Graywolf Press is a leading independent publisher committed to the discovery and energetic publication of twenty-first century American and international literature. We champion outstanding writers at all stages of their careers to ensure that adventurous readers can find underrepresented and diverse voices in a crowded marketplace.

We believe works of literature nourish the reader’s spirit and enrich the broader culture, and that they must be supported by attentive editing, compelling design, and creative promotion.

www.graywolfpress.org
The White Card
A Play
by Claudia Rankine

A play about the imagined fault line between black and white lives by Claudia Rankine, the author of Citizen.

The White Card stages a conversation that is both informed and derailed by the black/white American drama. The scenes in this one-act play, for all the characters' disagreements, stalemates, and seeming impasses, explore what happens if one is willing to stay in the room when it is painful to bear the pressure to listen and the obligation to respond.

- from the introduction by Claudia Rankine

Claudia Rankine's first published play, The White Card, poses the essential question: Can American society progress if whiteness remains invisible?

Composed of two scenes, the play opens with a dinner party thrown by Virginia and Charles, an influential Manhattan couple, for the up-and-coming artist Charlotte. Their conversation about art and representations of race spirals toward the devastation of Virginia and Charles's intentions. One year later, the second scene brings Charlotte and Charles into the artist's studio, and their confrontation raises both the stakes and the questions of what - and who - is actually on display.

Rankine's The White Card is a moving and revelatory distillation of racial divisions as experienced in the white spaces of the living room, the art gallery, the theater, and the imagination itself.

Author Bio

Claudia Rankine is the author of three collections of poetry: Nothing in Nature Is Private, The End of the Alphabet, and Plot. She teaches at the University of Georgia.
Trump Sky Alpha
A Novel
by Mark Doten

A novel on the political madness of our time and the Internet's deep workings, by the author of The Infernal

Twice a week, the president pilots his ultraluxury airship Trump Sky Alpha (seats start at $50,000), delivering, as he travels between D.C., New York City, and Mar-a-Lago, a streaming YouTube address to the nation, in which he trumpets his successes and blasts his enemies - until the day his words plunge the world into nuclear war. One year later, with 90 percent of the world’s population destroyed, a journalist named Rachel has taken refuge in the Twin Cities Metro Containment Zone. Rachel goes on assignment to document the final throes of humor on the Internet in those moments before the end, hoping along the way to discover the final resting place of her wife and daughter.

What she uncovers, hidden amid spiraling memes and Twitter jokes in a working archive of the Internet's remnants, are references to a little-known book that inspired a shadowy hacktivist group called the Aviary. Their role in the downfall of the Internet, and the enigmatic presence of a figure known only as Birdcrash, take on immense and terrifying dimensions as Rachel ventures further into the ruins of the Internet. Mark Doten, a satirist of unparalleled vision, brilliantly details how the Internet has infiltrated every aspect of our lives, laying the groundwork for the tumult of our current political moment, and, in the kaleidoscopic, queer, all-consuming, parallactic swirl of Trump Sky Alpha, for the future headed our way.

To enshrine in such beauty and intelligence a country that so despises beauty and intelligence is an act of rogue hope and antic compassion. In Trump Sky Alpha, Mark Doten emerges as the shadow president of our benighted generation of American literature.” - Joshua Cohen

Author Bio
Mark Doten is the author of The Infernal. One of Granta’s 2017 Best of Young American Novelists, he is the literary fiction editor at Soho Press and teaches in Columbia University’s graduate writing program. He lives in Brooklyn.
An eerie, watery reimagining of the Oedipus myth set on the canals of Oxford, from the author of Fen

The dictionary doesn't contain every word. Gretel, a lexicographer by trade, knows this better than most. She grew up on a houseboat with her mother, wandering the canals of Oxford and speaking a private language of their own invention. Her mother disappeared when Gretel was a teen, abandoning her to foster care, and Gretel has tried to move on, spending her days updating dictionary entries.

One phone call from her mother is all it takes for the past to come rushing back. To find her, Gretel will have to recover buried memories of her final, fateful winter on the canals. A runaway boy had found community and shelter with them, and all three were haunted by their past and stalked by an ominous creature lurking in the canal: the bonak. Everything and nothing at once, the bonak was Gretel's name for the thing she feared most. And now that she's searching for her mother, she'll have to face it.

