New Books Scotland 2018
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Introduction

Welcome to the latest showcase of Scottish writing and publishing for 2018. Here we feature new talent from small presses, powerful new works from established writers, fantastic children’s books and young adult imprints. The selection of new and upcoming books offered in this edition of New Books Scotland reflects the energy and talent emanating from Scotland’s publishing scene.

Our publishers continue to delight and inspire young readers. Floris Books, the largest children’s book publisher in Scotland, also specialise in non-fiction for adults, with unusual titles bringing new perspectives on the world. This fresh outlook and passion for alternative voices is also evident in titles from Black & White Publishing which has grown into one of Scotland’s leading independent publishers with over 300 books in print across a variety of genres. Award-winning independent publisher Saraband strives to offer readers an offbeat, original selection by bringing you radical ideas and challenging messages from established and first-time authors. Elsewhere, Scotland’s publishers continue to forge partnerships internationally: Sandstone Press demonstrate a strong commitment to publishing titles from all over the world.

Our capital city remains home to publishers large and small. The superb output by small academic and learned presses reflects their place in one of Britain’s oldest and most distinguished centres of learning, while the wonderfully illustrated and immaculately researched titles from Historic Environment Scotland are a must for anyone with an interest in Scotland’s history and heritage. Readers would also cherish publications from the Society of Antiquaries, an establishment which has actively supported the study and enjoyment of Scotland’s past for over 200 years. Relative newcomers Scotland Street Press have consistently produced quality fiction and non-fiction since their founding in Edinburgh in 2014, while Muddy Pearl, an independent publisher of Christian books, continue to provide a range of thought-provoking titles.

The breadth of output and diverse approaches from our member publishers continues to impress those at home and abroad. Whittles Publishing have forged an international reputation for their academic and professional titles, as well as their wide range of non-fiction books, while edgy newcomers 404 Ink and BHP Comics handle books from established creators alongside cutting-edge talent. Readers should also seek out William Collins, part of HarperCollins, for a roster of prize-winning and agenda-setting books spanning science, history, art, politics and current affairs, biography, religion and natural history. And finally, National Galleries of Scotland, with their influential books on the visual arts, continue to provide readers with engaging, accessible and affordable books, offering an insight into the nation’s collection and exhibitions.

The high quality, diverse and inspiring selection of titles in this edition of New Books Scotland 2018 showcases the talent, creativity and dynamism of our member publishers, providing you with an insight into the Scottish publishing scene.
Books from Scotland

BooksfromScotland.com welcomes you to the wonderful world of Scottish books.

Championing the very best of Scottish books from classics through to the latest publications and from print books to e-books, we help you discover exciting new reads. We carefully curate a dynamic selection for you in exclusive monthly magazine-style issues and you can browse a wide range of books across fiction and non-fiction on the site. When you find a book that you like the sound of and you want to read more, we provide links so you can easily buy the book from your retailer of choice.

You can sign up online to our fortnightly e-newsletter via the homepage and get in touch with us on Twitter and Facebook. We’d love to hear from you.

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Publishing Scotland

Publishing Scotland is the network, trade and development body for the book publishing sector in Scotland. We represent a wide range of publishers and suppliers – both print and digital. The 100+ membership includes major publishers such as HarperCollins, Canongate, Edinburgh University Press and Witherby as well as the publishing divisions of the National Galleries of Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland and the National Museums of Scotland. Other members are part of the network category and include companies and organisations affiliated to the publishing sector such as the Society of Authors in Scotland, the Booksellers Association, Nielsen Book, agents, designers and freelance editors.

We act as the voice and network for publishing, to develop and promote the work of companies, organisations and individuals in the industry, and to co-ordinate joint initiatives and partnerships.

Our Aims

— To develop and promote the work of companies in the publishing sector to an international audience
— To foster public understanding of the unique value of books and other published materials in the cultural and political life of the nation
— To promote the status of publishing in Scotland
— To run a first-class skills and training programme for the sector
— To develop a comprehensive network of publishers, content creators and service providers to allow access to key markets, information and opportunities
— To provide members with useful current information on trade conditions, government activities and policies, and other matters of concern
— To stand as a framework within which publishers from all sectors can work together to advance their particular and common interests; to serve as an authoritative voice for Scottish-based publishing, at home and overseas
New titles

Fiction
Mayhem and Death
Helen McClory

Helen McClory returns with the anticipated follow-up collection to the award-winning *On the Edges of Vision*, delving deeper into descriptively mythical yet recognisable stories woven from human fear and fortune.

Swimming and suffering. Spikes loom, ever-threatening. A weight against the throat. Sea where the dead lie pressed into a layer of silt. A silent documentary through a terrible place. Mary Somerville, future Queen of Science. A coven of two. A polar companion.

*Mayhem and Death* is a mature, darker companion to *On the Edges of Vision* and shows McClory’s ever-expanding ability to envelop and entrance her readers with lyrical language of lore, stunning settings and curious characters. It includes woodcut-style illustrations to accompany each short story. *Mayhem and Death* also introduces the brand new novella *Powdered Milk*, a tale for the lost.

‘McClory is clearly one of the best new writers to have emerged in Scotland in the last few years’ – *The Herald*

Helen McClory lives in Edinburgh and grew up between there and the Isle of Skye. There is a moor and a cold sea in her heart. Her first collection, *On the Edges of Vision*, won the Saltire First Book of the Year 2015. Her debut novel, *Flesh of the Peach*, was published by Freight in spring 2017.

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On The Edges of Vision
Helen McClory

In Helen McClory’s award-winning, daring debut collection, the skin prickles against sweeps of light or darkness, the fantastic or the frightful; deep water, dark woods, or scattered flesh in desert sand. Whether telling of a boy cyclops or a pretty dead girl, drowned sailors or the devil himself, each story draws the reader not towards bleakness but a tale half-told, a truth half-true: that the monster is human, and only wants to reach out and take you by the hand.

‘If an extra-terrestrial were to ask, “What’s it like to live as a human being, I mean, what’s it like from the inside?”, I’d say, “Read Helen McClory’s *On The Edges of Vision*...’ – Reader’s Review
**We Shall Fight Until We Win**
Various Contributors

*We Shall Fight Until We Win* celebrates a century of pioneering political women in honour of the centenary of the first wave of women gaining the right to vote in the UK. This is a reminder of how far women’s rights have come over a century and, conversely, where we have left to go, looking back to the women who shaped our current climate or trailblazed.

From suffragettes like Emmeline Pankhurst and Sophia Duleep Singh, through to the defining ‘firsts’ in politics like Nancy Astor, the first female member of Parliament, and Diane Abbott, the first black woman to hold a seat in the House of Commons, to many of the women campaigning and heading up politics today, this graphic novel brings together a mix of creators from across the UK to illustrate the numerous important stories from the last century.

Contributors include Hannah Berry, Denise Mina, Sabeena Akhtar, Jenny Bloomfield, Kathryn Briggs, Wei Ming Kam, Shazleen Khan, Charlot Kristensen, Durre Shahwar and Grace Wilson.

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**Freedom Bound**
Warren Pleece

*Freedom Bound* follows the interconnected stories of three enslaved people living in Scotland before Scots Law proved slavery illegal. From mountainous countryside to the inner city, *Freedom Bound* explores Scotland’s uncomfortable history of slavery and the injustices perpetrated through the decades.

Warren Pleece is a UK-based comics illustrator with over 20 years of experience. He has worked for DC Comics, Vertigo, 2000AD and many more throughout his career, creating both comics and graphic novels. Pleece engages with a range of genres in his work and also has a passion for historical fiction.
**Full Colour Anthology**

**Various**

*Full Colour Anthology* brings together the freshest voices in Scottish comics and collects their short-form work in one stunning volume. *The Full Colour Project*, created to foster diversity in comics and mentor young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, came to fruition with this collection of bold new comics.

BHP Comics’ *The Full Colour Project* brought together a team of young Scottish people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds to be mentored in creating comics. The group, who come from all over Scotland and from many backgrounds, worked to create comics with outstanding results. While some of these young people had never made comics before, their work proves that the future of Scottish comics is in excellent hands.

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**The Gravity of Love**

**Noëlle Harrison**

In love, there’s no such thing as a coincidence.

Scottsdale, Arizona, 1989. In small-town America, Joy Sheldon married young, believing popular heartthrob Eddie to be ‘the one’. Now, years later, facing the brutal truth that her husband is a cheat, she cannot help but feel drawn when she meets the enigmatic Lewis.

Soho, London, 1967. In the heart of the glamorous new world of graphic design, ambitious young Lewis is aiming for the big time – if only he can keep his creative spark and his talented girlfriend Marnie. As pressure mounts, 1960s London quickly shows its darker side.

Ballycastle, Ireland, 1989. When Joy and Lewis embark on individual quests for resolution and redemption, neither is prepared for what they find – and all paths lead back to London in 1967.

Bold, intimate and joyful, this novel deftly interweaves decades, continents and lives to tell a story of the irresistible gravity of love.

Noëlle Harrison is the Irish author of *Beatrice, A Small Part of Me, I Remember, The Adulteress* and *The Secret Loves of Julia Caesar*. Her *Valentina* trilogy was published under the pen name Evie Blake. She has been translated into over 13 different languages, as well as featuring on Der Spiegel’s Bestseller List. Now living in Edinburgh, Harrison divides her time between art, travel, and writing fiction, as well as pursuing a Masters in creative writing at Edinburgh Napier University.
The Manhattan Project
Paul McNeive

The Manhattan Project is a fast-paced, biological terrorist thriller spanning present-day Japan, the Middle East and New York. Intent on avenging the deaths of his family by exacting revenge on the US, a Hiroshima survivor turned pharmaceutical mogul and criminal mastermind navigates an ingeniously evil terrorist plot, one which leaves tenacious New York cop John Wyse in a battle to save the lives of millions of innocents. The Manhattan Project is a love story wrapped in a breathtaking international thriller, and provides much food for thought.

Paul McNeive lost his legs in a fire aged 20, and his own experience with antibiotic resistance is the inspiration for The Manhattan Project. His injuries did not prevent him going on to have a successful business career – he was managing director of Savills in Ireland and is the first double amputee helicopter pilot in the world.

Cause of Death (Book 1 in the Grace Macallan series)
Peter Ritchie

Cause of Death is the first book in a strong female-lead five-book crime series set in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Belfast featuring DCI Grace Macallan, who relocates from Belfast to Edinburgh after a covert police operation in Northern Ireland goes wrong. Finding her feet in the new Scotland division amongst a highly varied group of colleagues proves challenging, not least while dealing with her own personal demons.

In Cause of Death, the newly formed crime team quickly comes under pressure when a brutal attack on a prostitute escalates into a series of murders, with a high-profile Edinburgh lawyer as the chief suspect. With a rich sense of place, a brilliantly drawn cast of characters and compelling plots, the Grace Macallan series is a thrilling new addition to the crime writing scene.

Peter Ritchie is a retired senior police officer. The real-world authenticity in his novels comes from vast experience gained working in CID, murder squads, Serious and Regional Crime Squads, and Europol. He is a regular lecturer and commentator on the subject of transnational organised crime.
Ghost
Helen Grant

‘Langlands House is haunted, but not by the ghost you think.’
Augusta McAndrew lives on a remote Scottish estate with her grandmother, Rose. For her own safety, she hides from outsiders, as she has done her entire life. Visitors are few and far between – everyone knows that Langlands House is haunted.

One day Rose goes out and never returns, leaving Augusta utterly alone. Then Tom McAllister arrives – good-looking and fascinating, but dangerous. What he has to tell her could tear her whole world apart.

As Tom and Augusta become ever closer, they must face the question: is love enough to overcome the ghosts of the past? In the end, Langlands House and its inhabitants hold more secrets than they did in the beginning in this chilling new novel from award-winning author, Helen Grant.

Helen Grant’s debut novel The Vanishing of Katharina Linden was shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2010. In 2011 the book also won an ALA Alex Award, awarded to ‘books written for adults that have special appeal to young adults’. Her work has also featured in Best British Horror 2015 (for the third time). Grant has lived in Spain, Germany and Belgium, and now lives in Perthshire. She is currently the Royal Literary Fund Fellow at the University of Stirling.

Danube Street
Linda Tweedie and Kate McGregor

Danube Street tells the story of the most notorious brothel ever to open its doors in Edinburgh.

Ruled by the infamous Madame Stella Gold, the house was known the length and breadth of the country, a magnet for red-blooded males, single or otherwise.

Now, although the darling of Edinburgh’s glitterati, Stella Gold finds herself the victim of a vendetta by the city’s most dangerous and violent criminal brothers, and a corrupt Chief of Police.

Survival was a constant challenge which Stella thought she had under control. How wrong could she be?

Linda Tweedie and Kate McGregor have co-authored several books, including the bestselling Coyle Trilogy: The Silence, The Betrayal and The Reckoning. They both live in East Lothian, enjoying semi-retirement from their previous careers in the hospitality trade. Their humorous debut title, Life Behind Bars, was a finalist in The People’s Book Prize in 2012.
The Crackit Cup
Irene Howat

These poems look at life in a Scottish village before, during and after the First World War. The central character is Tuim-heidit Tam, a simple-minded and kind-hearted man who, being unfit for military service, does what he can at home. The title The Crackit Cup describes Tam himself – useful and still beautiful despite a little damage. The world is a better place for the likes of him. The poems are in Scots and English, and the book has commendations by Tom Hubbard and Kenneth Steven.

Irene Howat lives in Ayrshire and has written over 50 books. She is a recent winner of The Herald and Glasgow University's McCash Prize for Scots poetry. The author is a biographer, poet, watercolour painter and an accomplished public speaker of long experience. She was brought up hearing the Scots language around her and grew to love it. ‘English is my head language,’ she says, ‘but Scots is the language of my heart.’

