2021

Fitzcarraldo Editions
Originally written as a libretto for the Berlin State Opera, Elfriede Jelinek’s *Rein Gold* reconstructs the events of Wagner’s epic Ring cycle and extends them into the present day. Brünnhilde diagnoses Wotan, father of the gods, to be a victim of capitalism because he, too, has fallen into the trap of wanting to own a castle he cannot afford. In a series of monologues, Brünnhilde and Wotan chart the evolution of capitalism from the Nibelungen Saga to the 2008 financial crisis. Written with her trademark ‘extraordinary linguistic zeal’ (Swedish Academy), *Rein Gold* is a playful and ferocious critique of universal greed by the 2004 Nobel Prize in Literature laureate.

‘In Rein Gold, Jelinek reimagines the characters of Brünnhilde and Wotan from Wagner’s Ring Cycle and transposes them into the context of modernity. She delivers an impassioned expose of the discontents of capitalism. Her musical thought is interwoven with myth, politics, and Wagnerian motifs. Gitta Honegger’s excellent translation allows us to experience the intense flow of her characters’ stream of consciousness entangled in greed and alienation.’
— Xiaolu Guo, author of *A Lover’s Discourse*

‘Translated with verve by Gitta Honegger, *Rein Gold* becomes a series of monologues without paragraph breaks: a frequent discordant assault on the senses. A visceral challenge to lazy and pernicious consumerism … Jelinek’s critique is simultaneously timely and timeless, as Brünnhilde and Wotan’s arguments and digressions map capitalism’s progression.’
— Catherine Taylor, *Financial Times*

‘Living legend Elfriede Jelinek’s *Rein Gold*, rhapsodically written from the maw of forlorn gods, echoes like an incensed dialogue-eulogy designed to fill the space soon left behind the eventual implosion of the twenty-first century’s bottomless appetite for capital, for absent love. “For what?” *Rein Gold’s* Brünnhilde asks and asks, trying out answers like mad masks, in search of something lost out here among us that even the gods cannot quite name, yet found as if alive here for all to feel – as in the masterworks of Bernhard’s *Correction* and Lispector’s *The Passion According to G.H.* – by the inimitable, majestically incensed end-visions of master Jelinek.’
— Blake Butler, author of *Alice Knott*

Elfriede Jelinek, who was born in 1946 and grew up in Vienna, now lives in Vienna and Munich. She has received numerous awards for her literary works, which include not only novels but also plays, poetry, essays, translations, radio plays, screenplays and opera librettos. Her awards include the Georg Büchner Prize and the Franz Kafka Prize for Literature. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2004 for her ‘musical flow of voices and counter-voices in novels and plays that, with extraordinary linguistic zeal, reveal the absurdity of society’s clichés and their subjugating power’.
In *Bolt from the Blue*, Jeremy Cooper, the winner of the 2018 Fitzcarraldo Editions Novel Prize, charts the relationship between a mother and daughter over the course of thirty-odd years. In October 1985, Lynn moves down to London to enroll at Saint Martin’s School of Art, leaving her mother behind in a suburb of Birmingham. Their relationship is complicated, and their only form of contact is through the letters, postcards and emails they send each other periodically, while Lynn slowly makes her mark on the London art scene. A novel in epistolary form, *Bolt from the Blue* captures the waxing and waning of the mother-daughter relationship over time, achieving a rare depth of feeling with a deceptively simple literary form.

’Bolt from the Blue is a scintillating, wistful exploration of a good career and a poor relationship. Pithy yet expansive, it’s an essential, engrossing, illuminating read for any aspiring artist’
— Sara Baume, author of *Handiwork*

‘In this novel written in epistolary form, Cooper has maximized the potential of this literary convention to achieve a work of great depth and quiet power. Over three decades, a mother and her artist daughter communicate only by letters, excavating their relationship as it evolves with melancholic, astute precision. At times spellbinding and mesmerising, the work also proves provocative and inspirational. As much a love letter to the lost art of letter-writing as it is a thirty year-long dialogue of familial love, Cooper has produced an understated book that nonetheless resonates powerfully. This book is deeply sensitive to the ebb and flow of relationships over time and the way love is disguised, expressed and experienced, and it achieves that elusive dream of all authors and finds new meaning in the recording of life.’
— Helen Cullen, *Irish Times*