In this electrifying reinterpretation of a classical myth, Daisy Johnson explores questions of fate and free will, gender fluidity, and fractured family relationships. Everything Under - a debut novel whose surreal, watery landscape will resonate with fans of Fen - is a daring, moving story that will leave you unsettled and unstrung.

Author Bio

Daisy Johnson is the author of the short-story collection Fen. She is the winner of the Harper's Bazaar Short Story Prize, the A. M. Heath Prize, and the Edge Hill Short Story Prize. She lives in Oxford, England, by the river.
The Collected Schizophrenias
Essays
by Esme Weijun Wang

Powerful, affecting essays on mental illness, winner of the Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize and a Whiting Award

An intimate, moving book written with the immediacy and directness of one who still struggles with the effects of mental and chronic illness, The Collected Schizophrenias cuts right to the core. Schizophrenia is not a single unifying diagnosis, and Esme Weijun Wang writes not just to her fellow members of the collected schizophrenias" but to those who wish to understand it as well. Opening with the journey toward her diagnosis of schizoaffective disorder, Wang discusses the medical community’s own disagreement about labels and procedures for diagnosing those with mental illness, and then follows an arc that examines the manifestations of schizophrenia in her life. In essays that range from using fashion to present as high-functioning to the depths of a rare form of psychosis, and from the failures of the higher education system and the dangers of institutionalization to the complexity of compounding factors such as PTSD and Lyme disease, Wang's analytical eye, honed as a former lab researcher at Stanford, allows her to balance research with personal narrative. An essay collection of undeniable power, The Collected Schizophrenias dispels misconceptions and provides insight into a condition long misunderstood.

Author Bio

Esme Weijun Wang is the author of The Border of Paradise. She received the Whiting Award in 2018 and was named one of Granta’s Best of Young American Novelists of 2017. She holds an MFA from the University of Michigan and lives in San Francisco.
Labrador
A Novel
by Kathryn Davis

Back in print, Kathryn Davis’s riveting debut about the indelible pacts and hidden hatreds of sisterhood

Labrador is the story of two unforgettable sisters. Willie, the eldest, is willful, beautiful, and wayward; to Kitty, the youngest, she is the radiant center around which everything revolves. Kitty, too, is willful, but in the brooding manner of the inveterate loner. She is the one who is visited by an angel, Rogni, who reshapes her beliefs by telling her eerie, enigmatic fables that defy time and place, parables about bears, martyrs, and imprisoned daughters that seem to contain warnings about betrayals and violence to come. In the pared-down landscape of the far north, where the girls’ grandfather has his home, Kitty escapes the orbit of her sister and begins to come to terms with the demons - and the enchantments - that have been her birthright from the start.

Kathryn Davis conjures a bewitching tale of the rifts and reparation that occur between two girls who are nothing alike but have only each other to turn to, all the while destabilizing our assumptions about what a coming-of-age story is supposed to be. In Labrador one can find the origins of Davis’s hallmark lyricism and startling narrative swerves, her layered atmospherics, her fierce intelligence and wit, and above all the wild and transformative qualities of her imagination.

Author Bio

Kathryn Davis is the author of six novels. She has received the Kafka Prize, the Morton Dauwen Zabel Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the Lannan Foundation Literary Award. She teaches at Washington University, and lives in Vermont and St. Louis, Missouri.
The Silk Road
A Novel
by Kathryn Davis

A spellbinding novel about transience and mortality, by one of the most original voices in American literature

_The Silk Road_ begins on a mat in yoga class, deep within a labyrinth on a settlement somewhere in the icy north, under the canny guidance of Jee Moon. When someone fails to rise from corpse pose, the Astronomer, the Archivist, the Botanist, the Keeper, the Topologist, the Geographer, the Iceman, and the Cook remember the paths that brought them there - paths on which they still seem to be traveling.

_The Silk Road_ also begins in rivalrous skirmishing for favor, in the protected Eden of childhood, and it ends in the harrowing democracy of mortality, in sickness and loss and death. Kathryn Davis's sleight of hand brings the past, present, and future forward into brilliant coexistence; in an endlessly shifting landscape, her characters make their way through ruptures, grief, and apocalypse, from existence to nonexistence, from embodiment to pure spirit.