Commentary
Jock Stein

All the poems in Commentary relate to current issues and can be described as ‘prophetic poems’. Their genesis varies from the Bus Party around Scotland before the Referendum, to refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean. Featuring styles ranging from sonnet to sestina and with places of writing from Orkney to Catalonia, the poems’ references span Xenophon to Angela Merkel, and explore themes from taxes to female circumcision.

Apart from some of the more recent ones, the poems in this booklet have all been published in The Eildon Tree, The Evergreen, The Herald, Scintilla, Stand, The Scots Independent, Umbrellas of Edinburgh and collections from United Press in London.

Jock Stein is a piper and preacher from East Lothian. With degrees in economics and theology from Cambridge and Edinburgh, he also brings to his poetry experience of the Sheffield steel industry, life in East Africa, directing a conference centre, a sabbatical in Hungary, and the politics of Scotland today. He writes poetry in a variety of styles, serious and quirky, and has had many of his poems published in poetry journals and newspapers.
Apollo Unbound
Chris Kelso and Jim Agpalza

Hollywood icon Apollo Calloway has woken up in the unlikeliest of places – rural Ayrshire. A leader of the estate, or a scapegoat of fate, Apollo prepares for his ultimate performance.

‘Kelso's writing is transgressive, erudite, shocking.’– Mary Turzillo, NEBULA winner

‘Will Self meets Chuck Palahniuk’ – Former People magazine

‘Jim Agpalza’s art is 100% pure concentrated aggro. Disturbingly terrific.’
– Seb Doubinsky, author of The Babylonian Trilogy


Chris Kelso is an award-winning genre writer, editor and illustrator from Scotland. His short stories and articles have appeared in magazines and journals across the UK, US and Canada. Unger House Radicals won the Ginger Nuts of Horror Book of the Year in 2016 and The Black Dog Eats the City was featured in the Best of 2014 list by Weird Fiction Review.

Jim Agpalza’s work has appeared in a multitude of formats, including cartoons, books, slot machines, comics and t-shirts. Agpalza is the co-creator of the animated show Spacefish and the novels Fantastic Earth Destroyer Ultra Plus and Not Safe For Kids.

One Cog Turning
Anthony Laken

Bellina Ressa, daughter of the Lord Chancellor, has lived a sheltered life. Shunned by the rest of the nobility due to her cognopathic abilities, she has become strong-willed and independent. But in the blink of an eye, she finds herself betrothed to the arrogant Elvgren Lovitz and on a diplomatic mission to save the Estrian empire.

Joined on this perilous quest by her fiancé and the resolute Major Cirona Bouchard, Bellina is about to discover that intrigue lurks just beneath the surface and danger lies in wait around every corner. One Cog Turning, the first instalment of a trilogy, is a rip-roaring new Steampunk adventure, featuring a cast of foul-mouthed, irreverent and memorable oddballs.

Anthony Laken lives in South East London with his fiancé and son. His debut Steampunk Fantasy adventure novel One Cog Turning has been nominated for the BSFA (British Science Fiction Association) Awards in 2017 and the Gemmell Awards’ Morningstar Award in 2017. He was first published in Luna Press’ Beyond Realities 2015 short story contest, in which he was shortlisted for Harix, a science fiction story.
The Tyranny of Lost Things
Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett

Having dropped out of university, Harmony returns to the site of the urban commune where she lived as a child, now divided into flats. She rents a room in the hope of uncovering the source of her nightmares about a red-headed woman who haunts the house and her obsession with lost objects from her childhood. As the London riots explode in the streets, the two hot summers converge, blurred by the drugs and sex and cheap wine, and Harmony begins to discover what really happened at Longhope twenty years ago. Can she grow up at last and build her own future? The Tyranny of Lost Things is a tale which will resonate with the millennial generation.

Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett is a columnist, feature writer and editor for The Guardian newspaper, contributing mainly to Opinion and Features sections, and the Weekend magazine. In 2012, she co-founded The Vagenda, a funny feminist blog which was published in book form by Vintage. In 2014 Cosslett was shortlisted for a press award for young journalist of the year. As a freelancer, she has written for publications as wide-ranging as Elle, Stylist, New Statesman, The Independent and Time.

Steampunk Writers Around the World (Volume 1)
Various Contributors

This bilingual anthology – half in Spanish and half in English – is the product of the first Steampunk Hands Around the World project, created by Kevin Steal and 11 international authors. It encouraged writers to engage with each other and to express how Steampunk, although global in nature, is born from the unique culture of its setting. Three of these stories from the anthology were nominated for the 2017 BSFA (British Science Fiction Association) Awards in 2017.

“We were reaching our steampunk hands out around the world to shake in friendship and collaboration.” – the authors

The project Steampunk Hands Around the World was created by Kevin Steal who runs Airship Ambassador, a web hub for all things Steampunk. Steal was in touch with writer Josue’ Ramos of MundoSteampunk in Spain, and from this exchange, the idea of sharing their passion for steampunk was born.

International writers were then invited to submit stories which would reflect the true multicultural spirit of Steampunk. Ramos was joined by Suna Dasi (India), Milton Davis (Africa), Ray Dean (Hawaii), Fabio Fernandes (Brasil), Anibal J Rosario Planas (Puerto Rico), César Santivañez (Peru), Petra Slováková (Czech Republic), Elaine Vilar Madruga (Cuba), Paulo César Ramírez Villaseñor (Mexico) and Marcus R Gilman (Germany).
The Accidental Recluse
Tom McCulloch

Johnny Jackson used to be a famous film director, but his brother Duke was a hero. Having just turned 75, JJ is heading home from exile in Japan for one last blockbuster and a civic honouring. But home is where the ghosts of his past reside, some darker than his dead brother's shadow. His sins may be about to come to light.

Tom McCulloch has published poetry and short stories in various journals including Other Poetry, Northwords, Northwords Now, Eldon Tree, Markings, Buzzwords and Wilderness magazine (New Zealand). He was longlisted for the Herald/Imagining Scotland short story competition 2011. With his first novel, The Stillman, he became an Amazon Rising Star.

The Posy Ring
Catherine Czerkawska

When antiques seller Daisy Graham inherits an ancient house on the Hebridean island of Garve, she plans only to sell up, daunted as she is by its isolation and its crumbling structure. But the house, its beautiful grounds and the island itself quickly prove themselves too charming – their secrets too fascinating – for Daisy to resist, and she finds herself unable to walk away. Meeting a wealthy fine art dealer who has an evident interest in the house, she’s also attracted to him, yet suspicious of his motives.

In parallel with their story runs that of two 16th-century lovers who meet after members of an ill-fated Armada ship crew find safe passage to the island, one of them falling in love with the laird’s daughter.

The precious gold posy ring he gives her will provide the link between their intertwined stories. Are its engraved mottos, ‘un temps viendra’ and ‘vous et nul autre’, somehow prophetic for Daisy?

Catherine Czerkawska is a multi-award-winning novelist and playwright based in Scotland. She has written plays for the stage, ITV and BBC Radio 4, and has published numerous short stories. Her eight novels include The Curiosity Cabinet, shortlisted for the Dundee International Book Prize and serialised on BBC radio in 2013.
**The Walrus Mutterer**
Mandy Haggith

Northern Britain, Iron Age. Rian, a carefree young woman known for her healing and cooking skills, is enslaved by a powerful trader and taken aboard a vessel for a long and perilous voyage. Their quest: to find precious walrus ivory and amber – sources of untold wealth and influence. They’re joined by a mysterious, ambitious stranger known as Pytheas the Greek, who seeks riches to bring back to his native land.

In the first volume of this extraordinary, imaginative trilogy, Mandy Haggith takes us back to prehistoric times and opens the way for an intergenerational saga ranging from the Sub-Arctic to the Mediterranean. *The Walrus Mutterer*, visceral, gripping, and featuring an unforgettable cast of characters, is a stunning achievement from an award-winning novelist and poet.

Mandy Haggith is the author of several works of poetry, fiction and non-fiction, having gained a Masters in creative writing with distinction from the University of Glasgow. Her first novel, *The Last Bear*, was set 1,000 years ago and won the Robin Jenkins Literary Award. An eco-activist and former scientist and academic, Haggith is Co-ordinator of the European Environmental Paper Network and has lobbied at the United Nations. She lives in the northwest Scottish Highlands.

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**Burnout**
Claire MacLeary

Maggie and Wilma are back, and this time Maggie means business. Intent on clearing her late husband’s name, she’s burning the candle at both ends, trying to keep her teenage kids out of trouble and working the private investigating business to keep the wolf from the door. Partner Wilma is keeping it real, though. Together, they’re tackling some of Aberdeen’s dirtier secrets.

But Wilma is not impressed when Maggie takes on a new client, a woman known to have a less-than-close relationship with the truth, and who claims her husband is trying to kill her.

Claire MacLeary fashions a surprising, gritty, sometimes darkly humorous tale that combines police corruption and domestic abuse with a paean to friendship, loyalty, and how ‘women of a certain age’ can beat the odds.

Following a career in business, Claire MacLeary gained an MLitt with Distinction from the University of Dundee. Her short stories have been published in various magazines and anthologies. She lived for some years in Aberdeen, and subsequently in Fife, before returning to her native Glasgow. Her first novel, *Cross Purpose*, was longlisted for the 2017 McIlvanney Award for Scottish Crime Book of the Year.
Miss Blaine’s Prefect and the Golden Samovar
Olga Wojtas

Fifty-something Shona is a proud former pupil of the Marcia Blaine School for Girls, but has a deep loathing for The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, which she thinks gives her alma mater a bad name. Impeccably educated and an accomplished martial artist, linguist and musician, Shona is thrilled when selected by Marcia Blaine herself to travel back in time for a one-week mission in 19th century Russia: to pair up the beautiful, shy, orphaned heiress Lidia Ivanovna with Sasha, a gorgeous young man of unexplained origins.

But, despite all her accomplishments and good intentions, Shona might well have got the wrong end of the stick about her mission. As the body count rises, will she discover in time just who the real villain is?

Olga Wojtas was born and brought up in Edinburgh where she attended James Gillespie’s High School – the model for Marcia Blaine School for Girls, which appears in Muriel Spark’s The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie. She was encouraged to write by an inspirational English teacher there, Iona M Cameron. Wojtas won a Scottish Book Trust New Writers Award in 2015 and has had more than 30 short stories published in magazines and anthologies.

MacSonnetries
Petra Reid

In this collection of 154 sonnets reflecting on love, death, marriage and economic theory, each poem takes inspiration from Shakespeare's 154. Presenting a post-modern, and sometimes post-human, response, the subject matter of each sonnet follows the original, and the metre, line endings and rhyme are all Shakespeare’s. The poems do not attempt to emulate, but instead, they are a humorous, irreverent and feminist reaction to the great bard.

Brought up in post-industrial Lanarkshire, Petra Reid read law at Edinburgh University. She worked as a solicitor in general practice, and more recently, as a welfare rights adviser. She studied fine art while raising a family and developed her interest in poetry through Dada. She specialises in site-specific performances at one-off events.
‘Who shall I say is calling?’

Madame Potapova’s major-domo didn’t even look at me, or at the letter of introduction I was waving, as he asked the question. He was too busy glaring at the doorman for letting me in, and at the footman for escorting me across the reception hall.

I announced myself in the Russian style of name and patronymic, and decided to play the exoticism card. ‘Shona Fergusovna from Edinburgh, the capital city of Scotland. My father Fergus was president of the local heritage association in Morningside, Edinburgh’s most celebrated arrondissement. I arrived here yesterday and have come to pay my respects to Madame.’

Not a flicker. ‘I do not know whether Madame is accepting any more visitors this afternoon.’

‘Well, why don’t you ask her?’ I suggested.

Madame Potapova was elderly, widowed and threw the best parties in Imperial Russia. I was on a mission which demanded that I wangle an invite to the party she would host that very evening.
But before the major-domo could reply, there was a piercing shriek from the top of the marble staircase and an elderly lady plummeted towards us in a flurry of black silk and taffeta.

I dashed over to try to cushion her fall, but I never got the chance. In the wake of the shriek came the scrape of metal on marble and the snap of bone. The gold chain on the lady's lorgnette had caught on one of the banister’s artistic protuberances. The gold was obviously of excellent quality, since rather than the chain breaking, it was her neck that broke. She sprawled halfway down the staircase, her head lolling at a 90-degree angle.

‘Is that Madame Potapova?’ I asked the major-domo.

He nodded, piously crossing himself in the presence of death.

‘I suppose that’ll be tonight’s party cancelled then?’

‘Unfortunately so, but since your excellency was not invited, your excellency will not be greatly inconvenienced.’

He snapped his fingers to summon a footman. ‘Her excellency is leaving.’

I always try to see the best in people, but I couldn’t warm to this bloke. I was very glad I hadn’t mentioned what I thought I had seen. Just as Madame Potapova plunged to her doom, it was as though someone had moved on the upper landing, then disappeared into the shadows. I couldn’t be sure; time travel seemed to have left me with a bit of visual disturbance.

If I had said anything, I wouldn’t have put it past the major-domo to start yelling that Madame Potapova hadn’t fallen, she had been pushed. Then some innocent chambermaid or footman who just happened to be in the vicinity would have been executed for murder. I deal in facts, not fancies. And it’s a sad fact that a lot of elderly people don’t exercise enough to retain good balance.

The footman escorted me across the reception hall and the doorman opened the door.

‘Thanks,’ I said. ‘I’m sorry you’re out of a job.’

The doorman’s brow creased. ‘Your excellency?’

‘Now that your employer’s passed away,’ I reminded him. He still looked baffled.

‘Excuse me, your excellency,’ said the footman. ‘I couldn’t help overhearing your conversation with the major-domo. I believe your excellency is Scottish.’

‘Impossible!’ gasped the doorman.

