

## Ex Libris Ross King

The Rabbit Book The Flanders Panel The Bookseller of Florence Taking Lives Domino Defiant Spirits London Falling Letters From London Ex Libris Out of the Dark The Fantasia of Leonardo Da Vinci Ebony The Three Mulla-mulgars Ex Libris Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling Reading Bangkok Leonardo and the Last Supper The Judgment of Paris The Big Over Easy Death Sentence Ex-Libris Artists The Deep Blue Good-By Ex Libris Brunelleschi's Dome M, King's Bodyguard Ex Libris 11 Mad Enchantment The Book Hunters of Katpadi Codex Born Ex Libris Machiavelli Library: An Unquiet History Domino The Bookseller's Daughter Book-plates Florence Ex libris The Book of Air and Shadows Ex Libris

### The Rabbit Book

Responding to a cryptic summons to a remote country house, London bookseller Isaac Inchbold finds himself responsible for restoring a magnificent library pillaged during the English Civil War, and in the process slipping from the surface of 1660s London into an underworld of spies and smugglers, ciphers and forgeries. As he assembles the fragments of a complex historical mystery, Inchbold learns how Sir Ambrose Plessington, founder of the library, escaped from Bohemia on the eve of the Thirty Years War with plunder from the Imperial Library. Inchbold's hunt for one of these stolen volumes - a lost Hermetic text - soon casts him into an elaborate intrigue; his fortunes hang on the discovery of the missing manuscript but his search reveals that the elusive volume is not what it seems and that he has been made an unwitting player in a treacherous game.

### The Flanders Panel

Tells the story of the adventures of three little monkeys, Thumb, Thimble, and Nod.

### The Bookseller of Florence

### Taking Lives

The second novel, by the author of Brunelleschi's Dome, and Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling is an elaborate historical mystery. Responding to a cryptic summons to a remote country house, London bookseller Isaac Inchbold finds himself responsible for restoring a magnificent library pillaged during the English Civil War, and in the process slipping from the

surface of 1660s London into an underworld of spies and smugglers, ciphers and forgeries. As he assembles the fragments of a complex historical mystery, Inchbold learns how Sir Ambrose Plessington, founder of the library, escaped from Bohemia on the eve of the Thirty Years War with plunder from the Imperial Library. Inchbold's hunt for one of these stolen volumes -- a lost Hermetic text -- soon casts him into an elaborate intrigue. His fortunes hang on the discovery of the missing manuscript but his search reveals that the elusive volume is not what it seems and that he has been made an unwitting player in a treacherous game.

## **Domino**

Neelambari Adigal and her young associate, Kayal, together run Biblio, a one-of-a-kind store of rare books in Chennai, specializing in modern Indian first editions. The lives of these passionate bookwomen revolve around curious browsers, eccentric book collectors, private-press printers and the occasional thrill of unexpected discoveries of the antiquarian kind. On a book-collecting trip to Ooty, Kayal stumbles upon an incendiary manuscript, long thought to be a myth, purportedly authored by explorer and translator Sir Richard Francis Burton. Almost simultaneously, a cache of priceless editions that looks like it could be from the 300-year-old library of one of the greatest book collectors the world has ever known, turns up at the bookshop. When it falls upon the two women to authenticate their finds, Neela and Kayal discover, quite suddenly, that their lives are more full of bibliographic intrigue than they could ever have imagined. India's first-ever biblio-mystery, *The Book Hunters of Katpadi*, is the book every lover of the written word has been waiting for. In the tradition of the greatest in the genre, it holds within its pages adventure, action, suspense ? and the sheer thrill of close encounters with prized print-on-paper.

## **Defiant Spirits**

The second novel, by the author of *Brunelleschi's Dome*, and *Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling* is an elaborate historical mystery. Responding to a cryptic summons to a remote country house, London bookseller Isaac Inchbold finds himself responsible for restoring a magnificent library pillaged during the English Civil War, and in the process slipping from the surface of 1660s London into an underworld of spies and smugglers, ciphers and forgeries. As he assembles the fragments of a complex historical mystery, Inchbold learns how Sir Ambrose Plessington, founder of the library, escaped from Bohemia on the eve of the Thirty Years War with plunder from the Imperial Library. Inchbold's hunt for one of these stolen volumes -- a lost Hermetic text -- soon casts him into an elaborate intrigue. His fortunes hang on the discovery of the missing manuscript but his search reveals that the elusive volume is not what it seems and that he has been made an unwitting player in a treacherous game. From the Trade Paperback edition.