‘For a book that has the word “love” on almost every page, *Bolt from the Blue* is endlessly inventive in showing us how love is often hidden, rationed, coded and disguised. It is an epistolary dialogue between a life of possibilities – as shown through the maturing vision of an artist – and one of disappointments, expressed through the wise and seasoned scepticism of the artist’s mother. Jeremy Cooper is a deft and sensitive writer who understands how to entrust his book to his characters.’
— Ronan Hession, author of *Leonard and Hungry Paul*

Jeremy Cooper is a writer and art historian, author of five previous novels and several works of non-fiction, including the standard work on nineteenth century furniture, studies of young British artists in the 1990s, and, in 2019, the British Museum’s catalogue of artists’ postcards. Early on he appeared in the first twenty-four of BBC’s Antiques Roadshow and, in 2018, won the first Fitzcarraldo Editions Novel Prize for *Ash before Oak*.
With the death of her aunt, Maria Stepanova is left to sift through an apartment full of faded photographs, old postcards, letters, diaries, and heaps of souvenirs: a withered repository of a century of life in Russia. Carefully reassembled with calm, steady hands, these shards tell the story of how a seemingly ordinary Jewish family somehow managed to survive the myriad persecutions and repressions of the last century. In dialogue with writers like Roland Barthes, W. G. Sebald, Susan Sontag and Osip Mandelstam, In Memory of Memory is imbued with rare intellectual curiosity and a wonderfully soft-spoken, poetic voice. Dipping into various forms – essay, fiction, memoir, travelogue and historical documents – Stepanova assembles a vast panorama of ideas and personalities and offers an entirely new and bold exploration of cultural and personal memory.

'A luminous, rigorous, and mesmerizing interrogation of the relationship between personal history, family history, and capital-H History. I couldn't put it down; it felt sort of like watching a hypnotic YouTube unboxing-video of the gift-and-burden that is the twentieth century. In Memory of Memory has that trick of feeling both completely original and already classic, and I confidently expect this translation to bring Maria Stepanova a rabid fan base on the order of the one she already enjoys in Russia.'
— Elif Batuman, author of The Idiot

'Stepanova's tour de force blends memoir, literary criticism, essay and fiction. Although this is a personal and intimate work using photographs, postcards and diaries, it succeeds in mining a universal theme in contemporary Russian cultural life: how does a family – or a country – process the events of the past 100 years?'
— Viv Groskop, Guardian

'You can sense the decades of contemplation Ms. Stepanova has dedicated to these questions in the sparkle and density of her prose, which Sasha Dugdale has carried into English so naturally that it’s possible to forget you are reading a translation. This is an erudite, challenging book, but also fundamentally a humble one, as it recognises that a force works on even the most cherished family possessions that no amount of devotion can gainsay.’
— Sam Sacks, Wall Street Journal

Maria Stepanova is a poet, essayist, journalist and the author of ten poetry collections and three books of essays. She has received several Russian and international literary awards (including the prestigious Andrey Bely Prize and Joseph Brodsky Fellowship). In Memory of Memory, a documentary novel, won Russia’s Bolshaya Kniga Award in 2018. Her collection of poems, War and the Beasts and the Animals, is published by Bloodaxe in Sasha Dugdale’s translation in 2021, and is a Poetry Book Society Translation Choice. Stepanova is the founder and editor-in-chief of the online independent crowd-sourced journal Colta.ru, which covers the cultural, social and political reality of contemporary Russia.
In her spare, stark style, Annie Ernaux documents the desires and indignities of a human heart ensnared in an all-consuming passion. Blurring the line between fact and fiction, she attempts to plot the emotional and physical course of her two-year relationship with a married man where every word, event, and person either provides a connection with her beloved or is subject to her cold indifference. With courage and exactitude, Ernaux seeks the truth behind an existence lived, for a time, entirely for someone else.

‘Annie Ernaux is one of my favourite contemporary writers, original and true. Always after reading one of her books, I walk around in her world for months.’
— Sheila Heti, author of *Motherhood*

‘Ernaux has inherited de Beauvoir’s role of chronicler to a generation…’
— Margaret Drabble, *New Statesman*

‘I find her work extraordinary.’
— Eimear McBride, author of *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing*

‘The author of one of the most important oeuvres in French literature, Annie Ernaux’s work is as powerful as it is devastating, as subtle as it is seething.’
— Edouard Louis, author of *The End of Eddy*

‘The triumph of Ms. Ernaux’s approach … is to cherish commonplace emotions while elevating the banal expression of them … A monument to passions that defy simple explanations.’
— *New York Times* Book Review

