

The
Portobello
Bookshop



The Portobello Bookshop

Gift Guide 2025

Welcome to **The Portobello Bookshop 2025 Gift Guide!**

It really does feel like yesterday we were writing an intro to our last Gift Guide, and we can't believe another year has flown by quite so fast. We've had such a bustling and busy year at the shop. It's been a pleasure to be visited by many authors for stock signings, and to be able to send their books to readers all over the UK and the world. We've also hosted more events than ever about a range of fascinating topics, such as craft and creativity with Clare Hunter, motherhood with Helen Charman, a celebration of Black culture in modern Britain with Lanre Bakare, and many more. We've also hosted launches at venues across Edinburgh. From Len Pennie launching *Poyums Annaw* at the Pleasance Theatre, V.E. Schwab packing out the Traverse Theatre for her latest novel *Bury Our Bones in the Midnight Soil*, to Ocean Vuong at the Assembly Rooms for an event celebrating *The Emperor of Gladness*, we've had the joy of hosting a plethora of events this year! Our highlight was launching the poetry pamphlet of our colleague Helena Fornells Nadal in the bookshop.

Notably this year we started our Kids' Summer Book Club in a bid to encourage children to read during the summer holidays. It was a delight to see so many children visiting the shop to collect stamps, goodies and a free book of their choice when completing their bingo card. We're delighted with the response and look forward to bringing the Book Club back next year.

As always, there have been plenty of new titles to get excited about and that we've really enjoyed reading this year – we've gathered our favourite in this guide and hope you find something inspiring and enjoyable between these pages! It's truly been a pleasure to see you all throughout the year; thank you for your support and for making the bookshop a lovely place to work. We hope to welcome you this festive season.



JACK

Flesh, David Szalay. £18.99

Foreign Fruit, Katie Goh. £16.99

Stag Dance, Torrey Peters. £16.99

We Were There, Lanre Bakare. £22

The Möbius Book, Catherine Lacey. £16.99



Another year's passed without me getting through even a quarter of my TBR pile, but what I have read I've really enjoyed. Katie Goh's *Foreign Fruit* is a book we were lucky enough to host the launch for at the shop, and one of my top non-fiction reads of the year. I always look forward to a new book by Catherine Lacey and *The Möbius Book* didn't disappoint; her novels are like no others in the way they probe reality and identity. It was a real pleasure to welcome Torrey Peters to the shop this year to sign copies of *Stag Dance*, and these

sometimes weird, sometimes tender, and all-round fantastic short stories should be on your reading list. David Szalay's *Flesh* and its exploration of what it means to inhabit a body over time was another great read. And lastly, another excellent non-fiction read, Lanre Bakare's *We Were There* is a fascinating look at the history of Black Britain that doesn't take London as its focus, as many books have in the past – it was great to read a book by a fellow northerner that so fascinatingly brought to life Black British history.

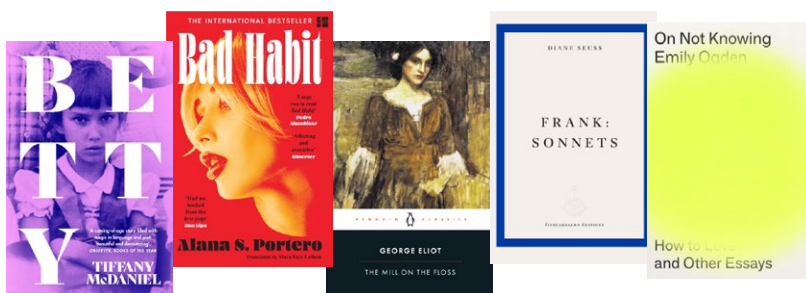
Betty, Tiffany McDaniel. £10.99

Bad Habit, Alana S. Portero. £9.99

The Mill on the Floss, George Eliot. £9.99

frank: sonnets, Diane Seuss. £12.99

On Not Knowing, Emily Ogden. £10.99



I started the year off with *Betty* by Tiffany McDaniel and it immediately became one of my favourite books of all time, in turn setting the bar quite high for the rest of the year! It's a heart-wrenching coming-of-age story that stands out in a sometimes very bustling genre. *Bad Habit* follows in this trend I developed in reading devastating prose, and is executed in a way that isn't flowery or excessive – it's the kind of writing that makes me envious and grateful all at once. I had a slower second half of the year, but George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* kept me company for quite a

while and it was a truly lovely reading experience; as is expected, *Maggie Tulliver* stole my heart. I have a tendency to read more non-fiction in the latter portion of the year, and *On Not Knowing* is a small but mighty read that ingeniously comforted me and forced me to change how I think all at once – how to hold it together is a personal favourite essay. Finally, if you love poetry, hate poetry, or are somewhere in between, it doesn't matter, just read *frank: sonnets* by Diane Seuss.



ZOË

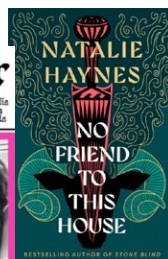
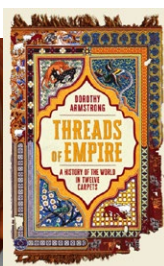
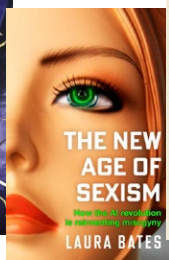
Skandar and the Spirit War, A F Steadman. £14.99

The New Age of Sexism, Laura Bates. £20

Threads of Empire, Dorothy Armstrong. £30

Reservoir Bitches, Dahlia de la Cerdá. £9.99

No Friend to This House, Natalie Haynes. £20



2025 has been a slower reading year for me, but that means the highlights shine all the brighter. I was delighted when *Reservoir Bitches* by Dahlia de la Cerdá was longlisted for the International Booker Prize because no collection of short stories has grabbed me in the same way before or since, and I was so happy to see it get more of the recognition it deserves. I got my non-fiction fix from *The New Age of Sexism* by Laura Bates, which, though intensely serious and even harrowing in some places, is so well researched and

prescient I cannot stop recommending it. I also loved *Threads of Empire* by Dorothy Armstrong, a calmer tale of global trade and power that is as expertly woven as the beautiful carpets at its heart. Finally, I'm pleased to report that my most anticipated releases of the end of the year did not disappoint: *Skandar and the Spirit War* had me weeping at how perfect a finale it was and Natalie Haynes' *No Friend to This House* put a fresh spin on the myth of Medea with Haynes' trademark sarcasm and wit, making it enormously entertaining.

The Book of Disappearance, Ibtisam Azem. £14.99

Restoration, Ave Barrera. £11.99

We Are Green and Trembling,
Gabriela Cabezón Cámara. £18.99

By the Fire We Carry, Rebecca Nagle. £10.99

The Little Stranger, Sarah Waters. £10.99



SELENA



For one reason or another this has been a tough reading year for me. However, fiction in translation, history books and a bit of Sarah Waters (as always) really helped to reignite my joy with reading. International Booker longlisted title, *The Book of Disappearance* by Ibtisam Azem (tr. Sinan Antoon), has to be my favourite of the year – an unforgettable story where overnight all of the Palestinians in Israel disappear and we are left to follow what happens next. My year wouldn't be complete without a Charco Press novel and *Restoration* by Ave Barrera (tr. Ellen Jones and Robin

Myers) was the perfectly gothic ghost story I was looking for. Similarly, *The Little Stranger* by Sarah Waters, her take on the gothic novel, was wonderfully unsettling (I need her to write more in this genre!). Gabriela Cabezón Cámara is a favourite author of mine and in *We are Green and Trembling* (tr. Robin Myers) she follows the real-life (and incredibly fascinating) story of Antonio de Erauso. Finally, my history pick of the year has to be *By the Fire We Carry* by Rebecca Nagle which I truly believe everyone should read.