I fixed him with the stare I used as a prefect when some gobby second year tried talking back. ‘Do you have some objection?’

‘By no means, your excellency,’ he faltered. ‘But your excellency speaks our language so perfectly that I can’t believe your excellency is not Russian.’

I smiled. ‘Yes, I’m from Scotland, where I had the finest education in the world.’ I turned to the footman. ‘How about you? Any problem with my being Scottish?’

‘What I meant, your excellency,’ he gabbled, ‘is that perhaps you are not conversant with our circumstances. We are serfs. Whoever inherits Madame’s estate will inherit us as well.’

‘Then I hope she’s left you to someone nice.’

Miss Blaine’s Prefect and the Golden Samovar by Olga Wojtas is out now published by Saraband priced £8.99.

Wojtas’ book is an affectionate homage to iconic Scottish author Muriel Spark’s most famous novel The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie. 2018 is the centenary of Spark’s birth and events are planned throughout this year to mark her influence on literature and culture. Visit murielspark100.com to find out more.
Imagine life in 17th-century Iceland. Sally Magnusson has, and the proof is written all over her first novel, *The Sealwoman’s Gift*. All the details are there: dark smoke-filled hovels reeking of fulmar oil used for the lamps, with a sheep’s uterus strung across a window to keep out the wind.

But she’s also imagined life almost as far away from there as you could get at the time: the slave markets of Algiers, the city’s rooftops where – hard to imagine for any Icelander – washing dried quickly in the sun; the dazzlingly coloured silks and linen dresses that people wore.

Connecting the two is the historical fact of the *Tyrjaranid*, the Turkish Raid in 1627.

To Icelanders, it lies as heavily on their history as Culloden or Bannockburn lie on Scottish history – a date on which no fewer than 400 Icelanders, or one per cent of the population, were carried into slavery by North African pirates.
Magnusson knew she had a great subject. It had everything: a world turned upside down. She knew she was onto something when she was shown, by the curator of a museum on the south Iceland island of Heimaey, proof in the archives of the existence of a woman who had done just that. Not too much more was known, other than that the man to whom she came home was a minister who had been freed from captivity in order to raise a ransom to free the islanders. But wasn’t that enough? Wasn’t the life of that woman – Asta Thorsteinsdottir – crying out to be told?

Although she had never written a novel, Magnusson realised that it was the only way she could do justice to Asta’s story. Those gaps in the historical record – nothing much beyond the details of her birth and death – were just too great to do otherwise. Historical fiction it had to be. But to what extent are you free to make things up?

This was a bigger question for Magnusson than for most of us. All her life, she had only ever written – or tried to write – fact. It was facts, not imagination, that counted. And when she talks about writing The Sealwoman’s Gift, it’s easy to see how hard she must have found it to leave the world of facts behind and start to trust her imagination.

‘The journalist in me always wanted to establish what had happened,’ she explains. ‘I thought if I had as much of that as possible, I could imagine my way into the gaps in the story that were left without this reporter’s gauleiter voice all the time sounding inside my head saying “But that’s not true? How do you know it’s true?” Because, as long as that voice is there, you’re not free to invent.’

What finally stifled that gauleiter voice was meeting historical novelist Sarah Perry in 2015 in Connecticut. Magnusson was chatting to the novelist James Robertson and Perry and was bemoaning the fact that she’d just been told her novel needed a rewrite. ‘How many drafts have you done?’ he asked her. ‘Just the one,’ she replied. At which point Robertson and Perry fell about laughing.

When Sally started that rewrite, it wasn’t just with a greater sense of commitment to the craft of writing. There was something else too: she no longer felt the need to cling on to the facts like a novice swimmer hanging onto the poolside rails while edging away from the shallow end.

‘We were talking about what kind of compromises you have to make with historical reality. Sarah said that you should try to be as authentic as you can, but at the end of the day you’re an artist and you get to choose what you want to put in. She gave the example of the opening chapter of her novel The Essex Serpent, which was not yet the global bestseller it since became. Some expert had written to her to say it was impossible that there would have been a tide such as the one she mentions in her opening chapter.

Sarah said, “Sorry, but it doesn’t matter. Those are the tides I wanted for my story.” And to me that was quite liberating because I realised that one of the reasons the first draft hadn’t worked was because I was in thrall to the framework of the story, rather than trying to be as accurate as possible but still having some freedom of imagination. I thought, “When I get back to writing, I’m going to really let go.” At some point, you just have to take off and trust that you’re going to go ahead.’

And the result? ‘A remarkable feat of imagination from the first, it leaps from the page. I enjoyed and admired it in equal measure.’ That’s not me. It’s from Sarah Perry. And while I wouldn’t normally quote someone who is probably the author’s friend, on this occasion I will. Because it’s true.

The Sealwoman’s Gift by Sally Magnusson is out now published by Two Roads priced £16.99.

For more writing by David Robinson visit BooksfromScotland.com.
New titles

Non Fiction
**Sly Cooking (Forradh): 42 Irresistible Gaelic Words**
Catriona Black

Ever needed to know a word for the little bits of dust you see in a ray of sunlight? Or for squeezing a big thing into a small hole? Or for the noise made by women when they get together? This book revives 42 weird and wonderful Gaelic words collected by 19th-century priest, poet and folklorist, Fr Allan, in South Uist and Eriskay.

Catriona Black is originally from Scotland but now lives and works in Holland with her family. Her distinctive artwork often features linocut illustrations, which have been used extensively in her children’s books published by Acair.

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**William MacGillivray: A Hebridean Naturalist’s Journal 1817-1818**
William MacGillivray

William MacGillivray was just 21, on the verge of his career as an outstanding naturalist and bird artist, when he left Aberdeen to spend a year at his childhood home at Northton in Harris. In that year he kept a detailed journal that provides a rare insight into the rural life of 19th-century Scotland, especially of the Outer Isles. MacGillivray recorded details of everything that happened in his daily life: the weather, his feelings about the people that he met, the food that he ate, the clothes that he wore, even the games that his family played in the evening.

William MacGillivray was a highly respected ornithologist and naturalist during the early part of the 19th century, and his work influenced a number of important scientists, including Charles Darwin.
The Wreck of the ‘Annie Jane’
Allan F Murray

In late 1853, the ship Annie Jane set sail from Liverpool heading for Quebec in North America. On board were 450 men, women and children: Irish, Scottish and English emigrants fleeing poverty and famine. They never made it.

At almost midnight on 28 September the ship was wrecked in a horrendous storm and driven ashore on the small island of Vatersay in the Outer Hebrides, with the loss of up to 350 passengers and crew.

In this deeply researched and powerfully told story, author Allan F Murray tells the story of life aboard a typical 19th-century emigrant ship. He vividly captures the bravery and resilience of the impoverished steerage passengers and the extraordinary final journey of the Annie Jane.

The son of a crofter-weaver from Ness in the Isle of Lewis, Allan F Murray commutes to the North Sea to work as an electrician in the offshore oil industry. He lives on a croft in a small community in Ness with his wife Nina and spaniel Mel. The Wreck of the ‘Annie Jane’ is his first book, one he has been passionate about writing for a considerable amount of time.

The Chapels and Healing Wells of the Western Isles
Finlay MacLeod

This new edition brings together for the first time, in one volume, all of the information previously published in The Chapels and The Healing Wells in the Western Isles. This definitive guide, republished by popular demand, includes all the sites known to the author between the Butt of Lewis and Barra Head.

The useful references throughout the text, along with a bibliography and map locations, make it a practical exploratory tool for local and national history enthusiasts. It is suitable for all age groups and all levels of interest from school children to adults planning walks or pilgrimages to these beautiful sites, all of which are steeped in history.

Finlay MacLeod is a highly-respected figure in the Gaelic community. He was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement at the National Gaelic Awards in 2017. Having worked for many years in a variety of Gaelic organisations, he was one of the founding members of Stornoway-based publishing house Acair in 1977, and he has written numerous books for both children and adults.
Saints and Sinners: Tales of Lewis Lives
Iain Smith with Joan Forrest

This scholarly yet readable book by Iain Smith et al features poets, explorers, theologians, teachers and academics, and answers many questions about the history of education in Scotland’s Western Isles. The focus is on case studies, ranging from Professor Donald Mackenzie (1882 to 1941) from Aird Point to Murdo (Crola) Macdonald, the postman and self-taught scholar (1907 to 1940). This latter history of Murdo Macdonald will likely bring a tear to the reader’s eye when they understand the efforts made by this gifted man.

Iain Smith is a graduate of the University of Glasgow who trained as a secondary school teacher, but spent most of his full-time career working in the training of teachers. Joan Forrest has been variously a teacher in Glasgow schools and a trainer of teachers in the University of Strathclyde.

Frank Quitely Drawings and Sketches
Frank Quitely

Lifted from the pages of Frank Quitely’s plethora of moleskin sketchbooks, this is a rare view behind the looking glass of one of the UK’s most prolific and established comic artists. The publication features concept sketches, inner works, thought process and planning of comic projects from *All-Star Superman* to *Jupiter’s Legacy*.

Vincent Deighan, better known by the pen name Frank Quitely, is a Scottish comic book artist, best known for his frequent collaborations with Grant Morrison on titles such as *New X-Men, We3, All-Star Superman* and *Batman and Robin*, as well as his work with Mark Millar on *The Authority* and *Jupiter’s Legacy*. 
**The Book of Coorie**  
**Gabriella Bennett**

Coorie – or còsagach in Gaelic – is the Scottish version of hygge. In *The Book Of Coorie*, Times journalist Gabriella Bennett explores what coorie is and how it has helped nurture the astonishing creativity that Scotland is famed for, despite an often harsh and unforgiving climate.

Now used to describe how we want to feel and be, coorie covers all aspects of the way Scots live. *The Book of Coorie* explores Scottishness and coorie through lifestyle, homes and interiors, traditions, and how to feel good despite challenging elements. It examines the legacy of the bothies and fisherman’s cottages of the past and also looks at the art of slowing down, to appreciate what we have around us, and how to use the best of all things Scottish to make life better.

“We’re told that the next “breaking lifestyle trend” will be the Scottish concept of coorie or còsagach in old Gaelic.” – *The Guardian*  

Gabriella Bennett is a journalist and editor based in Glasgow. She writes for *The Times* about Scottish interiors, property and shopping habits. Her short stories have been featured in *Gutter*, *The Cadaverine* and *The Island Review*.

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**Collins English Dictionary Complete and Unabridged:**  
**200th Anniversary Edition**  
**Collins Dictionaries with introduction by Mark Forsyth**

Pioneers in dictionary publishing since 1819, Collins presents the 13th edition of the largest single-volume dictionary in print. It is described by *The Times* as ‘a book to be treasured, no home should be without one.’

Containing over 722,000 words, meanings and phrases, and updated with all the very latest new words and senses, this is an unparalleled resource for word lovers everywhere.

Be drawn in by evolving definitions and new, rare and quirky words, while you explore the extraordinary breadth and changing nature of world English with award-winning author Mark Forsyth’s insights as he casts an analytical eye over the latest fields and shifts in meaning that the dictionary reflects.

Collins have been publishing dictionaries for almost 200 years and have an impressive heritage in creating market-leading language products.
The Times Britain’s Hidden Railways: A Journey Along 50 Long-Lost Railway Lines
Julian Holland

Thousands of miles of Britain’s railways were closed during the 20th century. Since then, many have been converted to footpaths and cycle ways. Fortunately, both the keen walker and the railway enthusiast can enjoy these well-worn routes and hidden byways in peace and tranquillity. Follow the routes of 50 long-closed and derelict railways across some of our most beautiful countryside and discover the hidden railways of Britain.

Bestselling railway author, Julian Holland, presents brand new routes and tells the history and descriptions of lost railway lines, along with details of the route today for walking and cycling. Each route is highlighted on historical Bartholomew mapping, showing which parts can still be followed today. The carefully researched text is accompanied by historical photographs showing each line in operation prior to its closure, as well as specially commissioned images from the present day.

From a very young age Julian Holland has had a fascination with railways. He is a writer and photographer of many railway books, including the highly acclaimed and award-winning The Times Mapping the Railways, Exploring Britain’s Lost Railways and Great Railway Journeys of the World. As well as being passionate about train travel, Holland is a leading commentator in the media on railways.

The Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World (15th edition)
Times Atlases

The 15th edition contains over 200,000 place names. This is more than any other world atlas which means even small villages are included in the index and on the maps. It is a benchmark of cartographic excellence, trusted by governments, media and international organisations as well as being a go-to reference source for households across the country.

A possession to be treasured, this atlas presents our world as it is today in one single volume. Endlessly fascinating, it is independent, apolitical and neutral. Produced by the world’s leading atlas makers for over 100 years, and bought by over 1 million people worldwide, this new edition features elegant packaging and an attractive slipcase. It is printed on FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) paper.

This is the perfect wedding, retirement or anniversary present for anyone looking to explore the world.

The Times world maps and atlases range has been published for over 100 years (since 1895). Today they are regarded as the world’s most prestigious and authoritative atlases and maps.
**Origins: From The Beginning of All Things**
Edited by David AT Harper and Ole Seberg

Our universe is estimated to be some 14 billion years old and within it our solar system is a mere five billion years old. Life has been evolving on our planet for over 3.8 billion years on a surface that is probably 4.6 billion years old. Earth’s long journey through deep time has been punctuated with the most amazing events. When and how did life originate? When did the continents take shape and move across the Earth? When did life colonise the land? Why was the evolution of life nearly halted by five great extinction events? Origins is written by experts on their topics. It charts the progress of earth and life history through these critical events and many others that formed the foundations for the rich diversity of our planet today.