## **London Falling**

Recounts Michelangelo's creation of his masterpiece, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, from his commission from Pope Julius II, through the artist's four years of work, to the final acclaim at the paintings' 1512 unveiling.

## **Letters From London**

The author of *The Prince*—his controversial handbook on power, which is one of the most influential books ever written—Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) was no prince himself. Born to an established middle-class family, Machiavelli worked as a courtier and diplomat for the Republic of Florence and enjoyed some small fame in his time as the author of bawdy plays and poems. In this discerning new biography, Ross King rescues Machiavelli's legacy from caricature, detailing the vibrant political and social context that influenced his thought and underscoring the humanity of one of history's finest political thinkers.

## **Ex Libris**

## **Out of the Dark**

## **The Fantasia of Leonardo Da Vinci**

A murder committed on paper, safely within the confines of a novel, is one thing. To see that same crime in the real world, is something else entirely. . . Frank Føns is a very successful crime writer. His novels, famed for their visceral descriptions of violent death, have made him a household name. But now someone is copying his crimes. For Frank what once seemed a clever, intriguing plot twist, has suddenly become a terrifying, blood-spattered reality. In the novel, a redhead who was scared of water is drowned. In the mirror-image of the real world, she has become an ex-girlfriend chained and left to die at the bottom of the harbour. A corrupt police-officer tortured to death becomes a contact who dies with fear in his eyes. Someone is taking Franks' fiction and using it to destroy his life. The writer must become the detective. In fiction, the bad guy always gets caught, but in real life there is no such guarantee. Fear becomes real. The knife cut hurts like hell. Our narrator may not survive. No-one is promising you a happy ending. For Frank what had once been a game is now a matter of life and death.

## **Ebony**

This is the most comprehensive book on the paintings and frescoes of Florence ever undertaken, with more than 2,000 beautifully reproduced artworks from the city's great museums and churches—produced in the same manner as BD&L's *The Louvre* and *The Vatican*. Every painted work that is on display in the Uffizi Gallery, The Pitti Palace, the Accademia, and the Duomo is included in the book, plus many or most of the works from 28 of the city's other magnificent museums and churches. The research and text are by Ross King (best-selling author), Anja Grebe (author of *The Louvre* and *The Vatican*), Cristina Acidini (former Superintendent of the public museums of Florence) and Msgr. Timothy Verdon (Director of the artworks for the Archdiocese of Florence).

## **The Three Mulla-mulgars**

A fire destroys a New York City rare bookstore—and reveals clues to a treasure worth killing for. . . . A disgraced scholar is found tortured to death. . . . And those pursuing the most valuable literary find in history are about to cross from the harmless mundane into inescapable nightmare. From the acclaimed, bestselling author of *Tropic of Night* comes a breathtaking thriller that twists, shocks, and surprises at every turn as it crisscrosses centuries, from the glaring violence of today into the dark shadows of truth and lies surrounding the greatest writer the world has ever known.

## **Ex Libris**

"Splendidly articulate, informative and provoking. A book to be savored and gone back to."—*Baltimore Sun* On the survival and destruction of knowledge, from Alexandria to the Internet. Through the ages, libraries have not only accumulated and preserved but also shaped, inspired, and obliterated knowledge. Matthew Battles, a rare books librarian and a gifted narrator, takes us on a spirited foray from Boston to Baghdad, from classical scriptoria to medieval monasteries, from the Vatican to the British Library, from socialist reading rooms and rural home libraries to the Information Age. He explores how libraries are built and how they are destroyed, from the decay of the great Alexandrian library to scroll burnings in ancient China to the destruction of Aztec books by the Spanish—and in our own time, the burning of libraries in Europe and Bosnia. Encyclopedic in its breadth and novelistic in its telling, this volume will occupy a treasured place on the bookshelf next to Baker's *Double Fold*, Basbanes's *A Gentle Madness*, Manguel's *A History of Reading*, and Winchester's *The Professor and the Madman*.