AMOS

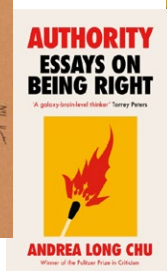
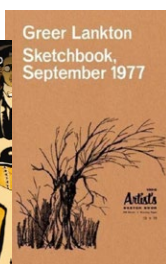
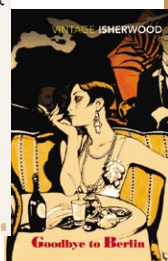
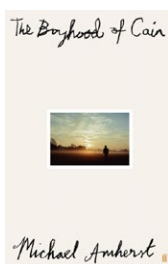
The Boyhood of Cain, Michael Amherst. £16.99

Goodbye to Berlin, Christopher Isherwood. £9.99

Greer Lankton: Sketchbook, September 1977, Greer Lankton. £15.00

Authority: Essays on Being Right,
Andrea Long Chu. £20

Lolly Willowes, Sylvia Townsend Warner. £9.99



This year seemed to pass too quickly, and there are so many books in my perpetual bedside pile I didn't manage to get to. My highlights are a mix of classics and new releases: *Goodbye to Berlin* resonated poignantly and ominously with today's political climate, and had one of the best opening pages I've read in a long time; *The Boyhood of Cain*, which was published this year, had one of the best last pages; *Lolly Willowes* was strange, magical, and very funny; all three were laced with

a potent mixture of nostalgia and ambivalence. Nonfiction highlights included *Authority*, Andrea Long Chu's new collection of essays and criticism, which was so crazy I kept actually rubbing my hands together as I read it; I also loved *Greer Lankton: Sketchbook, September 1977*, a facsimile of the 19-year-old artist's sketchbook and journal, rawly documenting the first days of her transition.



ELISE

Dream State, Eric Puchner. £18.99

Parable of the Sower, Octavia Butler. £10.99

The Way of Kings, Brandon Sanderson. £14.99

This is How You Lose the Time War,
Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone. £12.99

How to Hide an Empire, Daniel Immerwahr. £12.99



This year I worked on branching out from my usual genres and I've had an amazing year of reading. Eric Puchner's *Dream State* features a rom-com premise where the best man falls for the bride, but it turns into so much more! *The Parable of the Sower* is Octavia Butler's 1993 dystopian classic set in 2024 California – an absolute must read. *This is How You Lose the Time War* is a dreamy sapphic sci-fi romance,

it's short, beautiful, and you'll immediately want to reread it. I finally got into Brandon Sanderson – fantasy lovers should try *The Way of Kings*; heist/adventure fans, *Mistborn: The Final Empire*; and romance lovers, *Warbreaker*. For non-fiction you truly can't believe, check out *Empire of AI* by Karen Hao, *Empire of Pain* by Patrick Radden Keefe, and Daniel Immerwahr's *How to Hide an Empire*!



MARC

frank: sonnets, Dianne Seuss. £12.99

MAAfA, Harmony Holiday. £14.99

In Defence of Leisure, Akshi Singh. £20

Universality, Natasha Brown. £14.99

Silk Work, Imogen Cassels. £12.99



As ever, five recommendations for the year seems stingy, so here are more highlights from my 2025 in reading: *Collected Poems* by C.P. Cavafy (translated by Edmund Kelley & Philip Sherrard), *Open Socrates* by Agnes Callard, *Historiae* by Antonella Anedda (translated by Patrizio Ceccagnoli & Susan Stewart), *The Idiot* by Elif Batuman, Lavinia Greenlaw's *Selected Poems*, *War of the Beasts and the Animals* by Maria Stepanova (translated by Sasha Dugdale), *Rejection* by Tony Tulathimutte, *Biography of X* by Catherine Lacey, *The Driver's Seat* by Muriel Spark, *Forest of Noise* by Mosab Abu Toha, *What I'm Looking For & My Poets*

by Maureen N. McLane, *The Threshold* by Iman Mersal (translated by Robyn Creswell), *Selected Poems* by Osip Mandelstam (translated by Clarence Brown & W.S. Merwin), *Time and Materials* by Robert Hass, *Selected Poems* by Anna Akhmatova (translated by D.M. Black), a trio by Saskia Hamilton (*As For Dream*, *Divide These*, & *Corridor*), *Poet in Spain* by Federico Garcia Lorca (translated by Sarah Arvio), *Authority* by Andrea Long Chu, *The Devil You Know* by Gwen Adshead & Eileen Horne, *A Leopard-Skin Hat* by Anne Serre (translated by Mark Hutchinson), and *The Trembling Hand* by Mathelina Nabugodi.

On the Calculation of Volume, Solvej Balle. £12.99

A Room Above A Shop, Anthony Shapland. £14.99

Misinterpretation, Ledia Xhoga. £10.99

When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities, Chen Chen. £14.00

The Emperor of Gladness, Ocean Vuong. £20.00



EUAN



While I've been stuck in many a reading rut this year, I've also had enough highlights to make the process of choosing five books for the Gift Guide a difficult one! Ledia Xhoga's *Misinterpretation* has a disorienting quality to it and she writes brilliantly about collective generational trauma and the lingering scars of Albanian history. *A Room Above A Shop* by Anthony Shapland is a beautifully written debut about two closeted gay men and the life they make for themselves amidst the tensions of their small Welsh town. The ordinary everyday becomes extraordinary in the first volume

of Solvej Balle's *On the Calculation of Volume*, translated from the Danish by Barbara J. Haveland, in which her protagonist tunes into the rhythms of her subtly devastating predicament. Chen Chen's debut poetry collection *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities* really stopped me in my tracks – he's having such fun with language! *The Emperor of Gladness* by Ocean Vuong was also a poetic and poignant standout for me this year, and hosting an Edinburgh event with him in September was a dream come true.



BETH

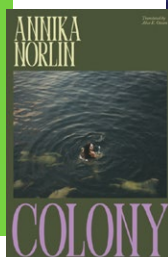
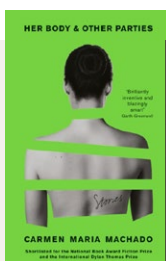
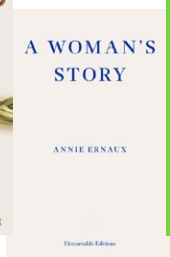
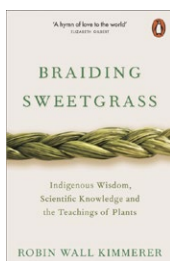
Braiding Sweetgrass, Robin Wall Kimmerer. £10.99

A Woman's Story, Annie Ernaux. £9.99

Her Body & Other Parties,
Carmen Maria Machado. £9.99

The Colony, Annika Norlin. £10.99

Orange World, Karen Russell. £9.99



Much of the second half of the year has been spent reading for my studies, however the first half of the year was all about reading for pleasure! I started 2025 with Annie Ernaux's *A Woman's Story*; this gorgeous, very short memoir has since been lent to three friends, all of whom said it made them cry. *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer was another fantastic read, packed full of botanical knowledge and personal stories, a book that made me look at the world with hope and wonder again. This year, Carmen Maria Machado's short story collection, *Her Body & Other*

Parties, filled my brain with unforgettable tales – magical realism, horror, science fiction, fable? Delicious! Karen Russell's *Orange World* was similarly fantastic, particularly the titular story which centres around a new mother nursing the devil outside her home. Finally, on a late summer camping trip I devoured *Colony* by Annika Norlin, at the recommendation of one of our other booksellers, Faye – the perfect novel to read while watching the fire burn out. Cultish novels are addictive to me, and this book was consumed in just a few days.