David Harper is Principal of Van Mildert College and Professor of Palaeontology, Durham University, UK. Ole Seberg is Scientific Head of the Botanical Garden and Professor of Botany, Natural History Museum of Denmark, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

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**I Say Nothing**
Christine Borland, Joanna Meacock, Andrew Patrizio et al

In October 2018 Christine Borland will unveil a new artwork at Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery as part of the 14-18 NOW First World War centenary commemorations. The artwork is co-commissioned by Glasgow Museums and 14-18 NOW, and supported by the Art Fund.

This highly illustrated book showcases the new, commissioned artwork and gives an insight into Borland’s research and practice. It includes an interview with the artist and an essay by Professor Andrew Patrizio reflecting on Borland’s career to date and placing the new work in context. The artist shares her research and personal response to the objects she selected from over 2,000 in Glasgow Museums’ First World War collection, and which have variously informed the new artwork. The publication comprehensively documents Borland’s artistic processes, the commission and the finished artwork installed in Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow, Scotland.

Christine Borland is a Scottish artist and Professor of Art at Northumbria University. Her work came to international renown in the 1990s. She is known for the rigorous research and investigative processes behind her multi-media sculpture. Many of her works connect art and the hidden worlds of institutions to reveal aspects of contemporary society not usually accessible to a general public. Dr Joanna Meacock is Curator of British Art for Glasgow Museums and Andrew Patrizio is Professor of Scottish Visual Culture at the University of Edinburgh.
Introducing Charles Rennie Mackintosh: Making the Glasgow Style
Alison Brown

2018 is the 150th anniversary of the birth of Glasgow’s famous son, architect and artist Charles Rennie Mackintosh. A year-long celebration of Mackintosh’s contribution to the arts, and to the making of the world-famous Glasgow Style, is taking place throughout the city, including a major exhibition and tour. This book focuses on highlights from Glasgow Museums’ collections, and considers what was happening in the city that encouraged the creativity of Mackintosh and contemporaries, such as Margaret and Frances Macdonald, Jessie M King, Talwin Morris and James Salmon, amongst others, to flourish. It looks at architecture in the city, ‘The Four’, the influence of Japan, Glasgow’s early architecture, the city’s technical studios and artisans, crafts, furniture design, the spread of the Glasgow Style, the world-famous tearoom interiors, and Mackintosh’s later years in London and France. Beautifully illustrated throughout, the book includes some works that have never before been on public display.

Alison Brown is Curator of European Decorative Art from 1800 at Glasgow Museums. Her particular focus is Charles Rennie Mackintosh, the Glasgow Style, and decorative art and design c1860-1920. She has worked for Glasgow Museums since 1993, including on the major 1996 exhibition Charles Rennie Mackintosh and associated three-venue tour of the US, and on the redisplay of the Glasgow Style Gallery in Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow. She curated the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Ingram Street Tea Rooms research project, has contributed articles and essays to several books and journals, and lectures internationally on Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Glasgow Style.

I Knew I Was Painting for My Life: The Holocaust Artworks of Marianne Grant (revised and updated edition)
Joanna Meacock, Peter Tuka, Deborah Haase et al

Marianne Grant (1921–2007) was remarkable. Born in Prague to Jewish parents, she loved painting and drawing. She and her mother were deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto in 1942, and Grant took watercolour paints, brushes and paper in the one suitcase allowed. Later sent to Auschwitz, she was made to document the work of Dr Mengele – literally, drawing for her life – and then on to Bergen-Belsen. Throughout, Grant’s paintings and sketches show compassion for her fellow inmates, but are also a form of silent protest. After liberation, she went to Sweden, later marrying her pen pal, a Jewish refugee living in Glasgow. Glasgow Museums is fortunate to own 77 of Grant’s remarkable works. This updated edition includes essays on: the Holocaust; the historical context to the Jewish population in former Czechoslovakia before, during and after the Second World War; Grant’s unique contribution to documenting the Holocaust; and a fully illustrated catalogue of the works in Glasgow’s collection.

Dr Joanna Meacock is Curator of British Art at Glasgow Museums. Her specialisms are Pre-Raphaelitism and Aestheticism, Scottish 19th- and early 20th-century art, women artists, war art and religious iconography, and she has published widely. Art historian Peter Tuka is currently Assistant Curator (Art) at Glasgow Museums. His research interest is 20th-century East/Central European art within the socio-political background of totalitarian regimes, with particular interest in the culture and history of former Czechoslovakia. Deborah Haase is curator at the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, following a 28-year professional career as Curator/Manager in Scottish museums. She was the author of the first edition of I Knew I was Painting for My Life: The Holocaust Artworks of Marianne Grant.
Mind’s Eye: A Journey Through Life, Landscape and Expression
Kate Philp

This book showcases a fabulous collection of paintings from the last 20 years of Kate Philp’s work, and a few paintings by FCB Cadell, to whom Philp is related. It features the Highlands and Islands, the Scottish Borders, and also Northumberland where she now lives. Mind’s Eye takes the reader on a journey, sharing many of these images with an inside look at what has guided and inspired the artist.

‘Words and pictures come together beautifully in this fascinating book. Anyone interested in how an artist is inspired will delight in Kate Philp’s account of her painting and its background.’ – Alexander McCall Smith

Kate Philp was brought up near Edinburgh after returning from Africa as a child in 1975, and has a degree in biological science. A spell designing gardens led to full-time botanical and landscape painting by 1997. Painting is in her family blood: her mother was an artist and the Scottish Colourist FCB Cadell is on her father’s side. Philp has exhibited in many galleries throughout Scotland, in Northumberland and in London, and a large selection of her limited edition and open edition prints are available online.

Scotland from the Sky
James Crawford

Accompanying the BBC documentary series Scotland from the Sky, this lavishly-illustrated book draws on the vast collection of aerial photography held in the archives of Historic Environment Scotland. Historian and series presenter James Crawford opens an extraordinary window into our past to tell the remarkable story of a nation from above – taking readers back in time to show how our great cities have dramatically altered with the ebb and flow of history, while whole communities have vanished in the name of progress. It shows how aerial imagery can reveal treasures from the ancient past, uncovering secrets buried right beneath our feet. And it demonstrates how the view from above has been at the heart of the post-war transformation of both our countryside and our urban landscapes. This is a fascinating story of war, innovation, adventure, cities, landscapes and people. This is the story of Scotland, from the sky.

James Crawford is Publisher at Historic Environment Scotland and the Saltire-nominated author of Fallen Glory: The Lives and Deaths of the World’s Greatest Lost Buildings. He has previously written a number of books on aerial photography, including Above Scotland, Scotland’s Landscapes and Aerofilms: A History of Britain from Above. This is his first series for the BBC as writer and presenter.
A History of Scotland’s Landscapes
Fiona Watson

It is easy to overlook how much of our history is preserved all around us – the way the narrative of bygone days has been inscribed in fields, forests, hills and mountains, roads, railways, canals, lochs, buildings and settlements. Indeed, footprints of the past are to be found almost everywhere. The shapes of fields may reveal the brief presence of the Romans or the labours of medieval peasants; while great heaps of abandoned spoil or the remains of gargantuan holes in the ground mark the rapid decline of heavy industry in the recent past.

A History of Scotland’s Landscapes explores the many ways that we have used, adapted and altered our environment over thousands of years. Full of maps, photographs and drawings, it offers a remarkable new perspective on Scotland – a unique guide to tracing memories, events and meanings in the forms and patterns of our surroundings.

Fiona Watson is a medieval historian and writer, and former Director of the Centre for Environmental History at the Universities of Stirling and St Andrews. She is author of the history books Scotland from Prehistory to the Present, Under the Hammer: Edward I and Scotland, Macbeth: A True Story and Robert the Bruce, and was presenter of In Search of Scotland, a BBC TV series on Scottish history.

Brick Lane Cookbook
Dina Begum

Explore the flavours of London’s iconic Brick Lane. Discover the secrets to homestyle Bangladeshi curries, indulge in some classic Jewish cheesecake, or take a peek behind the market’s cult street food stalls to learn how to make everything from Bourguignon burgers to paleo raw coffee brownies. With contributions from traders and restaurants alongside Begum’s own recipes inspired by her Bangladeshi roots, Brick Lane Cookbook is a culinary map of the East End’s tastiest street and a snapshot of London at its authentic, multi-cultural best.

Dina Begum was born in Bangladesh and grew up in East London. She is passionate about food traditions and stories, especially those that relate to her Bangladeshi heritage. Her recipes have been featured in The Telegraph, Huffington Post, The Cook’s Cook and Metro, for which she writes recipes and articles highlighting the rich culinary history of Bangladesh. She was shortlisted for the Muslim Writers Award in 2008.
The Sub-Genres of British Fantasy Literature
AJ Dalton

This essential guide helps readers and writers of fantasy know their grimdark from their urban, dark, epic, high and metaphysical fantasy. International fantasy author AJ Dalton explains how each of the sub-genres of fantasy literature is a response to their own social and historical period. Each sub-genre thereby describes a distinct political and philosophical outlook, proving that fantasy is far more important than many people truly understand. The book was nominated for BSFA (British Science Fiction Association) Awards, for book and cover art, in 2017.

‘Thoughtful, insightful [...] sure to prompt debate, and that can only benefit all facets of the fantasy genre.’ Juliet E McKenna


Probably the Best Idea in the World
Mark Greene

At the heart of everything there is one very good idea – the true currency of our society, the key to all human flourishing and happiness. That idea is very simple. It is love, actually. Love God. Love one another. Love your neighbour and your enemy.

So how can we begin to follow this command? With brilliant storytelling and deep theological insight, Mark Greene explores a simple but liberating framework to help us make decisions that enhance rather than damage our relationships – whether it’s about replacing a dishwasher or managing a team. He challenges us to put relationships deliberately back at the centre of our calling and discipleship.

Full of humour, contemporary examples and research, Probably the Best Idea in the World shows how Jesus’ emphasis on thinking relationally is not only a liberating basis for our personal lives, but a dynamic foundation for our workplaces, our society and our global community.

Mark Greene grew up Jewish and joyous, and celebrated becoming a Christian in his early twenties. He worked in advertising in London and New York, and is now Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity and Vice-Principal of the London School of Theology. He speaks, tells stories, and writes, mainly on the joys, trials and surprises of living the whole of his life as a follower of Jesus in today’s world.
Fire In My Heart: Adventuring into a Life of Prayer
Johannes Hartl

What is prayer? How does it work? And does it even help at all? These are questions that Johannes Hartl has spent his life exploring. Questions that have found their answers through encounter, experience and often through travel – a journey of discovery that has taken Hartl into the very heart of true prayer.

Weaving together stories of individuals, movements and moments he has encountered across the world, Hartl invites us to join him on an incredible adventure. Exploring different approaches to prayer, he encourages us to rediscover the true heart of prayer – a God who hears us and wants to speak to us.

Full of thoughtful insights and wisdom, combined with reflective applications, Fire In My Heart will inspire and challenge readers to catch the fire for a life of prayer themselves.

Johannes Hartl is a passionate storyteller who loves to communicate the heart of God. In 2005, he and his wife founded the House of Prayer, Augsburg. He is the author of numerous books and an international conference speaker, renowned for bringing spiritual depth along with humorous insight and practical application. He holds a PhD in Catholic Theology and earned degrees in German language and literature studies, as well as philosophy. Hartl lives in Augsburg with his wife, Jutta, and their four children.

Understanding Sexual Abuse: A Guide for Ministry Leaders and Survivors
Tim Hein

As many as one in four girls and one in six boys experience sexual abuse during childhood, and it’s estimated that half of the incidents are never reported. This means that countless millions in our societies, both children and adults, carry this complex and often hidden pain. What does the path to healing look like for survivors? And how can ministry leaders, pastors and counsellors best help them as they walk this difficult road?

Drawing on both his own and his wife’s experience as survivors of childhood sexual abuse, minister and lecturer Tim Hein offers his expertise, practical guidance and empathy. This book is a rich resource for those who have suffered sexual abuse and those in a position to help them. Filled with sober truths and the hope of Christ, it calls survivors to take courage and walk unafraid down the road of healing.

Tim Hein is Vice Principal and Director of Discipleship at Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in Adelaide, Australia. He is an ordained minister in the Uniting Church in Australia, and speaks and preaches regularly on the Christian faith. He lives in Adelaide with his wife Priscilla and their two daughters.
If You Forget Everything Else, Remember This: Tips and Reminders for a Happy Marriage
Katharine Hill

Married life is full of trials and bliss, no matter what season of marriage you are in. One day you’re saying your wedding vows, enjoying the honeymoon and making a home together, and the next you’re working through domestic challenges, paying the mortgage and struggling to remember the anniversary. Sometimes just a little wisdom and encouragement is needed to help along the way.

Katharine Hill offers her wisdom and guidance in stories and bite-sized chapters to help navigate the different seasons of marriage. In the busyness of life, this encouraging book is great for those who want to focus on what matters the most, to have the very best for their marriage.

With practical tips, sayings to read while waiting for the kettle to boil and hilarious cartoons to make you laugh, this book is here to help couples thrive whether you are newlywed or reaching your golden anniversary.

Katharine Hill is UK Director for Care for the Family. She speaks and writes widely on family matters, blogs regularly for the Huffington Post and is a popular speaker, writer and broadcaster. Hill has practiced as a family lawyer and as a member of the board of the International Commission for Couple and Family Relations, as well as being a member of a government advisory group on family issues. She is married to Richard and they have four grown-up children.

The Gift of Blessing
Kate Patterson

Blessing is God’s idea – it’s the first thing he did when he made Adam and Eve and it’s the last thing Jesus did before he ascended into heaven. And yet many of us picture God as a grumpy old man who measures out blessing in measly thimblefuls.

Following on from her first book exploring the Aaronic blessing from Numbers 6, this encouraging devotional from Kate Patterson offers the opportunity to see God afresh through that blessing made to his people as they wandered the desert. Would you be surprised to discover that this promise of blessing is for you?