‘A work of lyrical precision and diamond-hard clarity.’
— *New Yorker*

Born in 1940, Annie Ernaux grew up in Normandy, studied at Rouen University, and later taught at secondary school. From 1977 to 2000, she was a professor at the Centre National d’Enseignement par Correspondance. Her books, in particular *A Man’s Place* and *A Woman’s Story*, have become contemporary classics in France. *The Years* won the Prix Renaudot in France in 2008 and the Premio Strega in Italy in 2016, and was shortlisted for the 2019 Man Booker International Prize. In 2017, Annie Ernaux was awarded the Marguerite Yourcenar Prize for her life’s work. *Simple Passion* is her sixth book to appear with Fitzcarraldo Editions.
In *The Things We’ve Seen*, his most ambitious and accomplished novel to date, Agustín Fernández Mallo captures the strangeness and interconnectedness of human existence in the twenty-first century. A writer travels to the small uninhabited island of San Simón, used as a Franquist concentration camp during the Spanish Civil War, and witnesses events which impel him on a wild goose chase across several continents. In Miami, an ageing Kurt Montana, the fourth astronaut who secretly accompanied Neil Armstrong and co. to the moon, revisits the important chapters in his life, from serving in the Vietnam War to his memory of seeing earth from space. In Normandy, a woman embarks on a walking tour of the D-Day beaches with the goal of re-enacting, step by step, another trip taken years before. Described as the novel David Lynch and W. G. Sebald might have written had they joined forces to explore the B-side of reality, *The Things We’ve Seen* is a mind-bending novel for our disjointed times.

‘There are certain writers whose work you turn to knowing you’ll find extraordinary things there. Borges is one of them, Bolaño another. Agustín Fernández Mallo has become one, too. This novel, which ranges across the world and beyond it, is hugely ambitious in scope. It’s a weird, recursive, paranoiac, funny, menacing and thrilling book.’

— Chris Power, author of *A Lonely Man*

‘Charmingly voracious and guided by fanatical precision and wit, Mallo ties the loose threads of the world together into intricate, charismatic knots. This is the expansive, omnivorous sort of novel that threatens to show you every thought you’ve ever had in a new and effervescent light, along with so many others you couldn’t have dreamed.’

— Alexandra Kleeman, author of *Intimations*

‘Some great works create worlds from which to look back at ourselves and recalibrate; *The Things We’ve Seen* takes the world as it is and plays it back through renewed laws of physics. Rarely has a novel left me with such new eyes, an X-ray view of the present.’

— DBC Pierre, author of *Meanwhile in Dopamine City*

Agustín Fernández Mallo was born in La Coruña in 1967, and is a qualified physicist. In 2000 he formulated a self-termed theory of ‘post-poetry’, which explores connections between art and science and has been the principal focus in several prize-winning collections of poetry since then. The Nocilla Trilogy, published between 2006 and 2009, brought about an important shift in contemporary Spanish writing and paved the way for the birth of a new generation of authors, known as the ‘Nocilla Generation’. His long essay *Postpoesía, hacia un nuevo paradigma* was shortlisted for the Anagrama Essay Prize in 2009. In 2018 he published a long essay, *Teoría de la basura (cultura, apropiacionismo y complejidad)* [Theory of Rubbish (Culture, Appropriation and Complexity)] and won the prestigious Biblioteca Breve Prize for his latest novel, *Trilogía de la guerra*, to be published in English as *The Things We’ve Seen*. 
Why Japan? In Fifty Sounds, winner of the 2019 Fitzcarraldo Editions Essay Prize, Polly Barton attempts to exhaust her obsession with the country she moved to at the age of 21, before eventually becoming a literary translator. From min-min, the sound of air screaming, to jin-jin, the sound of being touched for the very first time, from hi’sori, the sound of harbouring masochist tendencies, to mote-mote, the sound of becoming a small-town movie star, Fifty Sounds is a personal dictionary of the Japanese language, recounting her life as an outsider in Japan. Irreverent, humane, witty and wise, Fifty Sounds is an exceptional debut about the quietly revolutionary act of learning, speaking, and living in another language.