Audition, Katie Kitamura. £18.99

A Life of One's Own, Marion Milner. £17.99

The Odd Woman and the City, Vivian Gornick. £10.99

Exophony, Yoko Tawada. £16.99

The Most Secret Memory of Men,
Mohamed Mbougar Sarr. £9.99



ALICE



This year I was drawn to memoirs and personal stories. I picked up and thoroughly enjoyed *Exophony* (a beautifully poetic word which means to write in a language that is not one's mother tongue) by Yoko Tawada. Originally published over twenty years ago, it's a playful exploration of language full of interesting observations. The psychoanalyst Marion Milner has been having a resurgence in the shop and beyond, and when Zoë described *A Life of One's Own* to me, I immediately knew I had to read it. Milner brings us on a seven-year quest to discover what

makes her truly happy – it's endlessly fascinating. American essayist Vivian Gornick's writing delights me and *The Odd Woman and the City* brightened several dark, cold January evenings for me. I struggled a little more with fiction this year, but loved Katie Kitamura's mysterious and disorienting exploration of identity and performance *Audition*. Finally, *The Most Secret Memory of Men*, a Goncourt Prize winner by Mohamed Mbougar Sarr (tr. Lara Vergnaud), is a brilliant novel for those who like labyrinthine quests!



HELENA

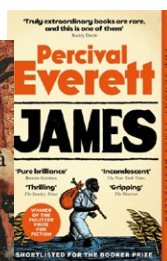
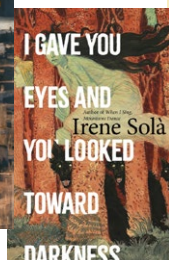
Wolf Hall, Hilary Mantel. £10.99

Woman : Plant : Language, Agata Maslowska. £10.99

The Butterfly's Burden, Mahmoud Darwish. £20

I Gave You Eyes and You Looked Toward Darkness,
Irene Solà. £14.99

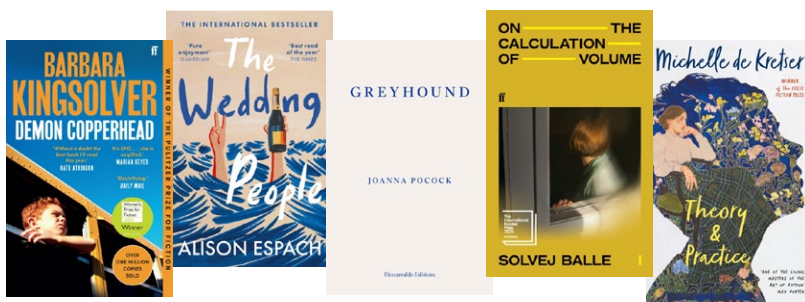
James, Percival Everett. £9.99



This has been a year of reading slowly, but it comes to an end with renewed determination to keep the reading habit strong and fight the endless distractions of this era. I spent slow quiet mornings with beautiful poems from Mahmoud Darwish and Agata Maslowska. I loved Percival Everett for his devilish humour in *James*, a profound and atmospheric novel. I cringed and laughed and marvelled at the unforgettable intergenerational novel *I Gave You Eyes and You Looked Toward Darkness*, by the incredibly talented Catalan writer Irene Solà. But really, my

reading year was mainly defined by *Wolf Hall*, which I already know is one of the best books I'll ever read. I can only say Hilary Mantel was a genius, I hadn't enjoyed reading a book so much for a long time – I was obsessed with it, I could only think of finding a quiet time to keep reading it, Cromwell and Tudor England were in my mind all the time and I'm not even a historically inclined reader. Two books that didn't make it in but which I really enjoyed were *Gertrude Stein: An Afterlife* by Francesca Wade, and *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey.

Demon Copperhead, Barbara Kingsolver. £9.99
The Wedding People, Alison Espach. £9.99
Greyhound, Joanna Pocock. £14.99
On the Calculation of Volume, Solvej Balle. £12.99
Theory & Practice, Michelle de Kretser. £12.99



I write this while on a reading streak, picking up recommendations from colleagues and friends like *James*, *Tipping the Velvet* and *North Woods* in a row! Imagine! I was intimidated by the size and subject matter of *Demon Copperhead* for too long, but this retelling of David Copperfield set amidst the opioid crisis and poverty of Appalachia became an all-time favourite. The *On the Calculation of Volume* series may be familiar if you've asked Euan or I about books recently – we're often pushing these unforgettable books into customers' hands. I also loved Michelle de Kretser's *Theory & Practice*, deconstructing

ideas of what a novel should be with lightness and care. The only non-fiction title on my list is *Greyhound* by Joanna Pocock, a gut-punching insight into the slow decimation of the US public transport system, reflecting on how we care for one another when systems force us to make individualistic choices. And finally, *The Wedding People* by Alison Espach follows the protagonist Phoebe who checks herself into a hotel to escape her life, only to become embroiled in a bridezilla wedding that every other hotel guest is attending. It's heartfelt yet spikey in a 90s romcom way and I loved it.



KATYA

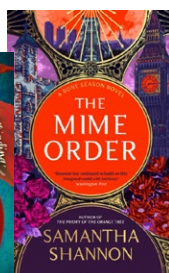
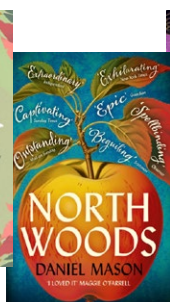
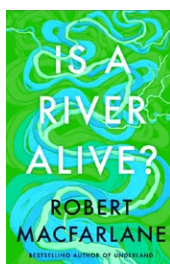
Is a River Alive?, Robert Macfarlane. £25

Love in Exile, Shon Faye. £20

Monk and Robot, Becky Chambers. £15.99

North Woods, Daniel Mason. £9.99

The Mime Order, Samantha Shannon. £9.99



This year seemed to pass at a sprint, and it often felt like a scramble to keep up with my reading. But I blasted away the winter cobwebs with Samantha Shannon's heart-pounding dystopian fantasy *The Mime Order*, which I devoured, white-knuckled. If that book was a thrilling race, Daniel Mason's *North Woods* slowed the tempo, drawing me into the shifting New England setting, with lives intersecting across centuries – mesmerising, hilarious, and bubbling with wilderness. I also had my first foray into Becky Chambers, with her charming *Monk and Robot* duology – the tears were good tears, and an

optimistic future suddenly didn't seem out of reach. Turning to non-fiction, Shon Faye's *Love in Exile* was such a refreshing, engaging series of essays on modern love and femininity; I was constantly scribbling in the margins! And of course, my most honoured mention of the year goes to *Is a River Alive?* by Robert Macfarlane – a writer who's been a major influence on my perception of the natural world, and this book of torrents and eddies powerfully argues for establishing a more intentional relationship with the environment, whilst at the same time being an utterly moving, thrilling, and hopeful piece of writing.