With daily reflections, bible quotes and prayer prompts, Patterson looks again to God’s blessing, each day discovering something significant about the God at the heart of faith – a God who loves us and whose heart is to bless his people so that they can be a blessing to others.

Kate Patterson is a writer and speaker based in West London. She is on the leadership team at Holy Trinity Richmond. She studied English at Oxford and theology at Bristol and is passionate about making God’s word accessible and relevant to all ages.
**Raqib Shaw**
Patrick Elliott

Raqib Shaw is one of the most extraordinary and sought-after artists working in the world today. Born in Calcutta in 1974 and raised in Kashmir, he came to London to study in 1998 and has lived there ever since. Inspired by a broad range of influences, including the old masters, Indian miniatures, Persian carpets and the Pre-Raphaelites, his paintings are infused with memories and longing for his homeland in Kashmir.

Shaw’s technique constitutes a completely unique kind of enamel painting. Spending months on preparatory drawings, tracings and photographic studies, he then transfers the composition onto prepared wooden panels, establishing an intricate design with acrylic liner, which leaves a slightly raised line. He adds the enamel paint using needle-fine syringes and a porcupine quill, with which he manoeuvres the paint. The finished works are intricate, magical and breathtaking in their colour and complexity.

Patrick Elliott is Senior Curator at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh and author of the highly successful *True to Life* and *Joan Eardley: A Sense of Place*.

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**Emil Nolde: Colour is Life**
Keith Hartley, Astrid Becker, Frances Blythe, Sean Rainbird, Christian Weikop

Emil Nolde (1867–1956) was one of the greatest colourists of the 20th century. Passionate about his north German home near the Danish border, he was equally fascinated by the demi-monde of Berlin’s cafés and cabarets, the busy to and fro of tugboats in the port of Hamburg and the myriad of peoples and places he saw on his trip to the South Seas in 1914. Nolde felt strongly about what he painted, identifying with his subjects in every brushstroke he made, heightening his colours and simplifying his shapes, so that we, the viewers, can also experience his emotional response to the world about him. This book covers Nolde’s complete career including his ‘un-paintings’ on small pieces of paper that he produced when he was branded by the Third Reich as ‘degenerate’ and forbidden to work as an artist. It also features over 100 illustrations.

Keith Hartley is Chief Curator and Deputy Director at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh. Sean Rainbird is Director of the National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin. Christian Weikop is Senior Lecturer in the History of Art Department at the University of Edinburgh. Frances Blythe is a PhD candidate in the History of Art Department at the University of Edinburgh. Dr Astrid Becker is Deputy Director of the Stiftung Seebull Ada and Emil Nolde.
Rembrandt and Britain
Christian Tico Seifert

This book is an engaging introduction to the story of Rembrandt’s fame and influence in Britain. Filled with beautiful images, it narrates the fascinating history of his artworks being acquired and lost by British collections as ‘Rembrandt mania’ ebbed and flowed. This master’s impact on British artists over the last four centuries is also explored and lavish images of paintings, drawings and prints from a range of British artists appear alongside Rembrandt’s own masterworks.

Christian Tico Seifert is Senior Curator of Northern European Art at the Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh. He has curated a number of exhibitions and contributed to publications including Adam Elsheimer: 1578–1610, Dürer's Fame, Masterpieces from Mount Stuart: The Bute Collection and Rubens and Company: Flemish Drawings from the Scottish National Gallery.

Rembrandt: Britain’s Discovery of the Master
Christian Tico Seifert et al

This book tells the fascinating story of Rembrandt’s fame and influence in Britain. Leading experts explore the collecting of his artworks in the country and his enormous impact on British artists from the 17th century to today. The book includes lavish images of paintings, drawings and prints and features British artists such as William Hogarth, James Abbott McNeill Whistler and Eduardo Paolozzi, alongside the master. It also contains 130 full-colour images.
The Other Robert
Fergusson: The Poet Who Inspired Robert Burns
Rick Wilson

The Poet Who Inspired Robert Burns is a contemporary and insightful take on the short life of poet Robert Fergusson who was born in Enlightenment Edinburgh in 1750. He flashed briefly across the literary firmament like a meteorite, and too quickly expired, but not before being called the laureate of the city he loved with fierce affection. Fergusson celebrated Edinburgh’s towering beauty, as well as the colour of its characters, and the vulgarity of its dark corners. He was to die in one such corner in 1774.

So how important was the ‘Other Robert’? If he could so inspire Burns to a bold new trajectory that brought global fame, he must have been a hugely significant, if tragic, figure; significant because of the undeniable quality of his work; tragic because he died at the cruelly young age of 24. His early death makes his achievement all the more admirable and deserving of more popular attention today.

Rick Wilson has been a magazine editor in London, Brussels, Amsterdam and Edinburgh, where he now lives with his wife Alison. He has three grown-up children and five grandchildren. This is his eighth book.

East of West, West of East
Hamish Brown

This extraordinary book tells the story of a remarkable family caught in Japan at the outbreak of the Second World War in the Pacific. With letters, journal extracts and notes from Hamish Brown’s parents, as well as his own recollections, it brings the era to life: not only life in the dying days of the British Empire, but also the terrible reality of the invasion of Singapore into which they went.

Hamish Brown is a legendary climber, walker, traveller and author. He has written and edited many books, including Tom Weir, an anthology of work selected from throughout the great man’s life. Brown is also an acknowledged expert on all things Scottish and explorer of the country’s many highways and byways.

In 2015, Brown was awarded an OWPG Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contribution to outdoor writing/photography and, in 2017, he was named as the 10th recipient of the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture.
The Secret Life of the Mountain Hare
Andy Howard

This beautifully crafted hardback takes readers through the four seasons and the life of the mountain hare. Featuring stunning photography by Andy Howard, a leading expert on the subject, field notes from his time on the hills tracking these majestic creatures and a charming narrative about the life of the mountain hare, this is a comprehensive guide to the secret life of the Scottish Mountain Hare.

Andy Howard is a leading wildlife photographer located in the Scottish Highlands. His principal subjects are mountain hares, otters, red squirrels, and the birds of the Cairngorms. Howard contributes to many periodicals and other outlets, runs a popular website and has a large following on social media.

There’s Always the Hills
Cameron McNeish

From his home in the Cairngorms of Scotland, Cameron McNeish reflects on a life dedicated to the outdoors. Following his career as an international long jump athlete, he has for almost 40 years written and talked about walking and climbing in Scotland, meeting some of the sport’s great characters such as Chris Brasher, Sir Chris Bonington, Tom Weir, Julie Tullis and many more.

A prolific author, Cameron has led treks in the Himalayas and Syria, created new long-distance walks, made television series, campaigned for Scottish independence and raised a family with his wife, Gina. In There’s Always the Hills he candidly recalls the ups and downs of a full life, much of it unseen until now.

Cameron McNeish is an established figure on the Scottish and British outdoor scene. As editor of The Great Outdoors, he increased circulation and established the magazine as Britain’s premier walking publication. He is the author of many books, presenter of several outdoor television programmes and contributes a monthly column to The Scots Magazine.
**Don’t Look Down: An Adventurous Life with MS**
Roger Chisholm

Ski-mountaineering in the Austrian Alps with only one working limb. Sailing above the Arctic Circle and west of Greenland. Walking around Annapurna. Working as a doctor in India. Exploring the tribal region on north Pakistan.

These are only some of consultant radiologist Roger Chisholm’s adventures, after being diagnosed with MS at the age of 27. *Don’t Look Down* is a life-affirming story of enduring friendships, quiet courage and resilience. Above all, it is a story of a man determined to defy the odds and live life to the full.

Roger Chisholm is a consultant radiologist in a Manchester teaching hospital. A one-time passionate mountaineer, after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS), he re-channelled his love of wild places and adventure into offshore sailing.

**The Sweet Pea Man**
Graham Martin

*The Sweet Pea Man* takes the reader on a journey through 19th-century British gardens. The book is a minutely researched biography of Victorian plant hybridist Henry Eckford’s life as a breeder of the famous Grandiflora sweet peas. It is also filled with fascinating detailed and scientific descriptions of various plants.

Born and brought up in Scotland, Eckford started as a garden apprentice at Lord Lovat’s Beaufort Castle. After working his way through the gardens of Penicuik House and Fingask Castle, Eckford moved to England. There he bred pelargoniums and dahlias in the Earl of Radnor’s garden, for which he became famous. He then began his lifework on the cross-breeding of sweet peas, which he refined in Wem in Shropshire.

A professional gardener for 37 years, Graham Martin began his career at Kelsey Park, Beckenham in 1964, studying at the Kent College of Horticulture then the Somerset College of Horticulture. At the same time he had a long career in athletics as a club and county distance runner. In 1991 he graduated in American studies at the University of Aberystwyth in Wales. He now lives near Selkirk in Scotland and lectures on Henry Eckford.
A Large Czesław Miłosz With a Dash of Elvis Presley
Written by Tania Skarynkina; Translated by Jim Dingley

Tania Skarynkina’s stories mix life in a small Belarusian town with thoughts on world literature. Sitting by her window with a glass of cranberries in sugar syrup bought from a woman in the market who assured her they came from Karelia, she muses ‘Perhaps they have some other kind of effect when you eat them. Spiritual maybe? So I eat and wait for the Karelian cranberries to work their magic on me.’

Skarynkina is impelled to spend the last of her money on a trip to Krakow to meet the poet and writer Czesław Miłosz but she can’t find his address, so he remains an idol of hers, like Elvis Presley dressed in gold lame. Written with a naivety of imagination that creates Eastern Bloc magic realism, each story has a charm of its own.

Tania Skarynkina, poet and essayist, was born in 1969 in Smarhon, Belarus. This book of literary essays was published in 2015 and includes recollections of her childhood in Smarhon interwoven with thoughts on poets, philosophers and world literature as a whole. Jim Dingley has a lifetime’s experience of translating Belarusian into English.

Native and Roman on the Northern Frontier: Excavations and Survey in a Later Prehistoric Landscape in Upper Eskdale, Dumfriesshire
Roger Mercer

Native and Roman on the Northern Frontier presents the results of a small-scale intervention at the Castle O’er hillfort and the total excavation of a unique enclosure at Over Rig in Dumfriesshire in Scotland. The text presents key findings from the excavations, revealing the long sequence of use at Castle O’er hillfort, including an extensive earthwork enclosure system believed to have been a mechanism to control large numbers of animals during the period of Roman presence.

By contrast the unique design of the enclosure at Over Rig is revealed to have had an auditorial function. Together the two sites offer fresh perspectives on the economic realities and Roman-Native relations in the military zone in Roman Britain. Meticulously researched, and with an abundance of illustrations, this book makes a thought-provoking contribution to scholarship of the Iron Age and life on the Roman frontier in south-west Scotland and beyond.

Roger Mercer is an Honorary Professorial Fellow in European Prehistory at the University of Edinburgh, and former Chief Executive of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS).
Small Steps to Great Parenting
Kalanit Ben-Ari

This book provides concise and proven tips for use in everyday family life, in the busiest of families. The realistic practical suggestions can be put into practice immediately. Even using just one tip a day will contribute to an upward spiral towards a calmer home-life that extends into school and social situations. Rich with examples of typical situations and conversations, you will discover what’s behind your child’s words and understand situations from their perspective and how language empowers them to cooperate. It will help you and your children develop strong lifetime connections, to repair situations when things go wrong, and to turn conflicts into opportunities. It also addresses the sometimes contradictory approaches of parents, and how to balance them out. Above all, it instills an easy confidence in taking small steps towards a balanced home life.

Dr Kalanit Ben-Ari is a parenting ‘guru’ and author, and the mother of two little book-lovers. She has been a couples and families counsellor for more than 15 years, and is often asked to advise busy parents who want their family lives to be easier and more harmonious. Based on her postgraduate research and clinical experience, Ben-Ari developed her own programme for parents, which she teaches in community and educational settings. She is a certified presenter for some of the best-known parenting programmes.

Smart Sitting
Peter Davies

We all sit far too much – far more than is good for us. This book understands our modern lifestyles and provides a concise practical tool for improving movement and awareness of the lower back to improve or eliminate problems. It does this by ‘retraining’ the brain during sitting, combining mindful movements with innovative movement maps that help to visualise the areas of pain, the movements made and progress during the programme. This very new ‘smart’ approach applies to any kind of sitting – on a chair or sofa, in a car, on a train or plane, at your desk or kitchen table, at social occasions, or during meetings and conferences. For people who have back problems, this book will make a difference.

Peter Davies is a senior physiotherapist who currently lives in Edinburgh. He has been helping patients for many years with chronic back pain, both in private practice and the NHS. He runs his own courses and teaches manual therapy to physiotherapists. He created the Manual Therapy Masters Programme at Glasgow Caledonian University, in collaboration with the Musculoskeletal Association of Chartered Physiotherapists. He also devised the innovative Back in Re-Hab programme.
Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Learning and Teaching Environment
Edited by Colin Martin, Hugh Smith and Mick Fleming

Due to increasing mental unwellness among pupils and students, and the people who teach them, this book contains a huge body of evidence on the issues facing classrooms in whole schools, colleges, and universities throughout Britain today. Unwellness has profound effects on the daily lives and futures of students and teachers, as well as that of the people learning alongside them, or teaching alongside them. The downward spiral continues as mental ill-health filters both up and down education settings and creates or augments undesirable situations already existing within families and the community. This incredibly complex web of cause and effect is very hard to alter, but this book for professional teachers and healthcare workers offers hope by combining expertise from educators and mental health experts. It raises awareness among teachers, head teachers, lecturers and trainers, overburdened as they are, about how simple changes in their teaching practice will contribute to a much-need turnaround.