## **Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling**

Beginning in 1912, *Defiant Spirits* traces the artistic development of Tom Thomson and the future members of the Group of Seven, Franklin Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A. Y. Jackson, Franz Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J. E. H. MacDonald, and Frederick Varley, over a dozen years in Canadian history. Working in an eclectic and sometimes controversial blend of modernist styles, they produced what an English critic celebrated in the 1920s as the “most vital group of paintings” of the 20th century. Inspired by Cézanne, Van Gogh and other modernist artists, they tried to interpret the Ontario landscape in light of the strategies of the international avant-garde. Based after 1914 in the purpose-built Studio Building for Canadian Art, the young artists embarked on what Lawren Harris called “an all-engrossing adventure”: travelling north into the anadian Shield and forging a style of painting appropriate to what they regarded as the unique features of Canada’s northern landscape. Rigorously researched and drawn from archival documents and letters, *Defiant Spirits* constitutes a “group biography,” reconstructing the men’s aspirations, frustrations and achievements. It details not only the lives of Tom Thomson and the members of the Group of Seven but also the political and social history of Canada

## **Reading Bangkok**

While investigating the mysterious death of a mobster, four police officers come in contact with a strange artifact that grants them the supernatural ability to see the true otherworldly evils that haunt London's streets.

## **Leonardo and the Last Supper**

“A sleek, sophisticated, madly clever chamber mystery” from the international bestselling author—the basis for the film *Uncovered* starring Kate Beckinsale (*The New York Times Book Review*). A fifteenth-century painting by a Flemish master is about to be auctioned when Julia, a young art restorer, discovers a peculiar inscription hidden in a corner: Who killed the knight? In the painting, the Duke of Flanders and his knight are locked in a game of chess, and a dark lady lurks mysteriously in the background. Julia is determined to solve the five-hundred-year-old murder, but as she begins to look for clues, several of her friends in the art world are brutally murdered in quick succession. Messages left with the bodies suggest a crucial connection between the chess game in the painting, the knight’s murder, the sordid underside of the contemporary art world, and the latest deaths. Just when all of the players in the mystery seem to be pawns themselves, events race toward a shocking conclusion. A thriller like no other, *The Flanders Panel* presents a tantalizing puzzle for any connoisseur of mystery, chess, art, and history. “A beguiling puzzle—a game within a game within a game—solved in perplexing but entertaining fashion.”—*The Philadelphia Inquirer* “For mystery fans who yearn for literate, intelligent, sophisticated whodunits, Spanish author Pérez-Reverte’s highly acclaimed story fills the bill perfectly . . . An inventive plot, gripping suspense, fascinatingly complex characters, and innovative incorporation of art, literature, and music will enthrall readers looking for something a little different.”—*Booklist* “This intelligent mystery . . . comes up with a satisfying twist at

the end.”—Library Journal

## **The Judgment of Paris**

On August 19, 1418, a competition concerning Florence's magnificent new cathedral, Santa Maria del Fiore--already under construction for more than a century--was announced: "Whoever desires to make any model or design for the vaulting of the main Dome shall do so before the end of the month of September." The proposed dome was regarded far and wide as all but impossible to build: not only would it be enormous, but its original and sacrosanct design shunned the flying buttresses that supported cathedrals all over Europe. The dome would literally need to be erected over thin air. Of the many plans submitted, one stood out--a daring and unorthodox solution to vaulting what is still the largest dome (143 feet in diameter) in the world. It was offered not by a master mason or carpenter, but by a goldsmith and clockmaker named Filippo Brunelleschi, who would dedicate the next twenty-eight years to solving the puzzles of the dome's construction. In the process, he did nothing less than reinvent the field of architecture. Brunelleschi's Dome is the story of how a Renaissance genius bent men, materials, and the very forces of nature to build an architectural wonder we continue to marvel at today. Denounced at first as a madman, Brunelleschi was celebrated at the end as a genius. He engineered the perfect placement of brick and stone, built ingenious hoists and cranes to carry an estimated 70 million pounds hundreds of feet into the air, and designed the workers' platforms and routines so carefully that only one man died during the decades of construction--all the while defying those who said the dome would surely collapse and his own personal obstacles that at times threatened to overwhelm him. Even today, in an age of soaring skyscrapers, the cathedral dome of Santa Maria del Fiore retains a rare power to astonish. Ross King brings its creation to life in a fifteenth-century chronicle with twenty-first-century resonance.