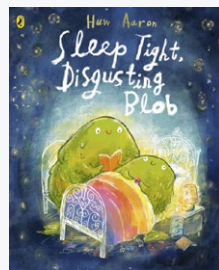
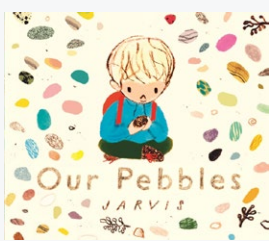
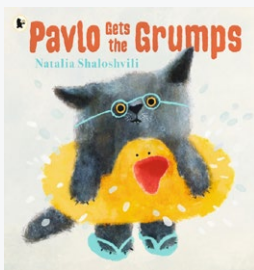
The Portobello Bookshop

It's time again for our annual **Christmas Gift Giving Tree** which, with your help, gets books into the hands of readers young and old, locally and further away. **You can donate in store by picking up a tag from our tree and purchasing a book,**

or online via our **Christmas Book Drive** page. Your donations will go directly to our partner charities and the people they support. **Every year we are heartened by the generosity and kindness of our customers, so thank you for your support.**

Children's Picture Books

Aliens, cats, geese, sausage dogs, pebbles, blobs – 2025's picture book picks have it all. There's hopefully something for every young reader in this line-up.



We Are Definitely Human, X. Fang. £12.99 **Pavlo Gets the Grumps**, Natalia Shaloshvili. £7.99

The Cave Downwind of the Café, Mikey Please. £14.99 **Coorie Doon**, Jackie Kay & Jill Calder. £12.99

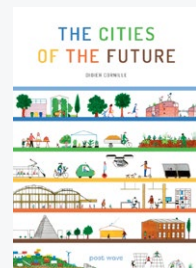
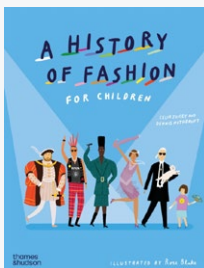
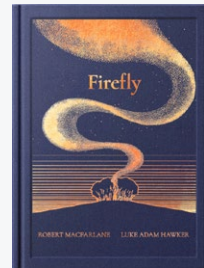
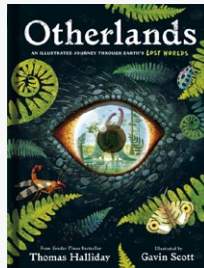
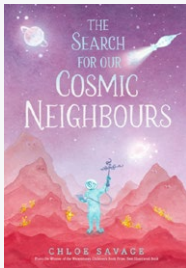
Books Aren't for Eating, Carlie Sorosiak & Manu Montoya. £7.99 **Clive Penguin Learns to Fly, Sort of**, Huw Lewis Jones. £12.99

Our Pebbles, Jarvis. £12.99 **The Big Day**, Rachel Plummer & Forrest Burdett. £7.99

Sleep Tight, Disgusting Blob, Huw Aaron. £7.99

Children's Reference

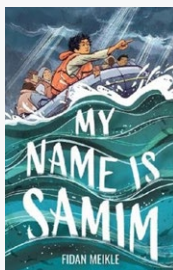
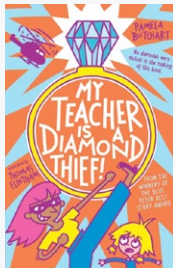
For the young readers in your life who like their books more factual, we've chosen nine of our favourite reference titles from 2025, with subjects ranging from sea to sky, nature and evolution, fashion to cities and more.



- The Search for our Cosmic Neighbours**, Chloe Savage. £12.99 **Otherlands**, Thomas Halliday & Gavin Scott. £20
Choose Your Own Evolution, Jules Howard & Gordy Wright. £14.99 **Great Escapes**, David Long & Jamie Coe. £18.99
Leave the Trees, Please, Benjamin Zephaniah & Melissa Castrillon. £12.99
The Night Creatures: Firefly, Robert Macfarlane & Luke Adam Hawker. £14.99
A History of Fashion for Children, Celia Joicey & Dennis Nothdruff. £16.99
Spin to Survive: The Pharaoh's Curse, Emily Hawkins. £20 **The Cities of the Future**, Didier Cornille. £14.99

Children's Fiction

We've collected some of our favourite children's fiction titles for ages 5-8 and 9-12 including plenty of local authors like Alastair Chisholm and Nadine Aisha Jassat and featuring fantastical tales, enchanting mysteries, action-packed sci-fi and heartwarming stories of family and friendship.



The House at the Edge of the World, Nadine Aisha Jassat. £8.99 **Nate Yu's Blast from the Past**, Maisie Chan. £7.99

The First Year, Matt Goodfellow. £9.99 **Role Model**, Elle McNicoll. £7.99

My Teacher is a Diamond Thief, Pamela Butchart. £7.99 **The Poisoned King**, Katherine Rundell. £14.99

Blitzers, Alastair Chisholm. £7.99 **My Name is Samim**, Fidan Meikle. £7.99 **Rocket Boy**, Katie Jennings. £6.99

Children's Graphic Novels

The popularity of graphic novels for readers young and old has soared over the last few years. Here we've chosen some new entries from familiar faces like Dog Man and Bunny vs Monkey, as well as a couple of new kids on the block!



Pablo and Splash: Roman Holiday, Sheena Dempsey.
£8.99



Donut Squad: Take Over the World!, Neill Cameron.
£9.99



Cosmo Park, Madeleine Finlay.
£10.99



Bunny vs Monkey: Intergalactic Monkey Business!, Jamie Smart.
£12.99



Dog Man 14: Big Jim Believes, Dav Pilkey.
£14.99



City of Dragons: Quest for the True Dragon, Jaimal Yogis & Vivian Truong. £9.99

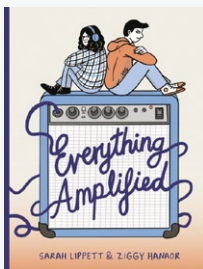
This year we launched our **Kids' Summer Book Club**, an accessible reading challenge that encourages young readers to read for pleasure.

We would like to thank all those who took part in this year's book club for your enthusiasm, dedication and passion for reading! **Keep your eyes peeled for the return of this initiative in 2026!**



Young Adult

For the young adults and teens in your life, we've chosen some of the best books of 2025 including addictive thrillers, sweeping adventures, suspenseful mysteries, and charming romances.



Our Infinite Fates, Laura Steven. £16.99

Sunrise on the Reaping, Suzanne Collins. £19.99

The Mirror World, Femi Fadugba. £9.99

Sad Girl Hours, Anna Zoe Quirke. £8.99

Keep Your Friends Close, Cynthia Murphy. £9.99

Everything Amplified, Sarah Lippett & Ziggy Hanaor. £18.99

Bury Your Friends, Benjamin Dean. £8.99

Murtagh, Christopher Paolini. £10.99

Livia in Rome, Bruna de Luca. £8.99



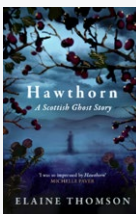
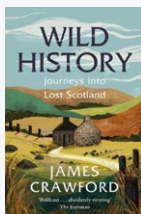
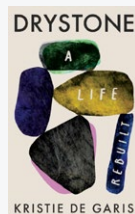
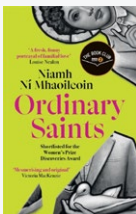
Another year has passed and we're hosting **more events than ever!** We love getting to host an incredible line-up of authors at the bookshop and at larger venues in wider Edinburgh (whilst broadcasting their conversations online too), as well producing a series of

masterclasses and **workshops**. Some of our highlights this year include events with **Ocean Vuong, Nicola Sturgeon, Val McDermid, Heather Parry, V.E. Schwab** and **Helena Fornells Nadal**, to name just a few!