'Witty, exuberant, also melancholy, and crowded with intelligence – Fifty Sounds is so much fun to read. Barton has written an essay that is also an argument that is also a prose poem. Let’s call it a slant adventure story, whose hero is equipped only with high spirits, and a ragtag band of phonemes.’
— Rivka Galchen, author of Everyone Knows Your Mother Is a Witch

'This book: a portrait of a young woman as language-learner, as becoming-translator, as becoming-writer, in restless search of her life. It is about non-understanding, not-knowing, vulnerability, harming and hurt; it is also about reaching for others, transformative encounters, unexpected intimacies, and testing forms of love. It is a whole education. It is extraordinary. I was completely bowled over by it.’
— Kate Briggs, author of This Little Art

'Fifty Sounds explodes the redundancy of the phrase “I’m learning a language”, showing us that the experience is more akin to relearning reality and who we are in it. Barton writes of being “souped” in the sounds of speech and a new place, but also in what is not said or written. She beautifully recreates the monumental intuition and exposure required to immerse oneself in a new mode of living, and the quantum levels of attention required to translate literature. It chimes and charms, a resounding wonder about identity, communication and love.’
— Jen Calleja, author of I’m Afraid That’s All We’ve Got Time For

‘Polly Barton is a brilliant, learned and daring writer and Fifty Sounds is a magnificent book. Through her eddying philosophical vignettes, Barton creates a unified work of extraordinary wisdom and vitality.’
— Joanna Kavenna, author of Zed

Polly Barton is a Japanese literary translator. Her translations include Where the Wild Ladies Are by Aoko Matsuda, There’s No Such Thing as an Easy Job by Kikuko Tsumura, and Spring Garden by Tomoka Shibasaki. She won the 2019 Fitzcarraldo Editions Essay Prize for Fifty Sounds. She lives in Bristol.
Corbin College, not-quite-upstate New York, winter 1959-1960: Ruben Blum, a Jewish historian – but not an historian of the Jews – is coopted onto a hiring committee to review the application of an exiled Israeli scholar specializing in the Spanish Inquisition. When Benzion Netanyahu shows up for an interview, family unexpectedly in tow, Blum plays the reluctant host, to guests who proceed to lay waste to his American complacencies. Mixing fiction with non-fiction, the campus novel with the lecture, The Netanyahus is a wildly inventive, genre-bending comedy of blending, identity, and politics – ‘An Account of A Minor and Ultimately Even Negligible Episode in the History of a Very Famous Family’ that finds Joshua Cohen at the height of his powers.

‘No one writing in English today is more gifted than Joshua Cohen. Every page of The Netanyahus – an historical account of a man left out of history, a wickedly funny fable of the return of the repressed – crackles with Cohen’s high style and joyride intelligence.’

— Nicole Krauss, author of To Be A Man

‘The Netanyahus is constructed with a brilliant comic grace that moves from the sly to the exuberant. Some scenes are funny beyond belief. But even when moments in the book are sharp or melancholy, they keep an undertone of witty and ironic observation. The vision in this book is deeply original, making clear what a superb writer Joshua Cohen is.’

— Colm Tóibín, author of The Magician

Praise for Moving Kings

‘A Jewish Sopranos … utterly engrossing, full of passionate sympathy … Cohen is an extraordinary prose stylist, surely one of the most prodigious in American fiction today … A crystalline novelist with a journalistic openness to the world.’

— James Wood, New Yorker

‘Joshua Cohen is a blacksmith who heats, hammers and moulds the language to sharpest, most precise points. Not for the sake of craft, but to tell a troubled story about troubled life in the twenty-first century. A dazzling and poignant book.’

— Rachel Kushner, author of The Flamethrowers

Joshua Cohen was born in 1980 in Atlantic City. His books include the novels Moving Kings, Book of Numbers, Witz, A Heaven of Others, and Cadenza for the Schniedermann Violin Concerto; the short fiction collection Four New Messages, and the nonfiction collection Attention: Dispatches from a Land of Distraction. Called ‘a major American writer’ by the New York Times, ‘maybe America’s greatest living writer’ by the Washington Post, and ‘an extraordinary prose stylist, surely one of the most prodigious at work in American fiction today’ by the New Yorker, Cohen was named one of Granta’s Best Young American Novelists in 2013. He lives in New York City.
In November 2019, Paul B. Preciado was invited to speak in front of 3,500 psychoanalysts at the École de la Cause Freudienne’s annual conference in Paris. Standing up in front of the profession for whom he is a ‘mentally ill person’ suffering from ‘gender dysphoria’, Preciado draws inspiration in his lecture from Kafka’s ‘Report to an Academy’, in which a monkey tells an assembly of scientists that human subjectivity is a cage comparable to one made of metal bars.