Colin Martin is Director of the Institute of Mental Health, a Professor of Mental Health and an honorary consultant with the Salvation Army. He runs research projects worldwide and has published many books on clinical medicine. He is also a mental health nurse and chartered psychologist. Hugh Smith is a teacher educator and professional educational consultant with national and international experience and roles in senior management in education and workplace settings. Mick Fleming is a Professor of Mental Health and honorary nurse consultant for the NHS, with special interests in schizophrenia and psychosis.

The Impact of Mental Health and Wellbeing on Effective Learning and Teaching
Edited by Hugh Smith and Amanda McGrandles

This set of two slim, practical books covers all the main mental health disorders likely to be encountered among learners of every age, and those more prevalent in specific age groups, from new schoolchildren to school leavers, young adults to older adults. This includes depression, anxiety, autism, eating disorders, self-harm, substance misuse, PTSD and ADHD. It also covers the many pressures on teachers and its consequences. The authors and editors have combined their vast experience and knowledge from two normally separate fields to provide accessible and learnable information for people who teach or train learners of all ages, whether in primary or secondary school, university or college, adult learning centres, or community and business environments. Rich with case studies, reflective activities and bullet points, this illustrated book is aimed at all teaching staff, as well as trainers in health settings, business and industry.

The author/editors are both highly-qualified experts from very different disciplines – the field of education and teaching practice, and the field of mental health research and clinical practice. Smith is a teacher educator and professional educational consultant with national and international experience and roles in senior management in education and workplace settings. McGrandles has vast experience in child, adolescent and adult mental health, including child protection in the police service and clinical research.
**Common and Spotted Sandpipers**

*Phil Holland*

This wonderful book describes the fascinating lives of the two most ubiquitous shorebirds in the world: the Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleuca*) and Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*). These birds make use of a large part of the world’s terrestrial habitat and, as shorebirds, they exhibit many exciting features. When the birds arrive on breeding ground they bring spectacular displays and sounds that announce the arrival of springtime. Yet they stay only long enough to reproduce before migrating southwards.

The author has spent over 40 years studying the lives of these fantastic birds and this book provides a wealth of information on topics including breeding behaviour, migrations, distribution, food sources, habitats and the Sandpiper’s history from 36 million years ago to the present. This beautiful book will add to the readers’ knowledge and hopefully stimulate others to watch these birds more appreciatively.

*Phil Holland* has had numerous articles on sandpipers published in ornithological magazines and bulletins and gives regular presentations to the International Wader Study Group.
Deeper into the Darkness (Volume 3 of The Diving Trilogy)

Rod Macdonald

In *Deeper into the Darkness* Macdonald takes the reader on an exploration of famous wrecks around the UK from the First World War. These include HMS Pathfinder, HMS Audacious, HMS Hampshire (on which Lord Kitchener perished) and HMS Vanguard which blew up at Scapa Flow in Orkney. The K-class submarines lost in the Firth of Forth during the Battle of May Island in 1918 are also included, along with UB-116, the last German submarine to be sunk in action in October 1918.

Macdonald also visits the American shipwrecks from the Second World War Battle of Guadalcanal by daringly penetrating these stunning Japanese wrecks. The development of technical diving, where closed circuit rebreathers allowed Macdonald to dive deeper into the depths, brings the book up to the present day. The latest developments in shipwreck exploration at Scapa Flow are recounted. The book concludes with investigation of the scandalous desecration of many national naval war graves at Jutland, the South China Sea and the Java Sea.

Rod Macdonald is one of the world’s pre-eminent shipwreck explorers, a motivational speaker and a bestselling author of a number of classic shipwreck diving books such as *Dive Scapa Flow*, *Dive Truk Lagoon* and *Dive Palau: The Shipwrecks*. *Deeper into the Darkness* follows volume 1 in *The Diving Trilogy*, *Into the Abyss: Diving to Adventure in the Liquid World*, and volume 2, *The Darkness Below*. Macdonald was inducted into the prestigious Explorers Club of New York and has been invited to give presentations at major international diving events including ADEX, OZteK and TekDiveUSA.

Engineering Hitler’s Downfall: The Brains that Enabled Victory

Gwilym Roberts

This book provides an appreciation of the remarkable ingenuity and invention of numerous scientists and engineers in advancing the Second World War effort. It is enriched with biographical accounts of the principal scientists and engineers involved, and it describes the machines, weapons and structures that enabled the Allies to achieve victory. These include the decoding machines developed at Bletchley Park; the hand-held mine detectors that cleared pathways through enemy minefields; the escort carriers and long range aircraft that enabled U-boats to be attacked in mid-Atlantic; the 4000 plus Bailey bridges that allowed narrow ravines and rivers as wide as the Rhine to be crossed; and the Mulberry harbours through which the D-Day bridgehead was reinforced and supplied. These, and many other examples, illustrate what was achieved under immense pressure. The book includes timelines which set the developments in context alongside the course of warfare.

Lt Cdr Gwilym Roberts CBE FREng RNR is a Past President of the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Smeatonian Society of Civil Engineers. He is an Honorary Fellow of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, and a former Chairman of the British Geological Survey, the Football Stadia Advisory Design Council and a committee involved with the construction of the Second Severn Crossing. In 2004 he was named as one of Britain’s four leading international engineers of the 20th century by the *Sunday Times* magazine. He is passionate about the importance of engineering to national and global wellbeing.
Ploughing a New Furrow: A Blueprint for Wildlife-Friendly Farming
Malcolm Smith

Farmland wildlife has been decimated by intensive crop growing using pesticides, grubbing up hedges, ploughing heathland and draining marshes. In the context of Brexit, *Ploughing a New Furrow* considers the unprecedented opportunity for wildlife once again to be nurtured by Britain’s farmers, reversing the enormous plant and animal losses our farmland has suffered.

The book provides a blueprint for supporting farmers to produce quality food and a wildlife-rich countryside, and argues for a sustainable balance between food production and wildlife. The achievements of farmers who are already increasing wildlife are showcased and controversial issues such as bovine TB, badgers, pesticides and insects, and GM crops are examined. The author also proposes a set of policy changes and other measures that should be adopted by the Government post-Brexit to make 70% of farmland rich in wildlife again.

Malcolm Smith is a biologist, former Chief Scientist, and Deputy Chief Executive at The Countryside Council for Wales. He has also been a Member of the Board of The Environment Agency (for England and Wales). He is the author of the acclaimed *Life with Birds: A Story of Mutual Exploitation*, *Back from the Brink* and *Gone Wild: Stories from a Lifetime of Wildlife Travel*. His numerous features on wildlife, heritage and travel have been published in a variety of publications.
**Iona of My Heart: Daily Readings**  
**Edited by Neil Paynter**

This book, containing four months of daily readings, reflects the concerns of the Iona Community. *Iona of My Heart* can be used for group or individual reflection and is intended to inspire positive action and change in our lives. When editor Neil Paynter called for contributions to *Iona of My Heart* he wrote, 'I’m looking for those human stories from Iona. You know the ones – we all have them. Stories about different folk coming together – people from different countries and backgrounds. Stories of encounter, challenge, exchange, connection, transformation. Stories about people and the power of the Spirit. Show why Iona, and what the Iona Community does there, is important to the world. Give it a human face.’

The royalties from *Iona of My Heart* will go to the Iona Community’s Iona Abbey Capital Appeal.

Neil Paynter was a member of the Iona Community’s resident staff group on Iona. He is an editor with Wild Goose Publications and of the Community’s magazine *Coracle.*
Muriel Spark 100

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Chapter 3 - The Time Machine

It’s not very often that you get the chance to travel back in time.

Through the doors of the aircraft hangar, waiting on the grass beside an apron of runway, was a 1942 DH82a de Havilland Tiger Moth – an open cockpit tandem biplane made of steel tubing, thin plywood and stretched fabric. This was going to be my time machine.

I walked out from the hangar and across the runway with my pilot, William Mackaness. Together, we were aiming to recreate a pioneering flight made from this same Perthshire aerodrome in the summer of 1939.

Back then the pilot was a man called Geoffrey Alington, who operated a company called Air Touring. And his passenger was Osbert Guy Stanhope Crawford – now dubbed the ‘father of aerial archaeology’. Crawford’s flight was about travelling back in time too.

The air was almost perfectly still – the aerodrome’s windsock was hanging listlessly from its pole. Beyond, to the north, you could see a wide expanse of farmland and the solid outline of the Cairngorms. The late summer sun was dropping, catching the distant mountains half in light and half in shadow. Set against the flatness of the land they looked somehow artificial, like the backdrop to a theatre set. This sense of unreality was appropriate. On top of my olive-green flight-suit I was wearing a leather and fur-lined Irvin jacket that had once belonged to a Second World War pilot.

‘Right now you’ll feel really hot’, William said. ‘But once you’re in the air you’ll be grateful for it’.

William had already begun his starting sequence. ‘There’s something almost magical about it’ he said. ‘It’s a checklist you learn off by heart – a ritual that puts you in a different mindset, that marks the start of your journey.’ First came the ‘walk round’ – feeling the tension in the flying wires, looking at the fuselage for any signs of damage, making sure the wheels were at the right pressure and were free rolling, inspecting the fuel tank above the cockpit – capable of holding 19 imperial gallons; ‘enough for about two and a half hours of flying’ as William explained. Next he checked the oil in the Tiger Moth’s 130hp Gipsy Major Engine. ‘It’s nicknamed the “Dripsy”’, he said ‘because it’s notorious for leaking oil’. A detail that, I confess, I did not want to hear immediately before take-off.

William compared this process to a kind of dance – I could see what he meant. Even climbing into the aircraft had a sequence of set steps: right foot here, left foot there, twist your body this way, grip just that part of the instrument panel, that lever that turns the prop. And, at once, you start having an emotional reaction – as if you were entering a dance floor or a music hall after a long absence.

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the wing – not below or above – left leg over, then lower yourself down to your seat. Why? Because, very simply, if you step in the wrong place there’s a good chance you might put your foot straight through something important...

As I fastened the seatbelt straps over my shoulders and around my waist, William began to, as he put it, ‘tickle’ the engine – first allowing the fuel to flow down to the intake manifold, then drawing it into the engine itself by turning the large single propeller on the nose. The propeller was a startling piece of craftsmanship. And very clearly of another time – a single piece of wood, carved exquisitely into a sort of curved figure-of-eight and lacquered to a smooth liquid shine, with gold-metal trim for the edges that sliced through the air. It brought to mind the fluid, streamlined hull of some vintage speedboat.

‘Magnetos off, fuel is on, throttle closed, four blades’, William recited. ‘Four blades’ referred to turning the propeller four times, to ensure that each cylinder takes in the fuel air mixture. Then it was ‘magnetos on’ – creating the electric spark that ignites the engine. With a guttural roar, the propeller in front of me spun to a blur. We sat for a few minutes, letting the engine and the oil warm up, before nimbly taxiing over the grass and on to the runway.

The take-off was remarkably quick. William ramped the engine up to 1600rpm with the breaks still on. Then he gently released the breaks and fed in the throttle, which he controlled with his feet. ‘You need soft shoes for it’ he told me, ‘you have to feel the aircraft, and the power, right in the soles of your feet’. Within seconds we were racing over the tarmac. I pulled the goggles down from my canvas flying helmet as the rush of air tore at my eyes. Another few seconds later, we were up. And we were going back in time.

Scotland from the Sky by James Crawford is out now published by Historic Environment Scotland priced £25. The book is the official accompaniment to the BBC documentary series of the same name.
When Alan Parks’ debut novel *Bloody January* comes to us from publisher Canongate already badged as ‘a Harry McCoy novel’, it’s an obvious clue to his publisher’s expectations. We’ll be seeing, they are saying, a lot more of him. But in the crowded corner of Clydeside crime fiction, what’s left to say? And, while we’re at it, why does Glasgow have such a stranglehold on the genre?

One key difference with *Bloody January* is its setting: the January in question is that of 1973, a whole decade before Taggart hit the small screen, two decades before anyone heard of tartan noir, and four decades before crime fiction became so important that it had to have its own literary festivals. For a crime writer, a Seventies setting has two key advantages: the absence of mobile phones makes plotting easier, and they can also shock readers into realising how much has changed by writing dialogue pitted, *Life on Mars*-style, with prejudices that are now almost silenced.
But the Seventies appealed to Alan Parks for an altogether different reason. ‘I’d find myself going on walks around the city, often to places I hadn’t seen since I was ten, back in the Seventies. I think that’s an age when things go in deep, even though at the time you are completely self-absorbed and don’t register them. So I thought that would be a good time to set a novel in too.’ He also wanted to cover as wide a range of society as possible, and maybe again part of that impulse stems from his childhood. ‘People always think that Glasgow is a poor town, but there has always been a level of glamour too, a wealthy strata, and I thought there’d be an interesting contrast looking at those two sides of it.’

It’s true: when Parks’ Detective Inspector Harry McCoy starts his investigations, they range dizzyingly from lowlife to high, from taking drugs with his prostitute girlfriend to finding out the nefarious deeds perpetrated by an aristocratic shipyard owner. Hold on a minute, you might think: drug-taking policemen in the Seventies? But that’s only part of McCoy’s crowded back-story. One of his closest friends, Stevie Cooper, is now the boss of one of the city’s gangs. They’ve been close since Cooper stuck up for him against the priests in the children’s home. Yet while McCoy often has to turn a blind eye to whatever Cooper is currently up to, he still has a moral compass of sorts. Unlike many of his colleagues, he’s not on the take.

That kind of compromised, yet still idealistic, cop has now become familiar enough to us: it’s Jimmy McNulty in the TV series The Wire, or – closer to home, Alex Morrow, with her gangster half-brother, in Denise Mina’s fiction. But how plausible was such a character in the Seventies? ‘Maybe there was a bit of dramatic licence there,’ Parks admits.

