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Kader Abdolah

The King

*Translated by Nancy Forest-Flier*

A hypnotic page-turner about historical change and ruthless palace intrigue in Persia, c. 1848

The King, young Shah Naser, succeeds to the throne of Persia at a turning point: he inherits an enchanted palace of harems, treasures, secret doors, sudden deaths, and hidden agendas. The court is dangerous enough, but outside all manner of change threatens—industrialization, colonization, and democratic ideals. Russia and England conspire to open the King’s empire; Shah Naser’s mother and vizier take opposing sides. The poor King is trapped. He likes some aspects of modernity (electricity, photography) but can’t embrace democracy. He must keep his throne.

With this gleaming and seemingly simple story, Kader Abdolah, the acclaimed Iranian émigré novelist, speaks of deeper truths. A novel that has many timely things to say about eras of upheaval, The King is an unforgettable book.

“This King is utterly fabulous in both senses of the word: a sly, witty, knowing fable, full of charm and humour. Deceptively simple in its storytelling, it reads like one of Angela Carter’s fairy tales transposed into the nineteenth-century Qajar Persian court. Kader Abdolah is a masterful and completely addictive storyteller.”

—WILLIAM DALRYMPLE, author of RETURN OF A KING

“A dramatic tale of a later ruler and his heroic, if often brutal, battles. The King is a modern epic.”

—THE INDEPENDENT (UK)

KADER ABDOLAH is the pen name of Hossein Sadjadi Ghaemmaghami Farahani. Opposed to the rule of the last shah and that of the ayatollahs who followed, he lives in Holland and writes in Dutch. Abdolah’s The House of the Mosque and My Father’s Notebook have appeared in English here, and he has been acclaimed as “moving and illuminating” (Publishers Weekly), “captivating and distinctive” (TLS), “poignant and colorful” (The Economist), and “clean and lyrical” (Kirkus Reviews).

NANCY FOREST-FLIER has translated books by Truus Matti and Marleen Westera.
Jorge Luis Borges

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“A vast interpretive web: this is the most surprising and useful of Borges’s works to have appeared posthumously.” —EDGARDO KREBS, *HARPER’S*

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JORGE LUIS BORGES (1899–1986), has been called “a giant of world literature” by John Updike and “a central fact of Western culture” by the Washington Post.

An award-winning literary translator, KATHERINE SILVER is the codirector of the Banff International Literary Translation Centre (BILTC).
A Little Lumpen Novelita

“Now I am a mother and a married woman, but not long ago I led a life of crime”: so Bianca begins her tale of growing up the hard way in Rome. Orphaned overnight as a teenager—“our parents died in a car crash on their first vacation without us”—she drops out of school, gets a crappy job, and drifts into bad company. Her younger brother brings home two petty criminals who need a place to stay. As the four of them share the family apartment and plot a strange crime, Bianca learns how low she can fall.

Electric, tense with foreboding, and written in jagged, propulsive chapters, A Little Lumpen Novelita delivers a surprising, fractured fable of seizing control of one’s fate.

“A Little Lumpen Novelita is brave and beautiful, a ‘quiet storm’ that reminds us what a joy it is to read Bolaño’s intimate writing.” —REVISTA ROCINANTE

“A Little Lumpen Novelita is a piece of intelligent realism without any sermons.” —EL PAÍS

“Bolaño has joined the immortals.” —THE WASHINGTON POST
Dylan Thomas’s 100th Birthday

The reputation of Dylan Thomas (October 27, 1914–November 9, 1953) as one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century has not waned. A Welshman with a passion for the English language, Thomas had a singular poetic voice that has been admired and imitated but never matched.

New Directions is proud to have been Thomas’s publisher from the beginning, and this fall we’ll be celebrating with numerous events and readings around the country. Happy 100th, Dylan Thomas!

“This Dylan Thomas is the greatest lyric poet in English of the 20th century.”

—LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI

“This Thomas meant much to me and my generation, he is still singing in his chains like the sea—a force driving the flowers.”

—SEAMUS HEANEY

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—Baltimore Evening Sun

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The Hundred Days—that span between Napoleon’s escape from Elba and his final defeat at Waterloo—describes the great Emperor’s last grab for glory. From the perspective of Napoleon himself and the devoted palace laundress Angelina—also from Corsica, a hard-luck case who deeply loves him—Roth refraacts the deep sorrow of their seemingly intertwined fates.

Roth’s signature lyrical elegance and haunting atmospheric details sing in The Hundred Days. “There may be,” as James Wood has stated, “no modern writer more able to combine the novelistic and the poetic, to blend lusty, undamaged realism with sparkling powers of metaphor and simile.”