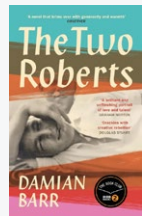
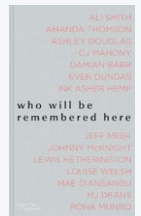
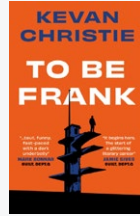
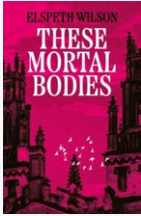
theportobellobookshop.com/events

Picks from Scotland

We're lucky to live in a country that's home to so many authors and we've chosen a few highlights from this year's incredible roster of titles from the Scottish literary scene. Where better to start when choosing a gift for a loved one this Christmas!



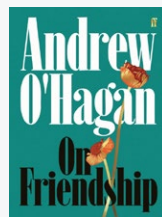
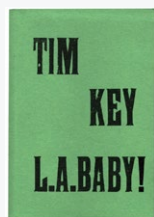
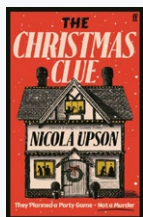
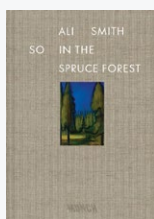
poyums annaw, Len Pennie. £14.99 **Muckle Flugga**, Michael Pedersen. £16.99 **Winter**, Val McDermid. £16.99
Carrion Crow, Heather Parry. £9.99 **How to Kill a Witch**, Claire Mitchell & Zoe Venditozzi. £20.00
Ordinary Saints, Niamh Ní Mhaolcoilín. £16.99 **Drystone: A Life Rebuilt**, Kristie De Garis. £14.99 **Hermit**, Chris McQueer. £18.99
Wild History, James Crawford. £12.99 **Hawthorn**, Elaine Thomson. £16.99 **Drifting North**, Dominic Hinde. £20.00
Benbecula, Graeme Macrae Burnet. £12.00



These Mortal Bodies, Elspeth Wilson. £16.99 **Murray Hall**, Milo Allan. £16.99 **To Be Frank**, Kevan Christie. £9.99
The Search for Othella Savage, Foday Mannah. £16.99 **Poor Creatures**, Mairi Kidd. £16.99
The Shapeshifter's Daughter, Sally Magnusson. £16.99 **25 Library Terrace**, Natalie Fergie. £9.99
There She Goes: New Travel Writing by Women, Esa Aldegheri (ed). £14.99 **Making Matters**, Clare Hunter. £20
Red Pockets, Alice Mah. £20 **Holy Boys**, Andrés N. Ordorica. £10.99 **The Tenement Revealed**, John Gilbert. £39.99
Who Will Be Remembered Here, Various. £16.99 **The Two Roberts**, Damian Barr. £18.99
No and Other Love Stories, Kirsty Logan. £16.99 **Watch Your Back**, Emma Christie. £10.99

Gift & Stocking Fillers

Not sure what to get someone? How about one of these lovely giftable books? We've chosen the best of the bunch below, perfect for a last minute gift or stocking filler.



The Little Book of Christmas and Hogmanay, Anna Marshall. £9.99 **So in the Spruce Forest**, Ali Smith. £10.95
Antarctica, Claire Keegan. £12.99 **Connecting Scotland's History**, Anna Groundwater. £9.99
The Christmas Clue, Nicola Upson. £10 **L.A. Baby**, Tim Key. £16 **The Book of Memory**, Mark Rowlands. £14.99
On Friendship, Andrew O'Hagan. £12.99 **Mythopedia**, Adrienne Mayor. £12.99 **How to Live an Artful Life**, Katy Hessel. £16.99
All About Love (Deluxe Collector's Edition), bell hooks. £16.99 **Penance (Indie Edition)**, Eliza Clark. £15

Fiction

It's no surprise that novels take up a lot of room in our staff picks, but there are plenty of other fiction titles we wanted to highlight from 2025, including literary heavyweights, translated titles and high-quality offerings from indie presses.



Heart Lamp

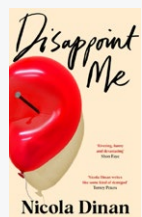
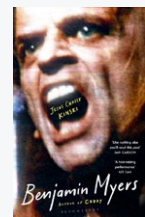
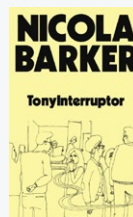
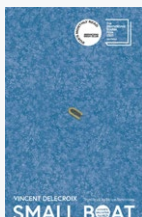
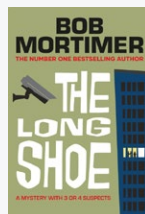
Banu Mushtaq

“On days when it was impossible for Shariza to wake up in time for the dawn names, she would blame it on her high blood pressure, and had a habit of saying she had no peace because of those damn talismans.” Her mother used to say. All this is Shariza’s game. Shariza comes early in the morning, presses your legs, drapes a blanket, snuggles you, puts you back to sleep... Translated by Deepa Bhasthi Winner of an English PEN Award Winner of the 2022 International Booker Prize

HAN KANG

WE DO NOT PART

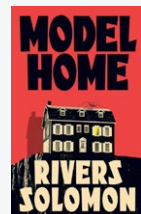
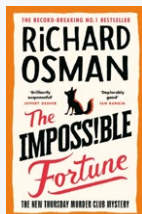
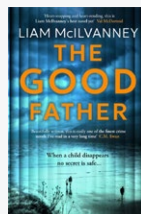
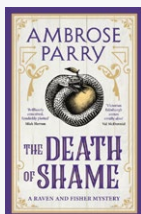
TRANSLATED BY E. YAEWON & PAIGE ANIYAH MORRIS



Perfection, Vincenzo Latronico (tr. by Sophie Hughes). £12.99 **Heart Lamp**, Banu Mushtaq (tr. by Deepa Bhasthi). £14.99
We Do Not Part, Han Kang (tr. by E. Yaewon & Paige Aniyah Morris). £18.99 **The Long Shoe**, Bob Mortimer. £22
Small Boat, Vincent Delecroix (tr. by Helen Stevenson). £12.99 **Theft**, Abdulrazak Gurnah. £18.99
TonyInterruptor, Nicola Barker. £16.99 **Jesus Christ Kinski**, Benjamin Myers. £18.99 **Disappoint Me**, Nicola Dinan. £16.99
Helm, Sarah Hall. £20 **Just A Little Dinner**, Cecile Tili (tr. by Katherine Gregor). £12.99
Open, Heaven, Seán Hewitt. £16.99

Crime & Horror

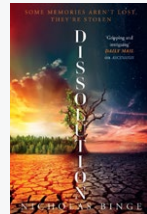
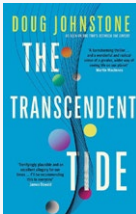
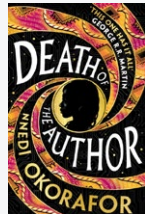
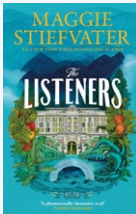
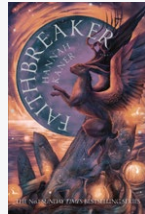
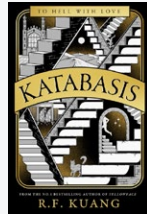
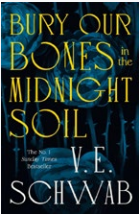
Our 2025 round-up of Crime and Horror books combines two of our most popular genres in the bookshop. Whether you're a fan of criminally good mysteries from the likes of Ambrose Parry or creepy gothic tales from Bora Chung, there's something in this list for you.



