



FEBRUARY '19

Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive

By Stephanie Land

"Stephanie Land's *Maid* is a must-read of the highest order, a memoir of a single mother struggling to survive while performing the household labor that many of us take for granted. While at once deeply personal—you'll fall hard for Stephanie and her daughter, Mia—it is also essential social commentary about how we treat the myriad domestic laborers who toil in our homes, oftentimes unseen and unappreciated. Read it alongside *Nickel and Dimed* or *Evicted* for a stunning, unforgettable look at American poverty and determination."

—Emilie Sommer, East City Bookshop, Washington, DC



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FEBRUARY '19

Lost Children Archive: A Novel

By Valeria Luiselli

"Really incredible fiction takes you on a journey, and somewhere along the way you realize how much of it reflects your own reality. In *Lost Children Archive*, Valeria Luiselli's narrator is highly observant of her inner life and the world around her. She unravels a story that's about family and how walls between people and nations are built—and what they damage. In reading this book, I felt like I was in the car on the family's road trip—feeling all the conflicting emotions that Luiselli's narrator is feeling as a partner, mother, and resident in today's United States."

—Zoey Cole, Books Are Magic, Brooklyn, NY



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FEBRUARY '19

Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes to A Tribe Called Quest

By Hanif Abdurraqib

"This monument to A Tribe Called Quest is constructed with the perfect combination of history, memoir, and sentiment. *Go Ahead in the Rain* is an accurate, honest documentation of the band, their music, and the time. Abdurraqib describes one particular lyrical style as 'the words bleeding into each other until the language itself becomes an instrument.' These words could also be said of his book. Brilliantly entertaining, informative, and self-reflective. This is essential reading."

—Mary Goree, Green Apple Books, San Francisco, CA



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FEBRUARY '19

The Collected Schizophrenias: Essays

By Esmé Weijun Wang

"*The Collected Schizophrenias* is a heartbreaking and honest collection about chronic mental illness and its effects on Wang. Through personal narrative and scientific research, Wang has created a collection of essays that are challenging in the sense that they confront you with the reality of a misunderstood condition. Her mission is not to scare, shock, or make the reader feel sorry for her, but to create an environment where mental illness is better understood and destigmatized within our culture. An eye-opening collection of essays from a truly exceptional writer."

—Katie Kucek, Brazos Bookstore, Houston, TX



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FEBRUARY '19

Deep Creek: Finding Hope in the High Country

By Pam Houston

"I can't decide if Mineral County, Colorado, is a piece of heaven or if it's actually heaven. Either way, it is a wondrous Rocky Mountain paradise—a paradise beset by bitter cold, fires, and various degrees of hardship, but always exquisite beauty. Pam Houston has 120 acres of it, and readers get a glimpse of life and death on the ranch in this marvelous combination of memoir and nature writing. Both deeply personal and wide-reaching, *Deep Creek* is about the human capacity to feel grief and joy all at once for the ground beneath one's feet and the planet as a whole."

—Stan Hynds, Northshire Bookstore, Saratoga Springs, NY



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FEBRUARY '19

The Last Romantics: A Novel

By Tara Conklin

"Oh, my! I was so moved by this book it brought me to tears. Fiona, Renee, Catherine, and Joe invaded my imagination and kept me spellbound until the end. Siblings! Many of us have them and often don't think about the nuances of our relationships. Conklin's story brought my own siblings to mind and questions emerged that can't be pursued on paper. Memories are such powerful things and affect our lives in compelling ways. There is so much love in this story. It's absolutely wonderful! Please read it!"

—Stephanie Crowe, Page and Palette, Fairhope, AL



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FEBRUARY '19

The Girls at 17 Swann Street: A Novel

By Yara Zgheib

"Through first-person narration, Yara Zgheib does a masterful job of presenting Anna, a young woman who has gradually spiraled into anorexia. So vivid are Anna's guilt and physical revulsion toward food that I was absolutely shaken. The other characters are equally well-developed. Anna's husband, Mathias, is loving and supportive but not immune to feelings of fear, frustration, and anger. Insights into the other residents and staff at 17 Swann Street provide a compelling context within which we experience Anna's excruciating struggle toward recovery. This is a very readable yet sobering reminder that eating disorders remain a serious problem in our image-conscious society and that anyone is potentially vulnerable."

