Going Into Town* reminds me, in one nostalgic and thoroughly entertaining sitting, of the most endearing aspects of the city. From moments of, 'Wait, is this an entire block of stores that sell ribbons?' to 'Humanity is both supremely lovely and frightening,' *Going Into Town* is a love letter to New York City for natives, newcomers, and wannabes alike."

—Nicole Sullivan, BookBar, Denver, CO



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The Vengeance of Mothers: The Journals of Margaret Kelly & Molly McGill: A Novel

By Jim Fergus

"*One Thousand White Women* was one of my favorite books and Jim Fergus does not disappoint with *The Vengeance of Mothers*. Meggie Kelly and her twin sister, Susie, are survivors of the 'Brides for Indians' program and of their Cheyenne village's massacre by the Army. When a new group of women are mistakenly sent west even though the government has abandoned the program, the twins help them adapt to the Cheyenne lifestyle while planning their revenge upon the soldiers that killed their family, including their newborn babies. Full of resilience, hope, sadness, and suspense, I was at the edge of my seat turning pages, worried about the outcome of these remarkable women. I loved it!"

—Maxwell Gregory, Lake Forest Book Store, Lake Forest, IL



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Caroline: Little House, Revisited

By Sarah Miller

"In *Caroline*, Sarah Miller recreates *Little House on the Prairie* from Ma's point of view. An oft-overlooked character, in *Caroline* we find a rich inner life that rarely breaks her smooth surface. She is constantly wrestling with fears and doubts about this journey and everything that it means (she was actually pregnant during it). Although *Caroline* seems consumed by caregiving, childbearing, and constant tasks for others, we get a glimpse of her true self through her thoughts on her childhood, her relationship with Charles, and her time as a teacher. Miller draws out the quiet richness of *Caroline* as a character, showing her to be as integral to the story as Pa or Laura."

—Jordan Barnes, Brookline Booksmith, Brookline, MA



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Forest Dark: A Novel

By Nicole Krauss

"No surprise: *Forest Dark* was worth the wait. Tapping into intellectual and deeply personal moments, the two main characters are ones to identify with even as the circumstances they find themselves in are fantastic. Krauss' reflections about marriage are poignant, and there is a lot to contemplate. At first, I enjoyed having moments when I wasn't reading to think, but toward the end I found myself not being able to put it down."

—Kira Wizner, Merritt Bookstore, Millbrook, NY



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The Ninth Hour: A Novel

By Alice McDermott

"Alice McDermott's dazzling *The Ninth Hour* turns on the contradictions that confound our need to reconcile with mortality. The empathetic characters, at once agents and benefactors of Christian charity, grow to realize not just the grace but also the hubris of their faith. A stunning work of generational storytelling, *The Ninth Hour* is compulsively readable and deeply thought-provoking. McDermott is a master artisan of humanity."

—Lori Feathers, Interabang Books, Dallas, TX



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The Last Castle: The Epic Story of Love, Loss, and American Royalty in the Nation's Largest Home

By Denise Kiernan

"Most of us who visit the Biltmore are awestruck by its beauty and grandeur. Kiernan now gives us the fascinating history of the people who built and cared for it, from George Vanderbilt, who had the vision to create this wonder, to his team, which included Frederick Law Olmstead, a nationally known landscape architect, and Richard Morris Hunt, who designed and built the house, along with so many others who contributed to the Biltmore's legacy. *The Last Castle* is a beautifully researched book, and I thoroughly enjoyed watching the adventure unfold. A great history that has motivated me to make another trip to Asheville! Loved it!"

—Stephanie Crowe, Page and Palette, Fairhope, AL



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Five-Carat Soul

By James McBride

"Sometimes after I've read a great book by an author, I judge. When I picked up a copy of James McBride's new collection of stories, *Five-Carat Soul*, I was prepared to be disappointed; how could he top *The Good Lord Bird*? Was I ever surprised, in the best way possible! These stories have all the magnificent qualities of his National Book Award-winning novel: quirky, poignant, and hilarious characters amid myriad situations in life, and humanity at its most human presented in beautiful writing. A couple of multi-story combinations read like novellas, and satisfied my craving to know more about the most interesting of the characters. McBride has set the bar high once again."