The Death of Shame, Ambrose Parry. £18.99 **Silent Bones**, Val McDermid. £22 **The Good Liar**, Denise Mina. £16.99
The Good Father, Liam McIlvanney. £16.99 **The Burning Grounds**, Abir Mukherjee. £18.99
The Stolen Heart, Andrey Kurkov (tr. by Boris Dralyuk). £20 **The Impossible Fortune**, Richard Osman. £22
Model Home, Rivers Solomon. £14.99 **On Earth As It Is Beneath**, Ana Paula Maia (tr. by Padma Viswanathan). £11.99
The Midnight Timetable, Bora Chung (tr. by Anton Hur). £14.99 **Saltwash**, Andrew Michael Hurley. £16.99
Bog People, Hollie Starling (ed.). £18.99

Sci-fi & Fantasy

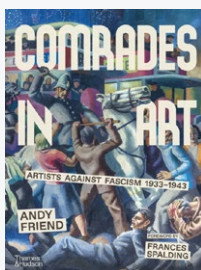
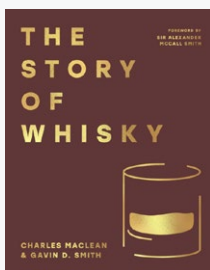
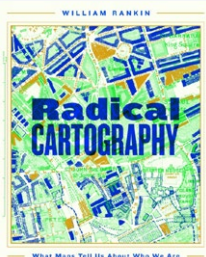
Escape into our sci-fi & fantasy picks for 2025, including page-turning offerings from many local authors including V.E. Schwab, T.L. Huchu, Doug Johnstone and L.R. Lam.



Bury Our Bones in the Midnight Soil, V.E. Schwab. £22 **Secrets of the First School**, T.L. Huchu. £20 **Katabasis**, R.F. Kuang. £22
Faithbreaker, Hannah Kaner. £20 **Stone & Sky**, Ben Aaronovitch. £20 **The Listeners**, Maggie Stiefvater. £20
Emberclaw, L.R. Lam. £20 **Death of the Author**, Nnedi Okorafor. £20 **The River Has Roots**, Amal El-Mohtar. £14.99
The Transcendent Tide, Doug Johnstone. £9.99 **Dissolution**, Nicholas Binge. £16.99 **Luminous**, Silvia Park. £16.99

Beautiful Books

Coffee table books are a staple of gift-giving at this time of year and there's plenty of beautiful choices out there. We've chosen nine of our favourites from 2025 to help you find the perfect present for your loved ones!



We Feed the UK, The Gaia Foundation. £35 **Folkish**, Victionary. £32

Mountaineering Women: Climbing Through History, Joanna Croston. £30 **Radical Cartography**, William Rankin. £30

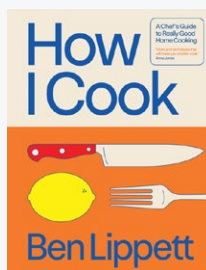
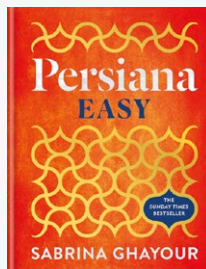
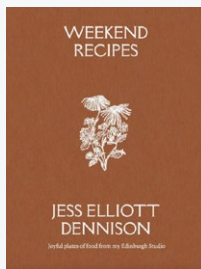
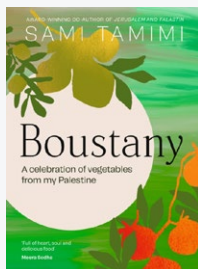
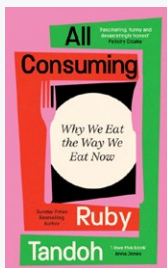
The Story of Whisky, Charles MacLean & Gavin D. Smith. £45 **Slow Looking: The Art of Nature**, Olivia Meehan. £40

Aviary: The Bird in Contemporary Photography, William A. Ewing. £50

Comrades in Art: Artists Against Fascism 1933-1943, Andy Friend. £40 **Green Mountains**, Caroline Eden. £28

Cookery

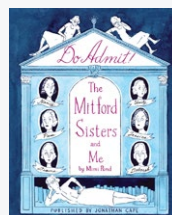
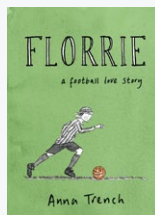
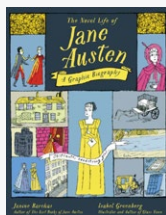
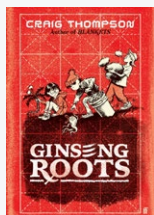
We apologise in advance if you get hungry whilst browsing this section! Here are just a handful of the brilliant food & drink titles out this year, including beautiful cookbooks from Flora Shedden and Sabrina Ghayour as well as Ruby Tandoh's insightful essays on food culture.



All Consuming, Ruby Tandoh. £18.99 **Kitchen Table**, Emily Cuddeford & Rachel Morgan. £25 **Sama Sama**, Julie Lin. £28
Boustany, Sami Tamimi. £30 **Weekend Recipes**, Jess Elliott Dennison. £23.50 **Persiana Easy**, Sabrina Ghayour. £28
Winter in the Highlands, Flora Shedden. £26 **Fusão**, Ixta Belfrage. £28 **How I Cook**, Ben Lippett. £26

Graphic Novels & Comics

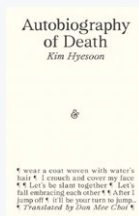
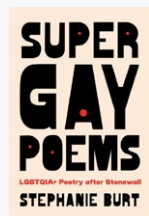
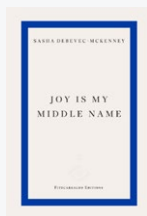
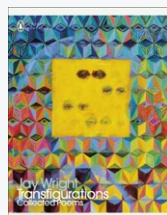
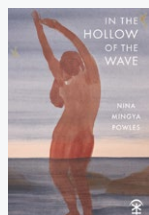
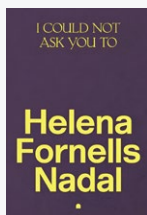
Our graphic novel section is particularly popular at this time of year, with good reason – they make the perfect gift! We welcomed new releases from Alison Bechdel and Craig Thompson, and discovered many other brilliant graphic novelists.