Speaking from his own ‘mutant’ cage, Preciado does not so much criticize the homophobia and transphobia of the founding fathers of psychoanalysis as demonstrate the discipline’s complicity with the ideology of sexual difference dating back to the colonial era, an ideology which is today rendered obsolete by technological advances allowing us to alter our bodies and procreate differently. Further, Preciado calls for a radical transformation of psychological and psychoanalytic discourse and practices, arguing for a new epistemology capable of allowing for a multiplicity of living bodies without reducing the body to its sole heterosexual reproductive capability, and without legitimizing hetero-patriarchal and colonial violence.

Causing a veritable outcry among the assembly, Preciado was heckled and booed and unable to finish. The lecture, filmed on smartphones, ended up published online, where fragments were transcribed, translated and published with no regard for exactitude. Eighteen months on, Can the Monster Speak? Report to an Academy of Psychoanalysts is published in a definitive translation for the first time.

Praise for An Apartment on Uranus

‘Paul B. Preciado has the magic ability to fire off imperatives that don’t feel bossy, but rather incite us to join him in whatever crackling energy, urgent curiosity, and dynamic nomadism is flowing through him. Reading these chronological missives offers the real pleasure of Preciado’s company in time, and inspires us not just to stay with our trouble, but to greet it with unstoppable speech, complex solidarity, glitter, and defiance.’
— Maggie Nelson, author of The Argonauts

‘An arresting, bold and moving book about crossing boundaries – of body, sex, nation, species and language – by an important dissident of dualism.’
— Amia Srinivasan, author of The Right to Sex

Paul B. Preciado is the author of Counter-Sexual Manifesto (Columbia University Press), Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs and Biopolitics (The Feminist Press) and Pornotopia (Zone Books) for which he was awarded the Sade Prize in France. He was Head of Research of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA) and Director of the Independent Studies Program (PEI) from 2011 to 2014. From 2014 to 2017 he was Curator of Public Programmes of documenta 14. He is currently Curator of Public Programmes at the Palais de Tokyo and lives in Paris, France. His next book, Virus & Revolution, will appear with Fitzcarraldo Editions and Graywolf Press in autumn 2022.
Pristina, Kosovo, 1999. Barry Ashton, recently divorced, has been deployed as a civil engineer attached to the Royal Engineers corps in the British Army. In an extraordinary feat of ventriloquism, Adam Mars-Jones constructs a literary story with a thoroughly unliterary narrator, and a narrative that is anything but comic through the medium of a character who, essentially, is. Exploring masculinity, class and identity, Batlava Lake is a brilliant story of men and war by one of Britain's most accomplished writers.

Praise for Box Hill

'Adam Mars-Jones's latest work is a sliver of a novel that provides ample evidence of his prowess. ... Box Hill is not a novel for the prudish, but it is a masterclass in authorial control. ... Despite its diminutive length, it is rich with detail and complexity, and has plenty to demonstrate Mars-Jones's well-deserved place on any list of our best.'
— Alex Nurnberg, Sunday Times

'The biggest small book of the year.'
— John Self, Guardian

'An exquisitely discomfiting tale of a submissive same-sex relationship ... perfectly realised.'
— Anthony Cummins, Observer

'A clever and subtle novel.'
— Max Liu, Financial Times

'I very much enjoyed Box Hill. It is a characteristic Mars-Jones mixture of the shocking, the endearing, the funny and the sad, with an unforgettable narrator. The sociological detail is as ever acutely entertaining.'
— Margaret Drabble

Ill Feelings blends memoir, medical history, biography and literary non-fiction to uncover untold case histories of medically unexplained and invisible illness. In 1995 Alice’s mother collapsed with pneumonia. Her lungs were infected, which caused flu-like symptoms: fatigue, headache, chest pain, fever. She never fully recovered and was eventually diagnosed with ME, or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Then Alice got ill. Their symptoms mirrored their mother’s and appeared to have no physical cause; they received the same diagnosis a few years later. Since this time, neither of them have been well, even if, at times, they believed they were well-enough.

Structured around the narrative of the author and their mother’s own ill feelings, Alice Hattrick’s collective biography of illness branches out into the records of ill health women have written about in diaries and letters. Their cast of characters includes Virginia Woolf and Alice James, the poets Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Emily Dickinson, Ruskin’s lost love Rose la Touche, and the artist Louise Bourgeois. Ill Feelings is a moving and defiant debut from a bold new voice in narrative non-fiction which inhabits a similar space to Leslie Jamison’s The Empathy Exams and Emilie Pine’s Notes to Self, but has a texture and voice – a generative, transcendent rage – of its own.