To give Bloody January the social sweep Parks wanted, he needed to show gang life from the inside. In the very first chapter, a warden at HM Prison Barlinnie asks McCoy whether his colleagues fitted up one of the inmates. ‘Nope,’ McNulty replies, ‘whole thing was straight for once.’ Yet this old order of ubiquitous violence and police corruption is slowly changing. That dialogue takes place just outside the Special Unit at Barlinnie, set up, we are told, ‘by hippies blabbering on about Art Therapy, Positive Custody and Breaking Barriers’. Before too long, McCoy will be chatting up a sociology postgraduate student, asking her about feminism. There’s a David Bowie gig at Green’s Playhouse. Our post-millennial world is taking its time, but it’s on the way.

The old one, though, is still in focus. The Seventies are here in all their seediness: old copies of Parade on the pavements, TVs on tick from DER, smokers lighting up one Kensitas after another. Familiar places like Paddy’s Market are sharply described (‘there was nothing it didn’t have and nothing you’d want to buy’), but because the city has been knocked about a bit, even McCoy still has to search out old landmarks like the Pinkston chimney to work out which way he is facing.

Change is coming. You can see that far clearer in this novel than any written at the time. But any future gathering of Glasgow’s fictional detectives can relax. The new kid on the block won’t let the side down.

Bloody January by Alan Parks is out now published by Canongate priced £12.99.

For more writing by David Robinson, visit BooksfromScotland.com.
New titles

Children and Young Adults
**Eulalie’s Journey to Algonquin with Tom Thomson**
Written by Catherine Wilson; Illustrated by Ruth MacLean

This book imaginatively explores the work of one of Canada’s most celebrated artists, Tom Thomson, and will touch the hearts of all who read it. The young reader has a chance to explore Tom’s world through the eyes of Eulalie, his dog, and to see how Tom worked ‘catching the light’ while painting, how they lived in the wilderness of Algonquin Park with Tom canoeing on the lakes and catching fish for supper, and how Eulalie discovers her cousins, the wolves. Eulalie was devoted to her owner from the very beginning. Tom said: ‘She’s a little treasure – she can come painting with me!’ Ruth MacLean has based most of her accompanying paper collages on Tom’s paintings.

Ruth MacLean was born and raised in Toronto, and trained in fine art and theology. From early childhood onwards she was familiar with the Tom Thomson territory around Owen Sound and Georgian Bay, where her Scottish forebears first settled. Like Thomson before her, she has always drawn inspiration from nature. Catherine Wilson lives on the Scottish island of Islay, where she first met MacLean. Wilson first trained as an artist, and began to write when she was teaching at Secondary Schools in East Africa. Later she worked for the BBC and became an author of educational texts.

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**Colour My Days**
Ross Collins

Emmy and Jeff live in a black and white world. But suddenly, the week begins with a splash of yellow and so starts an adventure where each new day brings a new colour into Emmy and Jeff’s lives. Join them as they explore the rainbow!

An appealing and evocative introduction to colour for young children, this brand new story from picture book star Ross Collins bursts with joy and celebrates the colour in all of our lives.

Ross Collins’ Primary 1 teacher told his parents that he should go to art school; 13 years later he was accepted to the Glasgow School of Art. On graduating he won the Macmillan Prize for his first picture book. Since then he has illustrated over 100 books for children and written several of his own. His books have won high-profile awards, notably *There’s a Bear on My Chair* which won the inaugural Amnesty International Honour and the UKLA Award, and was shortlisted for the CILIP Greenaway Medal.
**Hari and His Electric Feet**  
**Alexander McCall Smith**

Hari is a dreamer with an unusual talent. He spends the few coins he earns washing cars on cinema trips to watch, and learn from his beloved Bollywood films. Then one day Hari's gloriously fancy footwork is spotted by Mr Ram, a man on a mission to resolve conflicts near and far. Hari so entrances everyone with his magical dancing that soon he is travelling all over the world and his electric feet bring harmony to all who see him dance.

With an authentic Indian backdrop, this feel-good story of children chasing big dreams shimmers with all of Alexander McCall Smith's trademark optimism and joy – an outlook on life that makes him one of the world's best-loved storytellers.

**The Family Tree**  
**Mal Peet**

When a young man returns to his childhood home and visits the derelict treehouse in which his father once chose to live, he recalls the long-ago unravelling of his family and the impact on his adult life. An awkward encounter with a new family offers redemption of a kind – but no easy answers.

Beautiful, sparse and insightful storytelling from the much-missed Mal Peet, this is an utterly compelling exploration of families and fathers. The book features sensitive full-colour illustrations by rising star Emma Shoard.

‘I love this wonderful book. How does Mal Peet do so much in such a short space? It’s engrossing, haunting, beautifully written.’ – David Almond

Mal Peet was a multi award-winning novelist best known for his young adult fiction, including *Keeper*, *Tamar* and *Life: An Unexploded Diagram*. His novels were nominated for and won prizes such as the Carnegie Medal, the Branford Boase Award and *The Guardian* Children’s Fiction Prize. In 2017, the novel *Beck* – completed after his death by his good friend Meg Rosoff – was shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal. Peet passed away in March 2015.
McTavish Goes Wild
Meg Rosoff

It’s summer and the Peache family is in crisis – again. Youngest child Betty Peache is trying to persuade the family to go to the Faraway Campsite of Ma Peache’s idyllic dreams. But most of the Peacheys are still resisting. Pa Peache is convinced that terrible dangers lurk in the ‘wild’, Ollie only cares about whether there’s a ‘disco’, and Ava has her nose deep in philosophy books. But marvellous canine McTavish, always one step ahead of the Peacheys, quietly works out a way to get the family enjoying their holiday, together.

A glorious sequel to Good Dog McTavish, this endearing story is brimming with Meg Rosoff’s stylish prose, quirky humour and the oddities of family life.

Meg Rosoff worked in publishing, journalism, politics and advertising before writing How I Live Now, which was released as a feature film starring Saoirse Ronan in 2013. Her books have won or been shortlisted for 18 international book prizes, including the Carnegie Medal and the Orange First Novel Prize, and been translated into over 20 languages. In 2016, Rosoff was the recipient of the prestigious Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, the world’s largest and most prestigious children’s literature award.

Splash Day!
Nick Sharratt

Splash, splosh, splash! It’s Splash Day and everyone at school has downed tools – it’s time for a water fight! They’ve got their trunks and wetsuits, some wellies and rubber rings, and Mrs Rose even has a great big hose! Join in all the splashing fun with Nick Sharratt’s debut in the Little Gem series.

Overflowing with lots of rhyme, rhythm and energy for little ones to enjoy, it’s the perfect book for a young reader’s first steps on the path to reading independently and is filled with vibrant, engaging illustrations in Nick Sharratt’s instantly recognisable style.

Author and illustrator Nick Sharratt has created illustrations for over 250 books. As well as producing around 60 of his own titles, he has worked with many writers including Julia Donaldson, Michael Rosen, Giles Andreae and Kes Gray. His most famous collaboration is with Dame Jacqueline Wilson, for whom he has illustrated more than 50 novels. Sharratt’s books include Ketchup on Your Cornflakes?, the Shark in the Park! series and the million-selling You Choose. He has won many national and regional book prizes including the Kate Greenaway Medal.
**Plagued: Volume Two**
Gary Chudleigh and Tanya Roberts

When a deadly pandemic almost wiped out the world, witches got the blame and became the prey of witch hunters like Mackie and his dog Dex. Mackie believed in the cause, until the day he crossed paths with Miranda, a witch who showed him that the truth behind the plague was far more horrifying than he could have ever imagined.

Miranda, Mackie and Dex are now living as outlaws, on the run from corrupt authorities with a mission to end the plague once and for all. Together Miranda and Mackie are a dynamic duo and tour futuristic Scotland, clearing up the plague wherever they go, but their enemies are never far behind. They think things are bad but they’re about to get a lot worse.

Gary Chudleigh is a Glasgow based writer, best known for Plagued: The Miranda Chronicles and the one-shot reboot of the DC Thomson character, The Invisible Dick. He’s been writing, editing and self-publishing comics for several years, working with publishers such as DC Thomson, Grayhaven Comic, Comichaus and FutureQuake Press.

Tanya Roberts is a comic book artist from Edinburgh who, after beginning her career in animation, made a bold start in comics as the artist on Star Wars: Clone Wars. Since then she has worked on Boom!’s Toy Story comic and How to Train Your Dragon with Titan Comics.

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**The Mighty Women of Science**
Clare Forrest with Fiona Gordon and Kate Livingston

*The Mighty Women of Science* is a playful and engaging look at some well-known – and some not so well-known – women who have changed and continue to change the world of science. From astronaut Valentina Tereshkova to zoologist Birute Galdikas, *Mighty Women* is a joyful journey through time, highlighting the under-celebrated women that helped shape the world we live in. This immersive, all-ages book is a great teaching tool or simply a fun way to start your own journey learning about *The Mighty Women of Science*.

‘Quirky and exceptionally easy on the eye and the care in the little details across the pages makes the passion for the project as tangible as any of the discoveries we learn about’. - Comics Anonymous

Clare Forrest is a Scottish illustrator, who has a background in working to communicate the sciences. While employed at the Royal Observatory she began to realise that there was a whole world of mighty women who had made huge contributions to science but went uncelebrated. Combining her two passions she began work on *The Mighty Women of Science*. 
Create Your Own Happy
Penny Alexander and Becky Goddard-Hill

Create your own happy with this illustrated activity book that empowers children to shape their lives, and the lives of others, by showing them how to take fun, positive steps towards their own happiness and positive self-esteem.

Children can discover everything happy with this interactive, fun activity book. They can learn about the inspiring and surprising science behind emotions, and complete acts of kindness and think about positive relationships. From speaking in front of their class to standing up for others, planting a seed bomb outdoors, or making their own happy playlist, children can learn how to create their own happy.

This book is for increasingly independent thinkers and proactive young people, giving them a handle on their own emotional wellbeing to best equip them with confidence for the everyday challenges of life and school.

Penny Alexander and Becky Goddard-Smith are award-winning parenting and creative family life bloggers and consultants, with professional backgrounds in education and child development training.

Collins Children’s Dictionary: Learn with Words
Collins Dictionaries

Find all the words children need to know at school and at home in this new edition dictionary from Collins, with brightly coloured illustrations by Maria Herbert-Liew. As part of a new range, this fully updated dictionary for ages nine and up boosts skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and encourages confidence in children as they expand their vocabularies and creative writing skills in preparation for secondary school.

Collins have been publishing dictionaries for almost 200 years and have an impressive heritage in creating market-leading language products.
It’s Only the End of the World
JA Henderson

Charlie thinks he’s pretty normal, until someone breaks into his room one night. It turns out he’s basically wrong about everything, including: his parents are boring – except they’re highly skilled computer hackers with a history of radical action; he’s not talented – except he’s been injected with the Jekyll serum, practically making him a superhero (minus the spandex); the world’s a good and predictable place – except the evil corporation determined to bring on the end of the world, and kill him; the person who broke into his room is weird – OK, this one’s true. But Daffodil (not her real name) has a bossy, all-powerful AI attached to her brain, which is bound to make anyone a bit different.

In this pacy, ironic thriller, brilliant dialogue meets slapstick fight scenes. A teen version of Christopher Brookmyre, the question of who’s controlling who is startlingly, hilariously and constantly revised.

JA Henderson is an author of fiction and non-fiction, for children and young adults. Henderson won a Royal Mail Book Award for teen thriller Bunker 10. Originally from Dundee, Scotland, he now splits his time between Brisbane, Australia and Edinburgh, where he runs the award-winning City of the Dead ghost tours.

Artie Conan Doyle and the Vanishing Dragon
Robert J Harris

Robert J Harris, author of The World’s Gone Loki series, brings the young Conan Doyle to life in the second book of this ingenious new detective series.

One day Arthur Conan Doyle will create the greatest detective of all – Sherlock Holmes. But right now Artie Conan Doyle is a 12-year-old Edinburgh schoolboy with a mystery of his own to solve.

Artie and his friend Ham are hired to investigate a series of suspicious accidents that have befallen world-famous magician, the Great Wizard of the North. It seems someone is determined to sabotage his spectacular new illusion.

When the huge mechanical dragon created for the show vanishes, the theft appears to be completely impossible. Artie must reveal the trick and unmask the villain or face the deadly consequences.

The cards have been dealt, the spell has been cast, and the game is afoot once more!

Robert J Harris is the author of many children’s books, including Will Shakespeare and the Pirate’s Fire, Leonardo and the Death Machine and zany Norse-god trilogy The World’s Gone Loki! He also writes adult fiction, including a new series of Richard Hannay novels, the first of which is The Thirty-One Kings. He was born in Dundee and now lives in St Andrews with his wife, sons and his dog.
**The Fox Girl and the White Gazelle**  
**Victoria Williamson**

Under the grey Glasgow skies, 12-year-old refugee Reema is struggling to find her place in a new country, with a new language and without her brother. But she isn’t the only one feeling lost. Her Glaswegian neighbour Caylin is lonely and lashing out.

When they discover an injured fox and her cubs hiding on their estate, the girls form a wary friendship. And they are more alike than they could have imagined: they both love to run.

As both girls learn to believe again, in themselves and in others, they find friendship, freedom and the discovery that home isn’t a place, it’s the people you love.

Heartfelt and full of hope, this is an uplifting story about the power of friendship and belonging. Victoria Williamson’s debut children’s novel is a stunning story of displacement and discovery.

**Victoria Williamson** is a primary school teacher with a Master’s degree in special needs education. She has worked as a science teacher and teacher trainer in Cameroon and Malawi, taught English as a foreign language in China, and been a special needs teacher in the UK. Williamson’s experience of teaching young children in a deprived area, many of whom were asylum seekers, inspired her first novel, *The Fox Girl and the White Gazelle*.