## **The Big Over Easy**

A stunning exploration of over 80 famous artists and their fascinating lives, from Leonardo da Vinci to Frida Kahlo. Artists: Their Lives and Works tells the inspiring stories behind the world's most famous masterpieces and their creators, including their influences, development, friendships, loves, and rivalries. Discover the often tumultuous lives of iconic artists including Raphael, Hogarth, van Gogh, O'Keeffe, Magritte, Warhol, and Kiefer. Uncover the unconventional tales of the artists' lives, including Holbein's matchmaking portraits for Henry VIII, Caravaggio's thuggish reactions to a badly-cooked artichoke, and the many romantic affairs of Picasso. Lavishly illustrated biographies for every artist reveal these visionaries at work in their studios, as well as the unique techniques, artworks, and personalities that made them into legends. Featuring a foreword by Andrew Graham-Dixon, Artists: Their Lives and Works is the ideal gift for art lovers old and young, and a uniquely fascinating look at the lives of these creators.

## Death Sentence

A celebration of the treasure trove of Ebony magazine's history, glamorous covers, groundbreaking cultural impact, and authentic coverage of the past seventy-five years of black American life. Ebony magazine has been a cultural arbiter and a staple in black households in America since its first issue in November 1945. Founded by John H. Johnson, Ebony reported on, and continues to chronicle, every aspect of life from fashion to civil rights, entertainment, and cooking, and it has become the authoritative perspective for and about the black community. Curated by Ebony Publishing's president and publisher, Lavoie Lavette, this all-out feast of a book is packed with exclusive contributions by Ebony's editor in chief Tracey Ferguson, as well as a host of celebrities, influencers, and cultural icons, including Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, Will Smith, Samuel L. Jackson, Quincy Jones, Snoop Dogg, Magic Johnson, Deshaun Watson, and Eddie Levert. The book includes more than 600 covers and photographs featuring political forces such as Martin Luther King Jr., Michelle and President Barack Obama, and Congresswoman Maxine Waters; entertainers such as Diana Ross, Sidney Poitier, Dorothy Dandridge, Oprah Winfrey, Prince, and Kanye West; as well as sports heroes like Serena Williams, Muhammad Ali, Russell Westbrook, and Simone Biles. It also contains select articles, features, and reportage of note, including Martin Luther King Jr.'s advice column, and Ebony Fashion Fair photo shoots, divided into categories found within the magazine, including the "Gorgeous Women of Ebony: Fashion, Beauty, and Style", "Ebony Love", "Ebony Men", and "Date With a Dish". Unique in the quality of its photographs and contributors, this book is a monumental milestone and inspiration for African American culture mavens as well as seventy-five years of Ebony readers.

## Ex-Libris

Hugo winner Jim C. Hines's hilarious and clever Magic ex Libris series, where books come alive and libromancer Isaac Vainio combats magical threats that spring from the page five hundred years ago, Johannes Gutenberg discovered the art of libromancy, allowing him to reach into books to create things from their pages. Gutenberg's power brought him many enemies, and some of those enemies have waited centuries for revenge. Revenge which begins with the brutal slaughter of a wendigo in the northern Michigan town of Tamarack, a long-established werewolf territory. Libromancer Isaac Vainio is part of Die Zwelf Portenære, better known as the Porters, the organization founded by Gutenberg to protect the world from magical threats. Isaac is called in to investigate the killing, along with Porter psychiatrist Nidhi Shah and their dryad bodyguard and lover, Lena Greenwood. Born decades ago from the pages of a pulp fantasy novel, Lena was created to be the ultimate fantasy woman, strong and deadly, but shaped by the needs and desires of her companions. Her powers are unique, and Gutenberg's enemies hope to use those powers for themselves. But their plan could unleash a far darker evil...

## Artists

A collection of essays discusses the central and joyful importance of books and reading in the author's life.

## **The Deep Blue Good-By**

Based on a true story, M, King's Bodyguard is a gripping, atmospheric thriller about anarchy and assassination in Edwardian London, and one detective's mission to preserve the life of his king and prevent a bloody war in Europe. From humble beginnings in Ireland, William Melville has risen through hard work, intelligence, and occasional brute force to become head of Britain's Special Branch, personal bodyguard to Queen Victoria and her family, and the scourge of anarchists at home and abroad. But when in January 1901 the aged Queen dies and the crowned heads of Europe converge on London for her funeral, Melville learns of a conspiracy, led by a mysterious nihilist known only as Akushku, to assassinate Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany at the ceremony. Racing to prevent the atrocity, Melville and his German counterpart Gustav Steinhauer find themselves tangled in a web of adultery, betrayal, and violence. As the funeral looms ever closer, Melville realizes that Akushku is the most resourceful and vicious foe he has yet encountered--but is the real threat from Melville's enemies, or his allies?