Witchcraft, Sole Otero. £31.99 **Love Languages**, James Albon. £17.99 **Cannon**, Lee Lai. £25 **Spent**, Alison Bechdel. £20
Ginseng Roots, Craig Thompson. £25 **The Novel Life of Jane Austen**, Janine Barchas & Isabel Greenberg. £20
Florrie, Anna Trench. £20 **Lore Olympus: Volume Nine**, Rachel Smythe. £25 **Dry Cleaned**, Joris Mertens. £25.00
Tongues I, Anders Nilsen. £25 **Always Remember**, Charlie Mackesy. £22 **Do Admit**, Mimi Pond. £25

Poetry

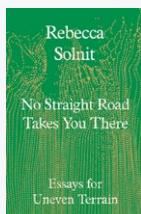
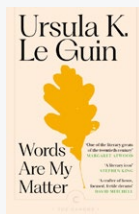
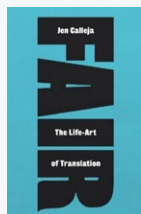
New collections from Nina Mingya Powles, the late John Burnside and Hollie McNish feature amongst our highlights, but if we could tell you about just one, it would be Helena Fornells Nadal's debut pamphlet *I Could Not Ask You To* – trust us, it's simply brilliant.



I Could Not Ask You To, Helena Fornells Nadal. £8 **In The Hollow of the Wave**, Nina Mingya Powles. £11.99
Virgin, Hollie McNish. £14.99 **Dwell**, Simon Armitage. £10
There Lives a Young Girl in Me Who Will Not Die, Tove Ditlevsen. £9.99 **The Empire of Forgetting**, John Burnside. £13
Maryville, Joelle Taylor. £14.99 **Transfigurations**, Jay Wright. £14.99 **Joy Is My Middle Name**, Sasha Debevec-McKenney. £12.99
Super Gay Poems, Stephanie Burt (ed.). £24.95 **No One Will Know You Tomorrow**, Najwan Darwish. £20
Autobiography of Death, Kim Hyesoon. £14.99

Essays

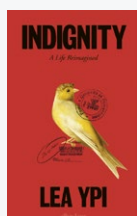
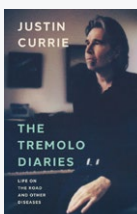
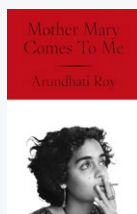
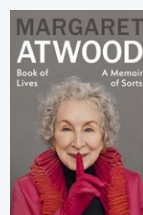
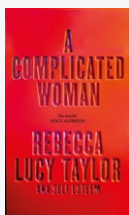
Our list of essay collections this year draws from subjects as varied as the art of translation, wild swimming, and romance fiction, as well as exploring and questioning the inequalities of our society at large.



- In Love with Love**, Ella Risbridger. £16.99 **Fair: The Life-Art of Translation**, Jen Calleja. £12.99
Words Are My Matter, Ursula K. Le Guin. £10.99 **We Are Not Numbers**, Ahmed Alnaouq & Pam Bailey (eds.). £14.99
Transcendence for Beginners, Clare Carlisle. £12.99 **Dead and Alive**, Zadie Smith. £22
One Day, Everyone Will Always Have Been Against This, Omar El Akkad. £16.99 **The Future of Truth**, Werner Herzog. £14.99
Swimming Studies, Leanne Shapton. £13.99 **No Straight Road Takes You There**, Rebecca Solnit. £16.99
I Deliver Parcels in Beijing, Hu Anyan (tr. by Jack Hargreaves). £20 **Things That Disappear**, Jenny Erpenbeck. £12.99

Biography & Memoirs

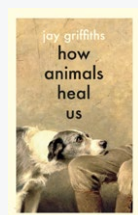
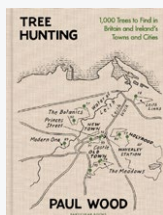
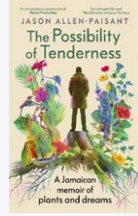
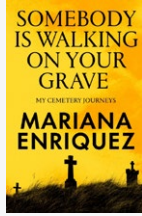
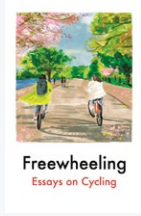
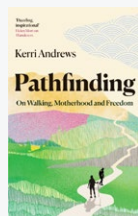
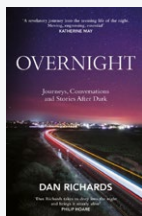
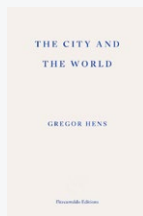
There are plenty of fascinating biographies and memoirs out this year, including compelling investigations into the lives of Muriel Spark, Josephine Baker and Gertrude Stein, and insightful recollections from Nicola Sturgeon, Arundhati Roy and Raymond Antrobus, to name just a few.



A Complicated Woman, Rebecca Lucy Taylor. £22 **The Quiet Ear**, Raymond Antrobus. £16.99
Electric Spark: The Enigma of Muriel Spark, Frances Wilson. £25.00 **Book of Lives: A Memoir of Sorts**, Margaret Atwood. £30
The Hottest Girl at Burn Camp, Krystal Evans. £20 **Mother Mary Comes to Me**, Arundhati Roy. £20
The Tremolo Diaries, Justin Currie. £22 **Fearless and Free**, Josephine Baker. £18.99
Gertrude Stein: An Afterlife, Francesca Wade. £20 **Indignity: A Life Reimagined**, Lea Ypi. £22
Frankly, Nicola Sturgeon. £28 **Children of Radium**, Joe Dunthorne. £16.99

Nature & Travel

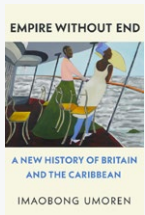
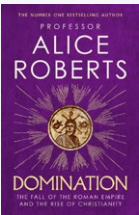
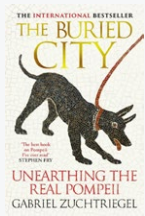
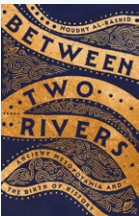
Our nature and travel list this year takes us from the sea to the sky, by train and by bicycle, across graveyards and through forests. These books are perfect for adventurers and lovers of the outdoors, encouraging us to appreciate and protect the natural world around us.



Looking Down at the Stars, Christina Riley. £12.99 **The City and the World**, Gregor Hens. £14.99 **Overnight**, Dan Richards. £20
Pathfinding, Kerri Andrews. £16.99 **Freewheeling**, Various. £10.99 **Moonlight Express**, Monisha Rajesh. £22
Somebody Is Walking on Your Grave, Mariana Enriquez. £20 **The Possibility of Tenderness**, Jason Allen-Paisant. £18.99
A Barrister for the Earth, Monica Feria-Tinta. £22 **Tree Hunting**, Paul Wood. £30
Ocean, David Attenborough & Colin Butfield. £28 **How Animals Heal Us**, Jay Griffiths. £20.00

History & Society

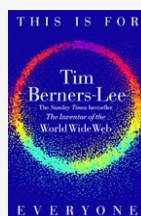
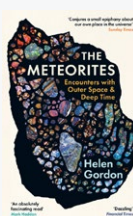
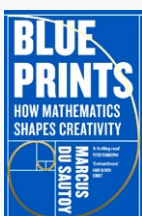
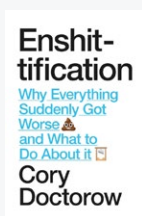
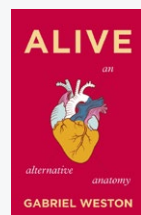
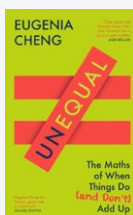
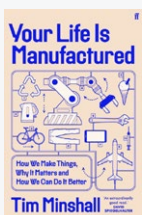
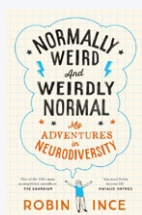
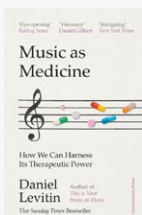
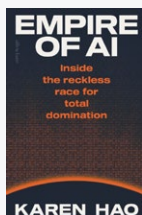
Wide in scope, featuring titles about ancient Mesopotamia and the story of the last generation of British miners, our history picks are eclectic and equally fascinating! Our society and culture highlights include explorations of music, sound and folklore.