‘Ill Feelings is a deeply personal and deeply political reckoning with the nature of illness, inheritance, time, silence, bodies and invisibility. Alice Hattrick offers both a radical redefinition of the dominant narratives surrounding health and pain, and the knowledge we need in order to name, understand and resist them. Hattrick has found a voice and form which open up new and exciting possibilities for writing the self and making sense of the collective past: I read this remarkable book with outrage, fascination and immense admiration.’

— Francesca Wade, author of Square Haunting

Excerpt:

‘My mother and I have symptoms of illness without any known cause – according them the status of feelings, confined to our bodies, or our sense of them as ill. Ill – bad, sick, wrong – is also how I learned to feel about my diagnosis. Those ill feelings were not really my own, but reflections of societal ones, which deemed people with ME/CFS as fakers, scroungers, lazy and privileged, and indeed all chronically ill and disabled people as less-than-human, deserving of fewer rights, less pay, and less security and care. Ill feelings were always something we shared.’

Alice Hattrick’s criticism and interviews have appeared in publications such as frieze magazine, ArtReview and The White Review. They completed an MA in Critical Writing in Art and Design at the Royal College of Art in 2013, and a BA in History of Art at the Courtauld Institute in 2008. They have been involved in projects and events at South London Gallery, Goldsmiths Centre for Feminist Research, ICA, Horse Hospital, The Photographer’s Gallery, Serpentine Galleries, the Barbican, Wysing Arts Centre and Raven Row. They were shortlisted for the Fitzcarraldo Essay Prize in 2016. Ill Feelings is their first book.
Asle is an ageing painter and widower who lives alone on the southwest coast of Norway. His only friends are his neighbour, Åsleik, a traditional fisherman-farmer, and Beyer, a gallerist who lives in the city. There, in Bjørgvin, lives another Asle, also a painter but lonely and consumed by alcohol. Asle and Asle are doppelgängers – two versions of the same person, two versions of the same life, both grappling with existential questions.

In this final instalment of Jon Fosse’s Septology, the major prose work by ‘the Beckett of the twenty-first century’ (Le Monde), Christmas is approaching. Tradition has it that Åsleik and Asle eat lutefisk together, but this year Asle has agreed for the first time to celebrate Christmas with Åsleik and his sister, Guro. On Christmas Eve, Åsleik, Asle, and the dog Bragi take Åsleik’s boat out on the Sygnefjord. Meanwhile, we follow the lives of the two Asles as younger adults in flashbacks: the narrator meets his lifelong love, Ales; joins the Catholic Church; starts exhibiting with Beyer; and can make a living by trying to paint away all the pictures stuck in his mind. After a while, Asle and Ales leave the city and move to the house in Dyrgja. The other Asle gets married too, but his wedding ends with a sobbing bride and is followed soon after by a painful breakup.

Written in melodious and hypnotic ‘slow prose’, A New Name: Septology VI-VII is a transcendent exploration of the human condition by Jon Fosse, and a radically other reading experience – incantatory, hypnotic, and utterly unique.

‘Jon Fosse is a major European writer.’
— Karl Ove Knausgaard, author of My Struggle

‘A relentlessly consuming work: already Septology feels momentous.’
— Catherine Taylor, Guardian

‘In The Other Name: Septology I-II’s rhythmic accumulation of words, [there is] something incantatory and self-annihilating – something that feels almost holy.’
— Sam Sacks, Wall Street Journal

Jon Fosse was born in 1959 on the west coast of Norway and has written over thirty books and twenty-eight plays that have been translated into over forty languages. His first novel, Red, Black, was published in 1983, and was followed by such works as Melancholia I & II, Aliss at the Fire, and Morning and Evening. He is one of the world’s most produced living playwrights. In 2007, Fosse became a chevalier of the Ordre national du Mérite of France, and he was awarded the International Ibsen Award in 2010. In 2011, he moved into Grotten, an honorary residence for artists on the grounds of the Royal Palace in Oslo. He was awarded the European Prize for Literature in 2014 and the Nordic Council Literature Prize in 2015. The Other Name: Septology I-II was longlisted for the International Booker Prize in 2020. Fosse currently has homes in Bergen, Oslo, and in Hainburg, Austria.
Taking the form of random journal entries over the course of seven years, *Exteriors* concentrates on the ephemeral encounters that take place just on the periphery of a person's lived environment. Ernaux captures the feeling of contemporary living on the outskirts of Paris: poignantly lyrical, chaotic, and strangely alive. *Exteriors* is in many ways the most ecstatic of Ernaux's books—the first in which she appears largely free of the haunting personal relationships she has written about so powerfully elsewhere, and the first in which she is able to leave the past behind her.