—Samantha Flynn, Quail Ridge Books, Raleigh, NC



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FEBRUARY '19

Black Leopard, Red Wolf: A Novel

By Marlon James

"Marlon James' *Black Leopard, Red Wolf* is a shot across the bow of fantasy literature: bold, fresh, and filled with brutal wonder and endless imagination. James' tale set in a fantastical ancient Africa follows a hunter known only as Tracker as he trails the scent of a lost boy, meeting a shape-shifting leopard along the way. At turns hallucinatory, dreamlike, and nightmarish, *Black Leopard, Red Wolf*'s world envelops the reader in its stink, grime, sweat, and blood. Never has a magical world felt quite so otherworldly and yet frighteningly tactile at the same time. This is literary fantasy as you've never encountered it before and a truly original tale of love, loss, power, and identity."

—Caleb Masters, Bookmarks, Winston-Salem, NC



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FEBRUARY '19

The Current: A Novel

By Tim Johnston

"Tim Johnston's brand of storytelling is a curious hybrid of conventional crime fiction and observation of human nature that demands attention. In *The Current*, Johnston goes beyond the sensational and asks relevant questions when tragedy strikes, addressing real topics that come with the loss of a loved one and the questions that follow a horrific crime. As with Johnston's previous novel, *Descent*, his latest concludes with a wallop you will not see coming."

—Javier Ramirez, The Book Table, Oak Park, IL



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FEBRUARY '19

The Age of Light: A Novel

By Whitney Scharer

"Art lovers will enjoy this sexy, brilliant novel about Man Ray and Lee Miller set in Paris during the Jazz Age. Ray met Miller shortly after she arrived in Paris, young and just learning her craft. He became her mentor and lover, an intense relationship with the older man nurturing the younger woman's talent. But as Miller grew into her art and the relationship shifted, Ray's ego needed to be first. By WWII, Miller is at the height of her powers, and she leaves behind the safety of shooting portraits for the battlefields of Europe, documenting the horrors of concentration camps. Following Miller from her youth to old age, Scharer explores the passions and creativity of two larger-than-life characters."

—Deon Stonehouse, Sunriver Books & Music, Sunriver, OR



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FEBRUARY '19

Leading Men: A Novel

By Christopher Castellani

"Make yourself an Aperol Spritz (or an entire pitcher) and find a comfortable chair because you're going to spend the afternoon reading *Leading Men* by Christopher Castellani. Tennessee Williams was a genius—charming, brilliant, and powerful—but he was hell to live with and even harder to love, a challenge even for the man who loved him best, Frank Merlo. Castellani's fourth novel brings to life not only their fraught relationship, but also the gritty glamour of their time. It's a rich and gorgeous party whose guests include Truman Capote, Luchino Visconti, and you. Fortunately, you have that Aperol Spritz. Salut!"

—Michael Barnard, Rakestraw Books, Danville, CA



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FEBRUARY '19

Bowlaway: A Novel

By Elizabeth McCracken

"At the turn of the 20th century, Bertha Truitt is found lying unconscious in a frosty New England cemetery with no explanation of how she arrived there and a past she is unwilling to talk about. In a bag by her side are a corset, a bowling ball, one candlepin, and 15 pounds of gold. Thus begins a story of love, bowling, and how Bertha Truitt would influence the town of Salford and its residents for generations to come. Elizabeth McCracken once again brings us superb storytelling that shows how our lives don't always follow a straight line to where we thought we might be going."

—Jessie Martin, Nicola's Books, Ann Arbor, MI



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FEBRUARY '19

The Silent Patient: A Novel

By Alex Michaelides

"*The Silent Patient* is an outstanding thriller centered on a spellbinding mystery with a shocking twist; in other words, you are going to love this book. Alicia was a talented painter and devoted wife until the night she was discovered still as a statue and covered in blood, having apparently killed her husband. The answer as to why has remained locked inside of Alicia, who stops speaking following the murder. Six years later, Theo, a young psychologist, is determined to get the mysterious Alicia to spill all of her secrets. The final surprise will have you rethinking every riveting scene in this brilliant debut."