## **Ex Libris**

The fascinating new book by the author of Brunelleschi's Dome and Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling: a saga of artistic rivalry and cultural upheaval in the decade leading to the birth of Impressionism. If there were two men who were absolutely central to artistic life in France in the second half of the nineteenth century, they were Edouard Manet and Ernest Meissonier. While the former has been labelled the "Father of Impressionism" and is today a household name, the latter has sunk into obscurity. It is difficult now to believe that in 1864, when this story begins, it was Meissonier who was considered the greatest French artist alive and who received astronomical sums for his work, while Manet was derided for his messy paintings of ordinary people and had great difficulty getting any of his work accepted at the all-important annual Paris Salon. Manet and Meissonier were the Mozart and Salieri of their day, one a dangerous challenge to the establishment, the other beloved by rulers and the public alike for his painstakingly meticulous oil paintings of historical subjects. Out of the fascinating story of their parallel careers, Ross King creates a lens through which to view the political tensions that dogged Louis-Napoleon during the Second Empire, his ignominious downfall, and the bloody Paris Commune of 1871. At the same time, King paints a wonderfully detailed and vivid portrait of life in an era of radical social change: on the streets of Paris, at the new seaside resorts of Boulogne and Trouville, and at the race courses and picnic spots where the new bourgeoisie relaxed. When Manet painted Dejeuner sur l'herbe or Olympia, he shocked not only with his casual brushstrokes (described by some as applied by a 'floor mop') but with his subject matter: top-hatted white-collar workers (and their mistresses) were not considered suitable subjects for 'Art'. Ross King shows how, benign as they might seem today, these paintings

changed the course of history. The struggle between Meissonier and Manet to see their paintings achieve pride of place at the Salon was not just about artistic competitiveness, it was about how to see the world. Full of fantastic tidbits of information (such as the use of carrier pigeons and hot-air balloons during the siege of Paris), and a colourful cast of characters that includes Baudelaire, Courbet, and Zola, with walk-on parts for Monet, Renoir, Degas, and Cezanne, *The Judgment of Paris* casts new light on the birth of Impressionism and takes us to the heart of a time in which the modern French identity was being forged. From the Hardcover edition.

## **Brunelleschi's Dome**

Enter the world of the Nursery Crime Division in this novel from the author of the Thursday Next series and *Early Riser*. Jasper Fforde's bestselling Thursday Next series has delighted readers of every genre with its literary derring-do and brilliant flights of fancy. In *The Big Over Easy*, Fforde takes a break from classic literature and tumbles into the seedy underbelly of nursery crime. Meet Inspector Jack Spratt, family man and head of the Nursery Crime Division. He's investigating the murder of ovoid D-class nursery celebrity Humpty Dumpty, found shattered to death beneath a wall in a shabby area of town. Yes, the big egg is down, and all those brittle pieces sitting in the morgue point to foul play. "[Forde] knows a thing or two about leaping into new worlds. . . . It's hard not to see what all the enthusiasm is about." -Janet Maslin, *The New York Times* "A wonderfully readable riot." -*The Wall Street Journal*

## **M, King's Bodyguard**

Hired to restore a once-magnificent library that had been ravaged during the English Civil War, London bookseller Isaac Inchbold becomes embroiled in the search for a missing manuscript and a conspiracy of spies, smugglers, and forgery.

## **Ex Libris 11**

## **Mad Enchantment**

A gripping story of ancient wisdom, revolutionary technology and 'the king of the world's booksellers', set in Renaissance Florence. In the mid-1400s, Vespasiano da Bisticci's bookshop in Florence was said to contain all the wisdom of the world. Vespasiano and his team of scribes and illuminators produced exquisite manuscripts for popes and princes across Europe, rediscovering and disseminating some of the most significant texts from classical antiquity. At his shop, the most formidable minds of the city would gather to debate these old ideas of revolutionary power. But in 1476 a new technology

arrived in Florence. The convent of San Jacopo di Ripoli, a community of Dominican nuns on the other side of the city, acquired a printing press from a bankrupt German printer. Before long, with the enterprising nuns working tirelessly as typesetters, the Ripoli Press began printing a series of books and pamphlets that triggered an explosion of ideas in politics, philosophy and religion. In *The Bookseller of Florence* Ross King, the internationally bestselling author of *Brunelleschi's Dome* and *Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling*, uncovers the story of a local battle that would have far-reaching consequences. The wave of radical thinking unleashed by printed books would alter the course of history, fuelling the Renaissance and the Reformation, and paving the way for the Enlightenment - and modernity as we know it today.