'Across the ample particularities of over forty years and twenty-one books, almost all short, subject-driven memoirs, Ernaux has fundamentally destabilized and reinvented the genre in French literature.'
— Audrey Wollen, *The Nation*

'Annie Ernaux is one of my favorite contemporary writers, original and true. Always after reading one of her books, I walk around in her world for months.'
— Sheila Heti, author of *Motherhood*

'Ernaux has inherited de Beauvoir's role of chronicler to a generation…'
— Margaret Drabble, *New Statesman*

'I find her work extraordinary.'
— Eimear McBride, author of *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing*

'The author of one of the most important oeuvres in French literature, Annie Ernaux's work is as powerful as it is devastating, as subtle as it is seething.'
— Edouard Louis, author of *The End of Eddy*

'Ernaux is an unusual memoirist: she distrusts her memory… Ernaux does not so much reveal the past – she does not pretend to have any authoritative access to it – as unpack it.'
— Madeleine Schwartz, *New Yorker*

Born in 1940, Annie Ernaux grew up in Normandy, studied at Rouen University, and later taught at secondary school. From 1977 to 2000, she was a professor at the Centre National d’Enseignement par Correspondance. Her books, in particular *A Man’s Place* and *A Woman’s Story*, have become contemporary classics in France. *The Years* won the Prix Renaudot in France in 2008 and the Premio Strega in Italy in 2016, and was shortlisted for the 2019 Man Booker International Prize. In 2017, Annie Ernaux was awarded the Marguerite Yourcenar Prize for her life's work. *Exteriors* is her seventh book to appear with Fitzcarraldo Editions.
In her brilliantly inventive debut collection, Vanessa Onwuemezi takes readers on a surreal and haunting journey through a landscape on the edge of time. At the border with another world, a line of people wait for the gates to open; on the floor of a lonely room, a Born Winner runs through his life's achievements and losses; in a suburban garden, a man witnesses a murder that pushes him out into the community. Struggling to realize the human ideals of love and freedom, the characters of Dark Neighbourhood roam instead the depths of alienation, loss and shame. With a detached eye and hallucinatory vision, they observe their own worlds as the line between dream and reality dissolves and they themselves begin to fragment. Electrifying and heady, and written with a masterful lyrical precision, Dark Neighbourhood heralds the arrival of a strikingly original new voice in fiction.

‘Onwuemezi’s writing is a breath of fresh air. This collection is a marvel.’
— Daisy Johnson, author of Sisters

‘The winner of the White Review Short Story Prize 2019 is a work that makes its own rules, that demands interpretation, and that feels, to quote one of its own lines, like “a long swim through the deepest layers”. It is “At the Heart of Things” by Vanessa Onwuemezi.’
— Chris Power, awarding the 2019 White Review Short Story Prize to Vanessa Onwuemezi

Excerpt:

‘The cat’s paws brush through the letterbox, looking for some jellied meat or an opening in the family. Cat pushes a letter through the door. The letter marked J.H. Ottessa, dead brother of mine. My brother’s bed sheets still warm-sweaty. My brother’s paw prints dented into the doormat. Rain water falls heavy from the gutter makes me look up, makes me remember what day it is what time it is. I call my little girl’s name Annette A        eh Annette A        eh voice through the wall, and the echo of her name, Annette, from the other side. Her face screwed up fingers in ears not to have to hear, Annette, all the damn half-hour of the morning of all the days to be playing up the day of the funeral day late for church day.

But a child can grieve. Let the child be grieving, let the child be.

Eight years old were you brother? And I a bit older. I see you running down the street, a sun-blazed strip lined with flowers begging for water, petals blown-out hearts. It was a day with corn, heavily spiced and salted. Smoke and charcoal. Nice. Heat beating a path into our bones, our brows wet. You had a rug tied round your neck with garden twine, lying out in the sun charge up charge up, before flying off, past the street light, past the telephone wire, past the aeroplane. Almost choked yourself to death.’