Since the beginning of her extraordinary career, Davis has been fascinated by journeys. Her books have been shaped around road trips, walking tours, hegiras, exiles; and now, in this triumphant novel, a pilgrimage. _The Silk Road_ is her most explicitly allegorical novel and also her most profound vehicle; supple and mesmerizing, the journey here is not undertaken by a single protagonist but by a community of separate souls - a family, a yoga class, a generation. Its revelations are ravishing and desolating.

Author Bio

Kathryn Davis is the author of six novels. She has received the Kafka Prize, the Morton Dauwen Zabel Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the Lannan Foundation Literary Award. She teaches at Washington University, and lives in Vermont and St. Louis, Missouri.
Deaf Republic
Poems
by Ilya Kaminsky

Ilya Kaminsky's astonishing parable in poems asks us, What is silence?

*Deaf Republic* opens in an occupied country in a time of political unrest. When soldiers breaking up a protest kill a deaf boy, Petya, the gunshot becomes the last thing the citizens hear - they all have gone deaf, and their dissent becomes coordinated by sign language. The story follows the private lives of townspeople encircled by public violence: a newly married couple, Alfonso and Sonya, expecting a child; the brash Momma Galya, instigating the insurgency from her puppet theater; and Galya's girls, heroically teaching signing by day and by night luring soldiers one by one to their deaths behind the curtain. At once a love story, an elegy, and an urgent plea, Ilya Kaminsky's long-awaited *Deaf Republic* confronts our time's vicious atrocities and our collective silence in the face of them.

**Author Bio**

Ilya Kaminsky was born in the former Soviet Union. He is the author of a poetry collection, *Dancing in Odessa*, and coeditor of *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry*. He was a 2014 finalist for the Neustadt International Prize for Literature.
Oculus
Poems
by Sally Wen Mao

A brilliant second collection by Sally Wen Mao on the violence of the spectacle - starring the film legend Anna May Wong

In Oculus, Sally Wen Mao explores exile not just as a matter of distance and displacement but as a migration through time and a reckoning with technology. The title poem follows a nineteen-year-old girl in Shanghai who uploaded her suicide onto Instagram. Other poems cross into animated worlds, examine robot culture, and haunt a necropolis for electronic waste. A fascinating sequence spanning the collection speaks in the voice of the international icon and first Chinese American movie star Anna May Wong, who travels through the history of cinema with a time machine, even past her death and into the future of film, where she finds she has no progeny. With a speculative imagination and a sharpened wit, Mao powerfully confronts the paradoxes of seeing and being seen, the intimacies made possible and ruined by the screen, and the many roles and representations that women of color are made to endure in order to survive a culture that seeks to consume them.

Author Bio

Sally Wen Mao is the author of a previous poetry collection, Mad Honey Symposium. Her work has won a Pushcart Prize and fellowships at Kundiman, George Washington University, and the New York Public Library Cullman Center.

Graywolf Press
On Sale: Jan 15/19
7 x 9 • 96 pages
9781555978259 • $21.00 • pb
Poetry / American / Asian American

Notes

Promotion
The House of the Pain of Others
Chronicle of a Small Genocide
by Julian Herbert, translated by Christina MacSweeney

A brilliant work of historical excavation with profound echoes in an age replete with violence and xenophobia

Early in the twentieth century, amid the myths of progress and modernity that underpinned Mexico's ruling party, some three hundred Chinese immigrants - close to half of the Cantonese residents of the newly founded city of Torreon - were massacred over the course of three days. It is considered the largest slaughter of Chinese people in the history of the Americas, an attempted extermination that was followed by denial or empty statements of regret. The massacre reverberated briefly before fading from collective memory. More than a century later, the facts continue to be elusive, mistaken, and repressed.

And what do you know about the Chinese people who were killed here?” Julian Herbert asks anyone who will listen. An exorcism of persistent and discomfiting ghosts, The House of the Pain of Others attempts a reckoning with the 1911 massacre. Blending reportage, personal reflection, essay, and academic treatise, Herbert talks to taxi drivers and historians, travels to the scene of the crime, and digs deep into archives that contain conflicting testimony. Looping, digressive, and cinematic, this cronica vividly portrays the historical context as well as the lives of the perpetrators and victims of the "small genocide.” It is a distinctly twenty-first-century sort of Western, a tremendous literary performance that extends and enlarges the accomplishments of a significant international writer.