Between Two Rivers, Moudhy Al-Rashid. £25 **When We Ruled**, Paula Akpan. £22 **America, América**, Greg Grandin. £30
The Buried City, Gabriel Zuchtriegel (tr. by Jamie Bulloch). £22 **Domination**, Alice Roberts. £22 **Legenda**, Janina Ramirez. £25
Mining Men, Emily P. Webber. £22 **Empire Without End**, Imaobong Umoren. £25 **Hark**, Alice Vincent. £18.99
With Her Own Hands, Nicole Nehrig. £25 **The Lost Folk**, Lally MacBeth. £20
Mark Kermode's Surround Sound, Mark Kermode. £18.99

Science & Technology

As technology develops and shapes our lives, books continue to exist to try and help us understand it. We're highlighting some of the best Science & Technology titles published this year including titles from Robin Ince, Eugenia Cheng and Tim Berners-Lee.



Empire of AI, Karen Hao. £25 **Music as Medicine**, Daniel Levitin. £22 **To Exist As I Am**, Grace Spence Green. £16.99
Careless People, Sarah Wynn-Williams. £22 **Normally Weird and Weirdly Normal**, Robin Ince. £20
Your Life Is Manufactured, Tim Minshall. £20 **Unequal**, Eugenia Cheng. £18.99 **Alive**, Gabriel Weston. £20
Enshittification: Why Everything Suddenly Got Worse and What to Do About it, Cory Doctorow. £22
Blueprints: How Mathematics Shapes Creativity, Marcus du Sautoy. £22 **The Meteorites**, Helen Gordon. £10.99
This is for Everyone, Tim Berners-Lee. £25



The Portobello Bookshop

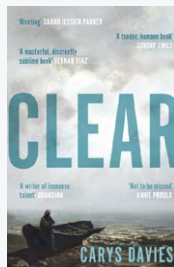
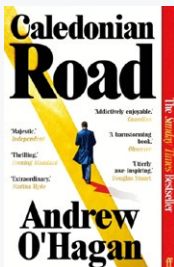
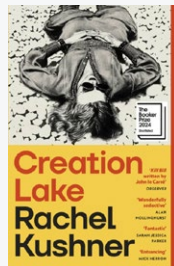
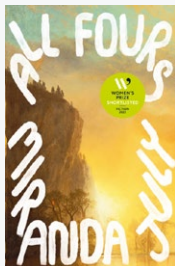
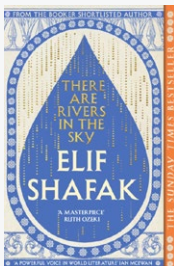
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Our website offers **millions of titles**, including many **signed and exclusive editions**, available to order for **delivery or collection**. You can browse our **monthly bookseller picks**, sign up to our **events**,

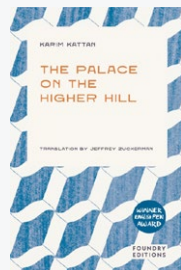
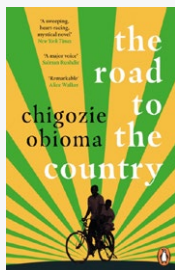
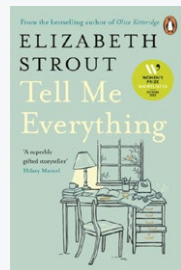
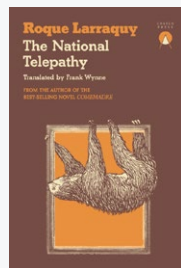
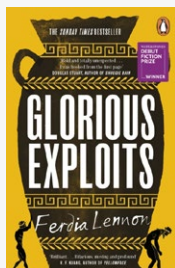
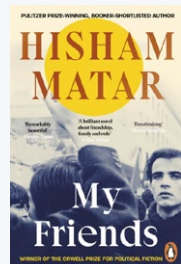
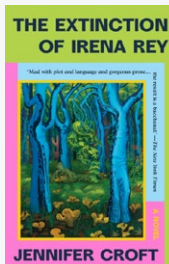
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Paperbacks of the Year

Remember last year when you said you would wait until that book came out in paperback before you picked it up? Well, now's the time! Here's a selection of our favourite books out in a slightly more portable format this year.



There are Rivers in the Sky, Elif Shafak. £9.99 **All Fours**, Miranda July. £9.99 **Creation Lake**, Rachel Kushner. £9.99
Caledonian Road, Andrew O'Hagan. £9.99 **The Ministry of Time**, Kaliane Bradley. £9.99 **Clear**, Caryl Davies. £9.99
Scaffolding, Lauren Elkin. £9.99 **Only Here, Only Now**, Tom Newlands. £00 **The Coin**, Yasmin Zaher. £9.99



Gliff, Ali Smith. £9.99 The Extinction of Irena Rey, Jennifer Croft. £9.99 My Friends, Hisham Matar £10.99

Glorious Exploits, Ferdia Lennon £9.99 Long Island, Colm Tóibín £9.99

The National Telepathy, Roque Larraquy (tr. by Frank Wynne) £11.99 Eurotrash, Christian Kracht (tr. by Daniel Bowles) £12.99

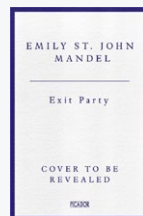
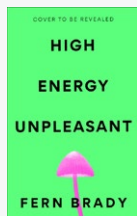
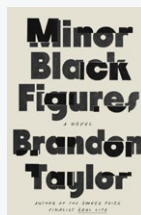
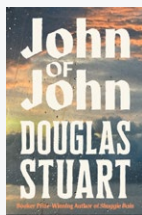
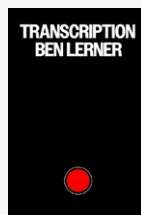
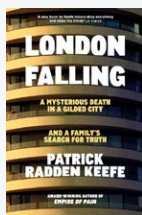
The Safekeep, Yael Van der Wouden £9.99 Tell Me Everything, Elizabeth Strout £9.99

A Sunny Place for Shady People, Mariana Enriquez (tr. by Megan McDowell) £9.99

The Road to the Country, Chigozie Obioma £9.99 The Palace on the Higher Hill, Karim Kattan (tr. by Jeffrey Zuckerman) £13.99

Looking Ahead to 2026

Here are some exciting glimpses of books we look forward to in the coming year. With new books from bookseller favourites Emily St John Mandel, Ali Smith, Patrick Radden Keefe, Ben Lerner and more, it's already shaping up to be an excellent year for new releases.



London Falling, Patrick Radden Keefe. £22 **Glyph**, Ali Smith. £20 **Transcription**, Ben Lerner. £14.99
The Ending Writes Itself, Evelyn Clarke. £16.99 **John of John**, Douglas Stuart. £20 **Vigil**, George Saunders. £18.99
Minor Black Figures, Brandon Taylor. £18.99 **Sisters in Yellow**, Mieko Kawakami. £16.99 **Boyhood**, David Keenan. £25
High Energy Unpleasant, Fern Brady. £20 **Almost Life**, Kiran Millwood Hargrave. £18.99
Exit Party, Emily St John Mandel. £18.99

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