Vanessa Onwuemezi is a writer and poet living in London. Her work has appeared in Prototype, frieze and Five Dials. Her story ‘At the Heart of Things’ won the The White Review Short Story Prize 2019.
Alaa Abd el-Fattah, 39, is arguably the most high profile political prisoner in Egypt, if not the Arab world. A leading figure among the young technologists and bloggers of the early 2000s he rose to international prominence during the revolution of 2011. A fiercely independent thinker who fuses politics and technology in powerful prose, an activist whose ideas represent a global generation which has only known struggle against a failing system, a public intellectual with the rare courage to offer personal, painful honesty, Alaa's written voice came to symbolize much of what was fresh, inspiring and revolutionary about the uprisings that have defined the last decade.

Alaa has been in prison for most of the last seven years and many of the pieces collected here were smuggled out of his cell. From theses on technology, to theories of history, to painful reflections on the meaning of prison, his voice in these pages – arranged by family and friends – cuts as sharply relevant, as dangerous, as ever.

'Alaa is the bravest, most critical, most engaged citizen of us all. At a time when Egypt has been turned into a large prison, Alaa has managed to cling to his humanity and be the freest Egyptian.'
— Khaled Fahmy, author of All The Pasha's Men

'Alaa is in prison not because he committed a crime, not because he said too much, but because his very existence poses a threat to the state. Those who are bold, those who do not relent, will always threaten the terrified and ultimately weak state which must, to survive, squash its opponents like flies. But Alaa will not allow himself to be crushed like that, I know.'
— Jillian C. York, director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation

'Alaa is a philosopher of everyday life and life-long struggle; he doesn’t merely find meaning in that which we go through, especially in dark political moments, but creates meaning and gives it form in writing. And he does so from a highly entrenched and implicated place in the present. His thoughts know no frontiers; they pierce through local contexts to inspire new modes of thinking about the chaotic substance of politics.'
— Lina Attalah, editor in chief of Mada Masr

Alaa Abd el-Fattah is an Egyptian writer, technologist and political activist. He is currently being held in indefinite detention in Egypt. He was a central figure in the blogging movement of the early 2000s, a vanguard of free speech and radical discourse that would become one of the catalysts of the 2011 revolution. Committed to using both on-the-ground activism and online platforms to push an uncompromising political discourse, Alaa was 24 when he was first arrested under Hosni Mubarak. Since then he has been prosecuted and arrested by the three other Egyptian regimes of his lifetime. After the coup d'etat of 2013, he was among the principal targets of the counter-revolution and has been held in the regime’s prisons since then.
In the mid-eighteenth century, as new ideas begin to sweep the continent, a young Jew of mysterious origins arrives in a village in Poland. Before long, he has changed not only his name but his persona; visited by what seem to be ecstatic experiences, Jacob Frank casts a charismatic spell that attracts an increasingly fervent following. In the decade to come, Frank will traverse the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires, thongs of disciples in his thrall as he reinvents himself again and again, converts to Islam and then Catholicism, is pilloried as a heretic and revered as the Messiah, and wreaks havoc on the conventional order, Jewish and Christian alike, with scandalous rumours of his sect’s secret rituals and the spread of his increasingly iconoclastic beliefs. In *The Books of Jacob*, her masterpiece, 2018 Nobel Prize in Literature laureate Olga Tokarczuk writes the story of Frank through the perspectives of his contemporaries, capturing Enlightenment Europe on the cusp of precipitous change, searching for certainty and longing for transcendence.

‘A magnificent writer.’
— Svetlana Alexievich, 2015 Nobel Prize in Literature laureate

‘A writer on the level of W. G. Sebald.’
— Annie Proulx, author of *The Shipping News*

‘One among a very few signal European novelists of the past quarter-century.’
— *The Economist*

‘Olga Tokarczuk is inspired by maps and a perspective from above, which tends to make her microcosmos a mirror of macrocosmos. She constructs her novels in a tension between cultural opposites: nature versus culture, reason versus madness, male versus female, home versus alienation. Her magnum opus so far is the historical novel *The Books of Jacob* (2014), portraying the eighteenth-century mystic and sect leader Jacob Frank. The work also gives us a remarkably rich panorama of an almost neglected chapter in European history.’
— Nobel Prize citation

Olga Tokarczuk is the author of nine novels, three short story collections and has been translated into thirty languages. Her novel *Flights* won the 2018 International Booker Prize, in Jennifer Croft’s translation. In 2019, she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Jennifer Croft was awarded the Man Booker International Prize in 2018 for her translation from Polish of Olga Tokarczuk’s *Flights*. She is the recipient of Fulbright, PEN, MacDowell, and National Endowment for the Arts grants and fellowships, as well as the inaugural Michael Henry Heim Prize for Translation and a Tin House Workshop Scholarship for her memoir *Homesick*. 