—Luisa Smith, Book Passage, Corte Madera, CA



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FEBRUARY '19

The Only Woman in the Room: A Novel

By Marie Benedict

"*The Only Woman in the Room* is the story of a woman who recreated herself several times over the course of her lifetime, as an actress who was a constant disappointment to her mother, a wife who learned state secrets about the Nazis, a refugee who convinced a movie mogul to cast her in his films, and a genius who developed a system to track German torpedoes but was turned away by the U.S. military because they believed she was too beautiful to be smart. The story of Hedy Lamarr is so much more than that of a Hollywood actress and war refugee. The fictional account Marie Benedict has woven is insightful, moving, and impossible to put down!"

—Kristin Pidgeon, Riverstone Books, Pittsburgh, PA



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FEBRUARY '19

The Lost Girls of Paris: A Novel

By Pam Jenoff

"Pam Jenoff specializes in finding a piece of history that has not been fully explored and that often leaves one thinking truth is stranger than fiction. In *The Lost Girls of Paris*, she returns to WWII but this time her protagonists are a group of British women recruited to blend into the French countryside and sabotage the Nazi network in preparation for D-Day. The story, told from the perspective of three women, ties up a whodunit in a satisfying knot with a little romance, but it's really a lot more about women finding out who they are and what role they can play in making a difference in the world."

—Cathy Fiebach, Main Point Books, Wayne, PA



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FEBRUARY '19

Golden Child: A Novel

By Claire Adam

"The country of Trinidad, in all of its lush complexities and sociopolitical intricacies, is the real main character here. As a family struggles with the terrible news that their son has been kidnapped, the reader is treated to a tour of the sights, sounds, and smells of Port of Spain and the outlying countryside, in all of its corruption and glory. This lyrical first novel portends great things to come for Claire Adam."

—Emily Crowe, An Unlikely Story, Plainville, MA



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FEBRUARY '19

When You Read This: A Novel

By Mary Adkins

"Death is called the final act, but for our loved ones who survive us, the show inevitably goes on. In *When You Read This*, Mary Adkins gives equal stage time to Iris Massey, a woman recently diagnosed with terminal cancer who begins a blog about her experiences, and those she has left behind. Grief is a unifying theme in this novel, from Iris, who struggles to come to terms with her death, to her sister, Jade, who is left rudderless without her, and even Iris' boss, Smith, who is determined to fulfill Iris' last request of having her blog published as a book. Poignant and bittersweet, *When You Read This* is a well-rounded blend of romance, comedy, and drama."

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



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FEBRUARY '19

The Weight of a Piano: A Novel

By Chris Cander

"A hulking black piano of Russian origin links the stories of two women: Katya, who must leave behind her beloved instrument when she immigrates to the U.S., and Clara, who is forced to sell her family heirloom when she loses her boyfriend and her home. The obsessive love each woman holds for the piano unfolds as the instrument journeys across continents. Chris Cander has crafted a novel of compelling beauty and characters who are complex, deeply flawed, and magnificently haunting. This will be a five-star beginning to any avid reader's 2019 book list."

—Pamela Klinger-Horn, Excelsior Bay Books, Excelsior, MN



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FEBRUARY '19

You Know You Want This: "Cat Person" and Other Stories

By Kristen Roupenian

"I was completely enthralled with Kristen Roupenian's 'Cat Person' story in the *New Yorker* and couldn't wait to pick up her collection. Like 'Cat Person,' each story pushes boundaries, holding a magnifying glass up to social norms and what our society accepts. The writing is fantastic, and the cadence of each story is strikingly unique. This book will delight fans of Roupenian's viral story and will start many more conversations in its wake."

—Courtney Flynn, Trident Booksellers & Café, Boston, MA



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FEBRUARY '19

The Falconer: A Novel

By Dana Czapnik

"Dana Czapnik's debut is a sharp coming-of-age story set in New York City in the mid-1990s with an unforgettable protagonist: Lucy is a street-smart basketball phenom who is secretly in love with Percy, her best friend and fellow baller. Lucy and Percy jump off the page through Czapnik's propulsive, stylish writing. These characters are interesting, warm, and quirky and feel entirely authentic as they struggle to define who they are and want to become. Czapnik's novel has personality and an attitude that infuses the pages and makes it impossible to put down."

—Lori Feathers, Interabang Books, Dallas, TX



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