## **The Book Hunters of Katpadi**

Milan, 1496 and forty-four-year-old Leonardo da Vinci has a reputation for taking on commissions and failing to complete them. He is in a state of professional uncertainty and financial difficulty. For eighteen months he has been painting murals in both the Sforza Castle in Milan and the refectory of the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie. The latter project will become the Last Supper, a complex mural that took a full three years to complete on a surface fifteen feet high by twenty feet wide. Not only had he never attempted a painting of such size, but he had no experience whatsoever in painting in the physically demanding medium of fresco. For more than five centuries the Last Supper has been an artistic, religious and cultural icon. The art historian Kenneth Clark has called it 'the keystone of European art', and for a century after its creation it was regarded as nothing less than a miraculous image. Even today, according to Clark, we regard the painting as 'more a work of nature than a work of man'. And yet there is a very human story behind this artistic 'miracle', which was created against the backdrop of momentous events both in Milan and in the life of Leonardo himself. In *Leonardo and the Last Supper*, Ross King tells the complete story of this creation of this mural: the adversities suffered by the artist during its execution; the experimental techniques he employed; the models for Christ and the Apostles that he used; and the numerous personalities involved - everyone from the Leonardo's young assistants to Ludovico Sforza, the Duke of Milan who commissioned the work. Ross King's new book is both a record of Leonardo da Vinci's last five years in Milan and a 'biography' of one of the most famous works of art ever painted.

## **Codex Born**

He's a self-described beach bum who won his houseboat in a card game. He's also a knight errant who's wary of credit cards, retirement benefits, political parties, mortgages, and television. He only works when his cash runs out and his rule is simple: he'll help you find whatever was taken from you, as long as he can keep half.

## **Ex Libris**

Events in France on the eve of the Revolution have forced Marie-Laure Vernet into service as a maid and into the eye of Viscomte Joseph d'Auvers-Raimond, a book smuggler, and passion unfolds amid murder and betrayal.

## **Machiavelli**

A young Frenchman's romance with a woman who lives off men. After stealing some money from a dentist, they go to London where she sleeps with various characters while he writes his first novel. One day she disappears for fifteen years. A study in character.

## **Library: An Unquiet History**

## **Domino**

Martin Arkenhout found his true calling on a lonely Florida highway -- with a sharp rock to the skull of an injured friend. He didn't just take the boy's life; he went on to live it. When that life became too risky, he found another, and another, changing his name, papers and style at will, until he chose the wrong life -- a scholarly thief on the run from the determined and troubled John Costa. The two men will meet, and there will be murder. But there is something much worse: the sweet seduction of taking another's life to be your own. Chillingly suspenseful, brilliantly executed and truly disturbing, *Taking Lives* is an entertainment to make you think and shiver.

## **The Bookseller's Daughter**

From "the most powerful book critic in the English-speaking world" (*Vanity Fair*) comes 100 personal, thought-provoking essays of the life-changing books she wouldn't want you to miss--beautifully illustrated throughout. Legendary former New York Times critic and bestselling author Michiko Kakutani once again brings her wealth of knowledge and passion about books to eager readers--but this time with her personal selections of more than 140 works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry that have had a profound effect on her life. "Why do we love books so much," she asks in her introduction. "These magical brick-sized objects are actually tiny time machines that can transport us back to the past to learn the lessons of history, and forward to the future, where we may be granted glimpses of more ideal worlds, or more dystopian ones that serve as dark mirrors of what we could become, should we misuse the gifts of science, or fail to protect our ideals and our planet." Books have always been her escape and sanctuary, the characters of some novels feeling so real to her childhood self that she worried they might leap out of the pages at night if she left the book cover open. In fact, Kakutani is so connected to her

beloved books, she refuses to see certain movie adaptations--even the iconic Lord of the Rings--for fear of the cinematic scenes crowding out the detailed images in her head. More than just recommendations, Ex Libris covers a broad range of topics that help build a well-rounded reader and citizen of the world--from the historical (Federalist Papers, The Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.) to the timely (Elizabeth Kolbert's harrowing *The Sixth Extinction*, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*) to the fantastical (the Harry Potter novels, *Where the Wild Things Are*). With richly detailed illustrations by lettering artist Dana Tanamachi that evoke vintage bookplates leafed between Kakutani's passionate essays, Ex Libris is always pointing us to our next great read.