Author Bio

Julian Herbert was born in Acapulco in 1971. He is a writer, musician, and teacher, and is the author of Tomb Song as well as several volumes of poetry and two story collections. He lives in Saltillo, Mexico.

Christina MacSweeney was awarded the 2016 Valle Inclán Translation Prize for her translations of Valeria Luiselli's The Story of My Teeth. Her translation of Daniel Saldana Paris's novel Among Strange Victims was shortlisted for the 2017 Best Translated Book Award.
The Gulf
A Novel
by Belle Boggs

A hilarious send-up of writing workshops, for-profit education, and the gulf between believers and nonbelievers

Marianne is in a slump: barely able to support herself by teaching, not making progress on her poetry, about to lose her Brooklyn apartment. When her novelist ex-fiance, Eric, and his venture capitalist brother, Mark, offer her a job directing a low-residency school for Christian writers at a motel they’ve inherited on Florida's Gulf Coast, she can’t come up with a reason to say no.

The Genesis Inspirational Writing Ranch is born, and liberal, atheist Marianne is soon knee-deep in applications from writers whose political and religious beliefs she has always opposed but whose money she’s glad to take. Janine is a schoolteacher whose heartfelt poems explore the final days of Terri Schiavo’s life. Davonte is a former R&B superstar who hopes to reboot his career with a bestselling tale of excess and redemption. Lorraine and Tom, eccentric writers in need of paying jobs, join the Ranch as instructors.

Mark finds an investor in God’s Word God’s World, a business that develops for-profit schools for the Christian market, but the conditions that come along with their support become increasingly problematic, especially as Marianne grows closer to the students. As unsavory allegations mount, a hurricane bears down on the Ranch, and Marianne is faced with the consequences of her decisions.

With sharp humor and deep empathy, The Gulf is a memorable debut novel in which Belle Boggs plumbs the troubled waters dividing America.

Author Bio

BELLE BOGGS has published work in Glimmer Train, Oxford American, and Best New American Voices 2003. She received an MA in fiction from the University of California at Irvine and grew up in King William County, Virginia.
Brute
Poems
by Emily Skaja

Selected by Joy Harjo as the winner of the Walt Whitman Award of the Academy of American Poets

Emily Skaja’s debut collection is a fiery, hypnotic book that confronts the dark questions and menacing silences around gender, sexuality, and violence. Brute arises, brave and furious, from the dissolution of a relationship, showing how such endings necessitate self-discovery and reinvention. The speaker of these poems is a sorceress, a bride, a warrior, a lover, both object and agent, ricocheting among ways of knowing and being known. Each incarnation squares itself up against ideas of feminine virtue and sin, strength and vulnerability, love and rage, as it closes in on a hard-won freedom.

Brute is absolutely sure of its capacity to insist not only on the truth of what it says but on the truth of its right to say it. What am I supposed to say: I’m free?” the first poem asks. The rest of the poems emphatically discover new ways to answer. This is a timely winner of the Walt Whitman Award, and an introduction to an unforgettable voice.

Author Bio

Emily Skaja grew up in rural Illinois and is a graduate of the creative writing MFA program at Purdue University. Her poems have been published in Best New Poets, Blackbird, Crazyhorse, FIELD, and Gulf Coast. She lives in Memphis, Tennessee.
Wade in the Water
Poems
by Tracy K. Smith

The extraordinary new poetry collection by Tracy K. Smith, the Poet Laureate of the United States

Even the men in black armor, the ones
Jangling handcuffs and keys, what else
Are they so buffered against, if not love's blade
Sizing up the heart's familiar meat?

We watch and grieve. We sleep, stir, eat.
Love: the heart sliced open, gutted, clean.

Love: naked almost in the everlasting street,
Skirt lifted by a different kind of breeze.

- from Unrest in Baton Rouge

In Wade in the Water, Tracy K. Smith boldly ties America's contemporary moment both to our (...)

Author Bio

Tracy K. Smith is the author of three previous poetry collections, including Life on Mars, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and a memoir, Ordinary Light, which was a finalist for the National Book Award. She teaches at Princeton University.