“There is a poem on every page of Joseph Roth.” —JOSEPH BRODSKY

“This is not perhaps the real Napoleon, but it’s certainly a remarkable creation that leaps off the page.” —JAKE KERRIDGE, THE TELEGRAPH (UK)

“What a marvelous writer! Read him now. You can thank me later.” —MICHAEL DIRDA

JOSEPH ROTH (1894–1939) was the great elegist of the cosmopolitan culture that flourished in the last dying days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He published several books and articles before his untimely death at the age of 44. Roth’s writing has been admired by J. M. Coetzee, Jeffrey Eugenides, Joseph Brodsky, and Nadine Gordimer, among many others.

RICHARD PANCHYK is the author, editor, or translator of over twenty books.
New Directions had the good fortune five years ago to begin copublishing literary art books with Christine Burgin. Her book publications (Rodney Graham’s *British Weathervanes*, Zoe Beloff’s *Coney Island Amateur Psychoanalytic Society*) have long been noted for their beauty. When Burgin became fascinated by the microscript writings of Robert Walser, she began working with his acclaimed translator Susan Bernofsky to create *Microscripts*, which shaped up to be a book that might benefit from copublication with a larger publisher.

The wonderful *Microscripts*—thanks to Christine Burgin for both its beautiful design and its extremely high production value—encouraged us to team up again on its subsequent paperback edition as well as on Walser’s *Thirty Poems* and *A Little Ramble: In the Spirit of Robert Walser*. The next copublication, Emily Dickinson’s envelope poems, *The Gorgeous Nothings*, has been a runaway success, and forthcoming is Susan Howe’s *Spontaneous Particulars: The Telepathy of Archives*.

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Spontaneous Particulars: 
The Telepathy of Archives

- A Christine Burgin & New Directions copublication
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A rapturous hymn to discoveries and archives, beautifully illustrated

Great American writers William Carlos Williams, Jonathan Edwards, Hannah Edwards Wetmore, Emily Dickinson, Noah Webster, Gertrude Stein, Hart Crane—all in the physicality of their archival manuscripts (reproduced in beautiful facsimiles here)—are the presiding spirits of Spontaneous Particulars: The Telepathy of Archives. Also woven into Susan Howe’s newest book are beautiful photographs of textiles from anonymous craftspeople. All the materials are links, discoveries, chance encounters, the visual and acoustic shocks resulting from rooting around amid physical archives. These are the telepathies the bibliomaniacal poet relishes. Rummaging in the archives she finds “a deposit of a future yet to come, gathered and guarded . . . a literal and mythical sense of life hereafter—happiness.”

Digital scholarship may offer much for scholars, but Susan Howe loves the materiality of research in real archives and Spontaneous Particulars is “a collaged swan song to the old ways.”

“Susan Howe is our great poetic chronicler of what it means to dwell in possibility, to live on the Edge.” —MARJORIE PERLOFF

“An example of the power of other people’s words to generate profound emotion—maybe the most sustained example—is Susan Howe.”

—THE BOSTON REVIEW

Winner of the Bollingen Prize and an artist/writer in the 2014 Whitney Bien-
nial, SUSAN HOWE is a prominent American poet, sound artist (with David Grubbs), and author of such seminal prose and poetry works as My Emily Dickinson and That This.

CHRISTINE BURGIN is a publisher of literary art and artifact books.
James Laughlin

The Collected Poems

Edited with an introduction by Peter Glassgold
Published simultaneously with the Laughlin biography from FSG

A classic poet of Catullan sensibility hiding in plain sight as an avant-garde publisher and the “Godfather of Modernism”

Published in Laughlin’s centenary year, The Collected Poems of James Laughlin encompasses in one majestic volume all the poetry (with the exception of his verse memoirs, Byways) written by the publisher-poet. Witty, technically brilliant, slyly satiric, and heartbreakingly poignant, Laughlin charted his own poetic course for over six decades, prompting astonishment and joy in fellow poets.

Compiled and edited by Peter Glassgold, Laughlin’s chosen poetry editor, The Collected Poems includes more than 1250 poems—from the early lyrics written in Laughlin’s signature “typewriter” metric, to the “long-line” poems of his later years, to the playful antics of his doppelgänger Hiram Handspring, to the trenchant commentary of the five-line pentastichs that occupied his last days.

Despite all the awards and accolades that James Laughlin received for his service to literature, the honor that pleased him most was his election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1996)—as a poet.

“The secret is out, the publisher of Williams and Pound is himself a great lyric poet.” —CHARLES SIMIC

“James Laughlin, who brought forth so much of the best writing of this century, stands in the company of the greatest modern American poets.” —GARY SNYDER

JAMES LAUGHLIN (1914–1997) founded New Directions in 1936 while still a student at Harvard. He wrote and compiled more than a dozen books of poetry as well as stories and essays; seven volumes of his correspondence with his authors are available from W. W. Norton & Co.