—Mamie Potter, Quail Ridge Books, Raleigh, NC



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The Tiger's Daughter

By K. Arsenault Rivera

"Badass ladies slaying demons, defying conventions, and saving the world on their own terms? Count me in. *The Tiger's Daughter* is an honest-to-goodness sweeping epic fantasy unlike any I have read. I don't remember ever being so excited for a new series. The characters in this story are so fully realized, the landscapes so vivid, I didn't even realize I'd been so swept away until I turned the last page. I endured with O Shizuka, princess, the divine made flesh, and finest blade in all Hokkaro; I raged with Barsalai Shefali Alsharyaa, demon slayer, horse whisperer, and infamous Qorin warrior. I didn't want to leave them, and I can't wait for the next installment."

—Heather Weldon, Changing Hands Bookstore, Tempe, AZ



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Logical Family: A Memoir

By Armistead Maupin

"Armistead Maupin's new memoir, *Logical Family*, tells the story of his life with the same humor and grace that have made his *Tales of the City* series so beloved. Fans will delight in reading about the inspirations for *Barbary Lane* and its inhabitants, but readers who are brand new to Maupin will also fall in love. His story is that of a young boy growing up in the old South, in the Navy, in Vietnam, and in the closet—at least until he found his home in 1970s San Francisco. Even if he weren't already an LGBT icon and literary hero, this memoir would be one to champion."

—Emilie Sommer, East City Bookshop, Washington, DC



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The Exact Nature of Our Wrongs: A Novel

By Janet Peery

"Long-suffering Hattie Campbell and her irascible husband, Abel, are in their 80s and still manipulating, enabling, and worrying about their four adult children, all of whom suffer, to some degree or other, from addiction, jealousy, and neediness. The sun around which they circle is Billy, the youngest of the siblings, who is both the most likable and most damaged. As Abel's health declines and Billy deteriorates, the remaining siblings compete to win their parents' favor. Peery's long-awaited follow-up to her National Book Award-finalist *The River Beyond the World* is a sympathetic portrait of a dysfunctional, complex, and often funny clan who, although they try, can't slip the family ties that bind."

—Cindy Pauldine, the river's end bookstore, Oswego, NY



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Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II

By Liza Mundy

"There is so much arguing these days over the existence of women in STEM fields and whether they should be allowed to be there. 'Oh honey,' says *Code Girls*, wrapping an arm around your shoulder, 'we never left.' In riveting prose, Mundy shows the presence of these women from the very beginning—and then how they were almost forcibly forgotten after the war was over. Women who once had only a life of school-teaching to look forward to (even with a PhD) became people who saved lives and sunk ships. This book exists to remind us that women have always been in these stories, even if they're not shown."

—Alice Ahn, Water Street Bookstore, Exeter, NH



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OCTOBER '17

The Prague Sonata: A Novel

By Bradford Morrow

"A rich, sweeping novel that moves through history, from World War I to World War II, into the fall of the Soviet Union, and up to the present day. Weaving throughout the story is a hauntingly beautiful anonymous piano sonata that has been broken up into three parts. With rich and complex characters and multilayered writing that moves seamlessly throughout, *The Prague Sonata* touches deep into the human heart."

—Richard Corbett, Powell's Books, Portland, OR



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Love and Other Consolation Prizes: A Novel

By Jamie Ford

"Jamie Ford has written another fabulous story. In *Love and Other Consolation Prizes*, a child is raffled off as a prize at a world's fair in Seattle in 1909. Based on a real-life raffle, this story is about Ernest Young, a Chinese orphan refugee who is won by the owner of The Tenderloin, a brothel where he becomes the house boy and lives a life with enough food to eat and hope for the future. During the Seattle World's Fair of 1962, Ernest reminisces about all of the life he lived between the two fairs."

—Beth Carpenter, The Country Bookshop, Southern Pines, NC



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Autonomous: A Novel

By Annalee Newitz

"The best science fiction stretches our ingrained concepts of humanity and civilization into a series of questions that entrance and electrify, both by the nature of the questions and by the contextual reality the author has created. Annalee Newitz shows her mastery of the genre with *Autonomous*, which poses questions relating to artificial intelligence, consciousness, and ownership against the backdrop of Earth in 2144, where patent property law rules social order and indentured people and bots are the new lower class. *Autonomous* follows Jack, a drug pirate desperately trying to fix a deadly mistake she made while racing against Elias, a temperamental military agent, and Paladin, a newly conscious indentured military bot. Newitz forces you to empathize with every character. A true masterpiece."

—Charlotte Bruell, Literati Bookstore, Ann Arbor, MI



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