## **Book-plates**

By the author of the acclaimed *Brunelleschi's Dome*. After meeting the mysterious and beautiful Lady Beauclair at a society ball, George Cautley, a hapless young artist adrift in the gilded world of 1770s London, paints her portrait. She, in turn, tells him the scandalous story of Tristano, a castrato singer in Handel's opera company fifty years before. But Cautley also meets the eminent painter Sir Endymion Starker that same evening and his mistress, Eleanora, who has another tragic tale to tell, one that will have George unwittingly re-enacting the fate of Tristano

## **Florence**

From bestselling author Ross King, a brilliant portrait of the legendary artist and the story of his most memorable achievement. Claude Monet is perhaps the world's most beloved artist, and among all his creations, the paintings of the water lilies in his garden at Giverny are most famous. Monet intended the water lilies to provide "an asylum of peaceful meditation." Yet, as Ross King reveals in his magisterial chronicle of both artist and masterpiece, these beautiful canvases belie the intense frustration Monet experienced in trying to capture the fugitive effects of light, water, and color. They also reflect the terrible personal torments Monet suffered in the last dozen years of his life. *Mad Enchantment* tells the full story behind the creation of the Water Lilies, as the horrors of World War I came ever closer to Paris and Giverny and a new generation of younger artists, led by Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso, were challenging the achievements of Impressionism. By early 1914, French newspapers were reporting that Monet, by then seventy-three, had retired his brushes. He had lost his beloved wife, Alice, and his eldest son, Jean. His famously acute vision--what Paul Cezanne called "the most prodigious eye in the history of painting?"--was threatened by cataracts. And yet, despite ill health, self-doubt, and advancing age, Monet began painting again on a more ambitious scale than ever before. Linking great artistic achievement to the personal and historical dramas unfolding around it, Ross King presents the most intimate and revealing portrait of an iconic figure in world culture.

## **Ex libris**

By the author of the acclaimed Brunelleschi's Dome. After meeting the mysterious and beautiful Lady Beauclair at a society ball, George Cautley, a hapless young artist adrift in the gilded world of 1770s London, paints her portrait. She, in turn, tells him the scandalous story of Tristano, a castrato singer in Handel's opera company fifty years before. But Cautley also meets the eminent painter Sir Endymion Starker that same evening and his mistress, Eleanora, who has another tragic tale to tell, one that will have George unwittingly re-enacting the fate of Tristano

## **The Book of Air and Shadows**

Reading Bangkok presents stories and meanings derived from the built fabric and spaces of Thailand's capital city. The narrative shifts from King Taksin's mostly forgotten but wondrous Thonburi to the tourist spectacle of Rattanakosin, Dusit and Ratchadamnoen (King Rama V's superficial emulation of an admired, imperialist Europe), Sukhumvit "Road" (consumer land), and the slums that are an integral part of the modern city. The author structures the book around external intrusions and local resistance. Geographically, this process is seen in movement from centre to periphery (Thonburi, Rattanakosin, Ratchadamnoen, Sukhumvit, Ratchadapisek, Khlong Toei, the universities). Chronologically, the city underwent various forms of colonization: incorporation of the periphery, which in turn colonized Bangkok; the economic colonization of the 19th and 20th centuries; colonization by consumption brought on in large part by globalized tourism; colonization by the "better" ideas of others (typically from the West); and finally colonization by "better" ways of thinking - notably the intrusions of the universities and of popular democracy. This exceptionally innovative study draws on urban planning and development, history, anthropology, and political economy, and a rich body of empirical data to provide insights into the maze of power relations, inequalities and global influences that is normally hidden from view. Reading Bangkok is that rare thing, a study that genuinely changes the way its subject is seen and understood.

## **Ex Libris**

With the same brilliant style and idiosyncratic intelligence that have marked all his novels--and with a bold grasp of intricate political realities--Julian Barnes's ironic glance turns home. Letters from London takes in everything from Lloyd's of London's demise to Maggie's majesty to Salman Rushie's death sentence. Formidably articulate and outrageously funny, Letters from London is international voyeurism at its best--a peek into the British mindset from the vantage point of one of the most erudite and witty British minds. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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