The former editor in chief of New Directions, PETER GLASSGOLD edited James Laughlin’s Byways (2005). His books include the novel The Angel Max (1998) and, most recently, the revised edition of Anarchy! An Anthology of Emma Goldman’s “Mother Earth.”
The Trace is Forrest Gander’s new masterful, poetic novel about a road trip through Mexico. After a devastating incident involving their adolescent son, a couple embark upon a trip through the vast Chihuahua Desert. They retrace the steps of Ambrose Bierce and try to piece their lives back together. With tender precision, Gander explores the intimacy as they travel through towns and picturesque canyons on a journey through the heart of the Mexican desert. After taking a short-cut through the brutally hot countryside, their car overheats miles from nowhere with terrible consequences. . . .

Praise for Forrest Gander’s As a Friend:

“In this strange and beautiful novel as in life, love is part of what is sacred.”
—JEANETTE WINTERSON, THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

“The clarity of artistic vision, formal innovation, and emotional honesty are enviable.”
—THE HARVARD REVIEW

“A moving elegy. It is also proof that language has magical potential.”
—JOANNA SCOTT

“Profound and relentlessly beautiful.”
—RIKKI DUCORNET

FORREST GANDER is an award-winning poet, novelist, and translator. His numerous books include As a Friend, Science & Steepleflower, and Core Samples from the World. He is the A. K. Seaver Professor of Literary Arts and Cooperative Culture at Brown University.
Acclaimed writer Norman Manea’s Captives is a kaleidoscopic, imagistic, and stylistically innovative look into the lives of three characters: an alienated piano teacher, an engineer reflecting on his youth, and a veteran who suffers through daily life long after surviving the battles of World War II.

Divided into interrelated sections—narrated in first-, second-, and third-person voices—Captives explores the social and psychological conditions of postwar Romania: a loss of identity, a complicated sense of guilt and trauma from having survived the fascist government during World War II, and the rise of communism.

“Mr. Manea’s voice is radically new, and we are blessedly awakened and alerted by the demand his fiction makes on our understanding.”

—LORE SEGAL, THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

“A superb writer who gives an extraordinary testimony of a rich and dramatic life under one of the most grotesque and ferocious dictatorships.”

—MARIO VARGAS LLOSA

“With his talent and creativity, Manea belongs to the great.”

—ORHAN PAMUK

NORMAN MANEA is the Francis Flourney Professor of European Culture and writer-in-residence at Bard College. As a child, Manea was deported to Transnistria by the Romanian fascist government, and in 1986 he went into exile from Ceausescu’s dictatorship. Since arriving in the West he has received many important awards and has been the subject of a New Yorker profile, and his work has been translated into more than twenty languages.

A novelist, essayist, and translator living in Romania, JEAN HARRIS was the 2007–2008 grant recipient from the U.C. Irvine International Center for Writing and Translation.
Jenny Erpenbeck

The End of Days

The End of Days, by the acclaimed German writer Jenny Erpenbeck, consists essentially of five “books,” each leading to a different death of the same unnamed woman protagonist. How could it all have gone differently? the narrator asks in the intermezzos. The first chapter begins with the death of a baby in the early twentieth-century Hapsburg Empire. In the next chapter, the same girl grows up in Vienna, but her strange relationship with a boy leads to death. In the next scenario, she survives adolescence and moves to Russia with her husband. Both are dedicated Communists, yet our heroine ends up in a labor camp. But her fate does not end there….

A novel of incredible breadth yet amazing concision, The End of Days offers a unique overview of 20th-century German and German-Jewish history by “one of the finest, most exciting authors alive” (Michael Faber).

“The brutality of her subjects, combined with the fierce intelligence and tenderness at work behind her restrained, unvarnished prose, is overwhelming.”

-NICOLE KRAUSS, author of GREAT HOUSE

“Dreamlike, almost incantatory prose.”

-VOGUE

“Erpenbeck’s writing is a lure that leads us—off-centre, as into a vortex—into the most haunted and most haunting territory.”

-ANNE MICHAELS, author of FUGITIVE PIECES

Jenny Erpenbeck was born in East Berlin in 1967. New Directions publishes her books The Old Child & Other Stories, The Book of Words, and Visitation, which NPR called “a story of the century as seen by the objects we’ve known and lost along the way.”

The translator of Yoko Tawada, Franz Kafka, and Robert Walser, SUSAN BERNOFSKY is currently working on a biography of Robert Walser.
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