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**Bear Child**  
**Written by Geoff Mead; Illustrated by Sanne Dufft**

‘Now that people live in towns and bears live in the woods, have you ever wondered what happened to the bear folk?’

At bedtime Ursula asks Daddy to tell her the tale of the bear folk: special beings who can choose to be either a bear or a person, depending if they want to catch a fish or read a book.

Bear folk live extraordinary lives, he tells her. They are strong and clever, kind and loving, adventurous and creative – just like her.

‘Will I ever meet one?’ Ursula asks. Perhaps she already has...

*Bear Child* is an inspirational story of parental love, belief and embracing individuality. This beautiful picture book weaves together Geoff Mead’s charming words with Sanne Dufft’s ethereal illustrations to create a truly timeless folktale.

**Geoff Mead** is a storyteller and author and runs storytelling workshops around the world.

**Sanne Dufft** has illustrated many children’s picture books. She won the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators European Conference Portfolio Content 2015. She lives in Germany with her family.

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**Nowhere Else But Here**

**Rachel Cotton**

Rose Valentine found out the hard way that life’s easier when you stick to the rules and stay out of other people’s business. But her classmate Theo Lockhart is too intriguing to ignore. He’s a mystery. One that Rose secretly dreams of solving.

When Theo disappears from town, Rose is certain that he’s done a runner. Certain, that is, until he pitches up on her doorstep, desperate to hide at her house. He’s on the run. But why, and who from? And why did he choose her? If she lets him in, Rose will go against everything she holds true.

But something about Theo makes Rose long to break the rules. His troubled presence turns her world upside down. How can life ever go back to normal? *Nowhere Else But Here* is delightfully tender-hearted first novel about the risks we take for love.

Rachel Cotton began her writing career at the age of 13 on the self-publishing forum Wattpad, where her early drafts of *Nowhere Else But Here* attracted more than one million hits. And now – aged just 17 – she is achieving her dream of being a published author. Cotton is currently studying English literature and creative writing at college in Chessington, Surrey, while writing her second novel for Ink Road. She plans to study for a degree in journalism.

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**How Billy Hippo Learned To Swim**

**Written by Vivian French; Illustrated by Hannah Foley**

Billy Hippo hates water. It’s too cold! Too scary! Too wet! And swimming? No thanks. He doesn’t want to try - not even when his whole family do their best to persuade him that it’s fun. It takes two cheeky frogs and a big surprise to change Billy’s mind.

Award-winning children’s author Vivian French teams up with new and exciting picture book illustrator Hannah Foley in this beautifully vibrant colourful tale about Billy the hippo who is not at all keen on learning to swim. This is a gentle and humorous tale for children aged two to five.

Vivian French began writing books for children after a career as an actor, playwright and storyteller. Her first books for children were published in 1990, and she has since written more than 250 books. She is an editorial consultant, reviewer and anthologist, and a tutor in the illustration department at Edinburgh College of Art. She is a co-founder of Picture Hooks, a project/mentoring scheme for graduate Scottish illustrators. French is among the most popular authors in UK libraries - her books are regularly borrowed more than half a million times a year.
**Magna Cow**
Written by Barry Hutchison; Illustrated by Cate James

Thanks to her mysterious magnetic powers, Magna Cow is always messing up the other cows’ fun. She ruins their camping trips, spoils their darts tournaments and plays havoc with their cutlery. But when disaster strikes the herd, Magna Cow finally gets her chance to shine. A moooving tale about being yourself and friendship.

The unlikely combination of magnets and cows brings together a wonderful collaboration between award-winning author Barry Hutchison and the stylised quirky illustrations of Cate James.

Barry Hutchison is an award-winning children’s author and screenwriter, currently hiding up a mountain in the Highlands of Scotland. Since landing his first children’s book publishing deal in 2008, Hutchison has toured extensively around UK schools, sharing his love of reading and stories with pupils of all ages. He has a passion for encouraging reluctant boys to pick up a book. A lifelong fan of funny books, Barry loves making readers laugh with his unique brand of comedy.

**The Humdrum Drum**
Written by Colin MacIntyre; Illustrated by Catherine Thomann

Meet Drum, the orchestra drum who is feeling very humdrum. When Drum is feeling unhappy he stops playing and the entire orchestra comes to an embarrassing halt. But with the help of his friends – a cast of colourful instruments, as well as ironing mice and shaving pigeons – Drum realises that without him keeping the beat, they lose their way and that they need him to save the day.

Multi-award-winning musician and author Colin MacIntyre and wonderful illustrator Catherine Thomann have come together to create *The Humdrum Drum*, a bright, colourful, fun musical tale about togetherness, teamwork and inclusivity.

Colin MacIntyre is an award-winning musician, producer and author, who has written and produced seven acclaimed albums to date, most notably under the name Mull Historical Society. His debut novel, *The Letters of Ivor Punch*, won the 2015 Edinburgh International Book Festival First Book Award. He has been voted Scotland’s Top Creative Talent and has toured worldwide with bands including The Strokes, Elbow and REM. Born into a family of writers and storytellers, MacIntyre is a descendant of the Gaelic warrior-poet, Duncan Ban MacIntyre. He grew up on the Isle of Mull but now lives in London with his family.
**Tijaran Tales VI: The Girl from the Sky**  
Francesca T Barbini

For five years Julius McCoy has led the Zed army in its fight against Arnesh, surviving where friends have fallen. Now humanity has been called to make a terrible choice, one that could undo all that Tijara has stood for. With the weight of the decision hanging over his head, and still reeling from his greatest loss, Julius has to summon enough strength to overcome his strongest enemy yet, as his brother Michael steps up to be the new King of Arnesh. *The Girl From The Sky* is the thrilling conclusion of FT Barbini’s *Tijaran Tales* series. The book’s cover art was nominated for the BSFA (British Science Fiction Association) Awards in 2017.

Francesca T Barbini is the author of YA SF series *Tijaran Tales*, the YA fantasy *The Dagger of Fire*, and co-authored the humorous *Tiny Pride and Plenty Prejudice*. She has edited *Gender Identity and Sexuality in Fantasy and Science Fiction* which was nominated for the BSFA Award in 2017.

**Black Snow Falling**  
LJ MacWhirter

In 1592, a girl with spirit is a threat.

Ruth has secrets: an old book of heresy belonging to her long-absent father, a dream that haunts her, a love that she and Silas hide from the world. When she is robbed of all she holds true, her friends from Crowbury slide into terrible danger. Hope is as faint as a moonbow. Dare Ruth trust the shadowy one who could destroy them all?

Ruth’s devastation breaks apart time. She sees that her hopes and dreams are a visceral halo of rainbow colours spinning to white, and that evil dream thieves are severing halos from sleeping victims. Disturbing dreams of black snow lead Ruth to a perilous discovery: one dream thief is connected to her grandfather and the candle-maker’s boy, Jude, from long ago. This is a story about hope overcoming evil, written with satisfying moral complexity.

Liz MacWhirter is an award-winning advertising copywriter and presenter. *Black Snow Falling* is her debut novel for young adults. She lives in Edinburgh with her family.
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Barrington Stoke is an award-winning children’s publisher set up in 1998 with a mission to help emergent, reluctant and dyslexic readers unlock a love of reading. In a nutshell, we publish quality short fiction, by the best authors and illustrators in the UK, crammed with ingenious design and editorial tricks to ensure an accessible and enjoyable read for all, and a satisfying quick read for the more confident.

We are about reading for pleasure, not reading schemes; about getting the best-quality stories into the hands and hearts of the hardest-to-reach readers. Top-quality and top-selling writers are key, and we wouldn’t be where we are 20 years on without their unbelievable support of us and our mission.
All children deserve the best-written stories regardless of their reading ability, and it’s particularly important that our readers are enjoying the same writers their peers are talking about in the playground. It’s the first-class writers who can grab a reader from page one and carry them through with sharper dialogue, engaging plots and interesting characters. And they are the ones who don’t patronise: essential if you are writing for those reading below level – for example, a teenager with a reading age of 7-9.

In addition to the more usual structural edit, all of our stories are further edited by an expert to ensure the language is clear and accessible. We continue to listen to our readers, their teachers and parents, as it’s important to keep researching and learning what hinders and what helps. Initially we sent manuscripts out to schools ahead of publication; now we run a free Young Editors scheme online.

Our books have to have ‘wow’ appeal and must not feel like school books. Even though they are used extensively in classrooms, they also feature on library shelves and bookshop tables, so they have to look the part or they will not even be opened. Each book has to pass the ‘school-bus test’, because if one of our readers feels ashamed of getting their book out of their bag, then we are not doing it right.

Years of experience in publishing for the under-confident reader has taught us much about readability:

For many readers, black text on white paper creates glare or a perception of movement. Using off-white or cream paper can help enormously.

Thin paper can mean that the ‘ghost’ of the words on the reverse of the page show through, confusing the eye. Thicker paper can help stop this happening.

A lot of books are typeset with a small typeface, close lines, and justification to the left and right so that the text appears as a neat block. This can prevent children tracking effectively, meaning they get lost, and it makes the spacing between words and letters uneven. It’s much more helpful to have the text lines uneven to the right, good spacing between words and letters, and plenty of space between lines.

Graphic novels are often said to appeal to struggling readers who can ‘read’ the pictures, but the text is regularly typeset in block capitals, which have less ‘shape’ on the page and are much harder to read, and the layouts can be confusing.

Picture books very often have text laid out on busy backgrounds or jumping all over the page, so children – and their parents – struggle with visual perception and knowing which order to tackle the words.

In recent years, children’s books have been getting longer, which can be very daunting for the book-averse. Shorter fiction can have real appeal for those with a short attention span and give the reluctant reader a much-needed confidence boost.

There is always more we can do as an industry to improve readability, and we believe every one of us has the right to access a story. Here’s to more children reading more in 2018 and beyond...

Find out more about Barrington Stoke at barringtonstoke.co.uk and the Young Editors scheme at youngeeditors.barringtonstoke.co.uk.
Solitude,
Ten Easy Steps For a Month-Long Writing Residency in Iceland

by Kirsty Logan

Step 1: Arrive at Keflavik airport late at night. Be driven an hour through the darkness to a small town called Laugarvatn by a Russian man taxi driver who used to be a competitive handball player, and is horrified that you’ve never heard of handball, and so tries to show you YouTube videos of him playing handball on a laptop propped on the dashboard (all while driving). Miraculously don’t die.

Step 2: Get settled in to the cabin and studio at Gullkistan, the artist residency (the name comes from a legend about a chest of gold hidden on Hekla, the active volcano visible from the front window). On the first morning, be woken by a herd of dozens of horses galloping along the main road. After the horses pass, there is utter silence. Make strong coffee, watch the sun rise over the lake, then get to work.

Step 3: Meet Alda and Kristveig, who run Gullkistan, as well as the other artists: Gab the Australian puppeteer, John the American sculptor, Lucie the Canadian choreographer, and Aoi the Japanese painter.

Step 4: Go with Gab and John to the local outdoor swimming pool, which is warm even though it’s September because the water is from the hot spring-heated lake. Swim 50 laps a day, then pop into the steam room and three hot tubs (all heated by the hot springs) where you learn about mushrooms from Gab (it turns out she’s into mycology as well as puppetry). Discover that swimming outside during a storm is one of the best and scariest and most freeing things in the world.
Swimming and Sheep

Step 5: Write obsessively into the night, alone in the darkened studio, and then be so freaked out by your own creepy stories that you have to run (not walk) the ten feet between the studio and the cabin, lit by the wavering light of your phone torch. Feel so haunted by your own stories that you triple-check the front door is locked, though you know the likelihood of an axe-wielding murderer descending on your little cabin in Laugarvatn is basically zero.

Step 6: Go on a road trip with Gab and John to visit the boiling-water eruption at Geysir, the waterfall at Gullfoss, and a sudden black-sand beach that doesn’t seem to have a name. Among endless miles of natural beauty, discover an abandoned bin lorry, which Gab climbs to look inside – she claims that it doesn’t contain zombies, but you don’t follow her to check.

Step 7: Attend rettir, the annual sheep-sorting, where the sheep are gathered in from the hills where they graze together all summer so that the farmers can take them inside for the winter (in Iceland, winter is very cold indeed, even if you have a natural woolly jumper). Afterwards go to the tomato farm to consume more freshly made all-you-can-eat tomato soup than you thought possible.

Step 8: Go for long after-lunch walks while listening to horror podcasts. As Laugarvatn consists solely of some houses, a school, two shops and a leisure centre hugging the main road that runs all the way around the edge of Iceland, the one road means only two ways to walk: right or left. You usually choose left as it goes past one field with a horse and one with some cows (all the other fields are empty). Walk for an hour and pass only two farmhouses, then finally turn back without getting in sight of the next town. Add a frame narrative to your story-collection-in-progress about a writer on a remote residency in Iceland who slowly loses her mind when she finds that the people in the town begin to disappear so that she is the only one left. Hope that it will remain fiction.

Step 9: Answer the ringing phone at midnight; it’s Kristveig, telling you to quickly go outside as the northern lights have decided to visit. Grab all the artists you can find and your duvets (even in September, Iceland at night is very cold) and sit out on the grass, watching the unearthly green-pink-purple lights flit and throb across the sky for hours.

Step 10: Over the course of a month manage to lose your mind and then find it again, climb volcanoes and swim in hot springs, write stories weirder and darker and more magical than you could ever have come up with at home, and let Iceland seep into your blood and bones in a way that you know you will never manage to put into words, although you know you will never stop trying.

Kirsty Logan’s writing residency was funded by Creative Scotland. Her second novel The Gloaming is published by Harvill Secker on 19 April priced £12.99.
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- Edizioni Sur, Italy, to translate Autumn – Ali Smith (Hamish Hamilton, 2016)
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