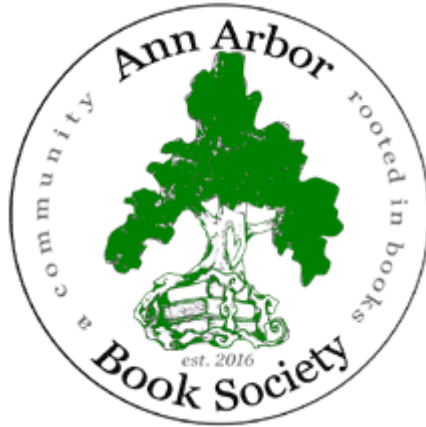


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December Newsletter

a2books.org

December Book Event Highlights

Saturday, December 1st at 1 pm: [Merry Mitten Signing with Maria Dismondy, Supriya Kelkar, Lisa Rosa, and Lisa Wheeler](#), Nicola's Books, 2513 Jackson Ave.

Saturday, December 1st from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday, December 2nd from 1 pm to 4 pm: [Friends of the Ann Arbor District Library Holiday Sale](#), AADL Downtown Branch Multipurpose Room.

Tuesday, December 4th at 5:30 pm: [Poetry reading and booksigning with UM's Zell Visiting Writers Series Poet in Residence Elizabeth Alexander](#), University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State St.

Wednesday, December 5th at 6 pm: [Louise Penny, author of Kingdom of the Blind](#), sponsored by Literati Bookstore, Pease Auditorium, Eastern Michigan University, 1000 College Place, Ypsilanti.

Thursday, December 6th from 6:30 pm to 8 pm: [I am Jazz Countywide Day of Reading](#), Bookbound Bookstore 1729 Plymouth Rd.

Saturday, December 8th from 10 am to 10 pm: [Holiday Soiree](#) at Vault of Midnight, 219 S. Main St.

For more information on these and other December events, visit our [events calendar](#) at [a2books.org](#)!

A Chilling Christmas Tradition

Possibly the most popular Christmas story in the English language is Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* (1843), not only a heartwarming holiday tale, but also a ghost story. And it is not his only spectral Christmas tale. In the U.S., we think of sitting around a fire at Halloween and trading spooky stories, but once upon a time, ghost stories were as much a part of Christmastime as festively decorated trees are today. (The ghosts actually predate Christmas trees in English tradition.)

In American literature, Washington Irving wrote of "superstitions and legends" in *Old Christmas* (1819). Centuries before, in *A Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare also referenced this tradition of telling ghost stories around a warm winter fire. "A sad tale's best for winter: I have one. Of sprites and goblins." And a century before Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe wrote in *The Jew of Malta* of "winter's tales... of spirits and ghosts that glide by night."

While not as popular today, this tradition did continue into the 20th century, especially in the U.K., which had the yearly television special *A Ghost Story For Christmas* (1971 - 1978, revived in 2005). And surely most are familiar with the holiday song made popular by Andy Williams. "It's the most wonderful time of the year! / There'll be parties for hosting, / Marshmallows for toasting, / And carolling out in the snow. / There'll be scary ghost stories, / And tales of the glories / of Christmases long, long ago."

Nevertheless, few people in the U.S. and Canada are aware of this spooky history. But for lit lovers, it's a charming tradition to revive. You can begin with the writers mentioned above and add to them J.H. Riddell, A.M. Burrage, and M.R. James. Canadian literary press [Biblioasis](#) has published pocket sized editions of several Christmas [ghostly short stories](#), including *How Fear Departed the Long Gallery* by E. F. Benson, *The Toll House* by W. W. Jacobs, *The Empty House* by Algernon Blackwood, *Afterward* by Edith Wharton, and more (US \$6.95 each, or a pack of 11 for CAD \$80).

Here is wishing a haunting holiday to all...

--*Crysta Coburn*

Holiday Gift Ideas

Last year we asked independent booksellers who specialize in new books for great holiday gifts ideas. The bookstore picks were a big hit with our readers so we asked them to do it again! Click on each title for more information, or better yet, stop by the bookstore that recommended them for an in-person explanation of what makes these books special. (Though Aunt Agatha's no longer has a brick and mortar location, thankfully they still sell a selection of their books [online](#)). Or course, all of the bookstores in town offer gift certificates as well. You can also stop by [Dawn Treader](#), [Motte & Bailey](#), or [West Side Book Shop](#) for a truly one-of-a-kind find!

Aunt Agatha's Picks

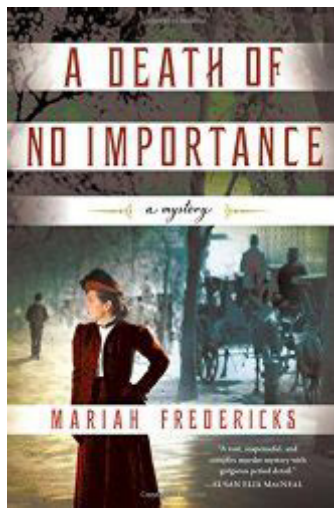


The Broken Girls
by Simone St. James
November 2018, Berkley
Paperback, \$14*

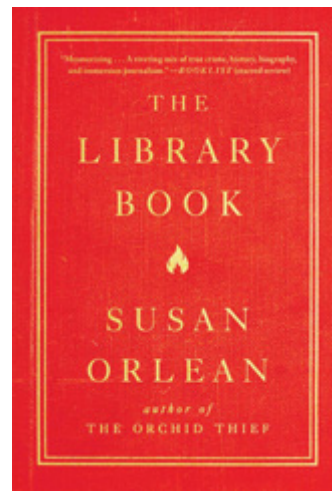
Bookbound Picks



Little: A Novel
by Edward Carey
October 2018, Riverhead Books
Hardcover, \$27



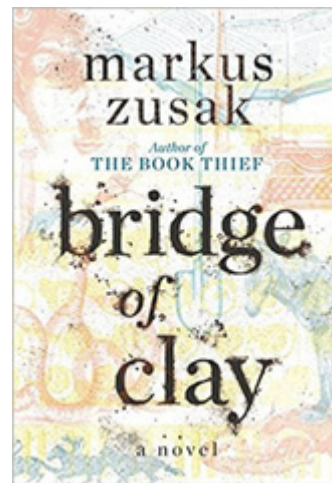
A Death of No Importance:
A Mystery
by Mariah Fredericks
April 2018, Minotaur Books
Hardcover, \$23*



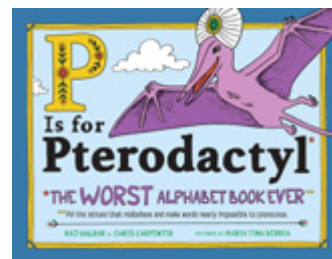
The Library Book
by Susan Orlean
October 2018, Simon & Schuster
Hardcover, \$28



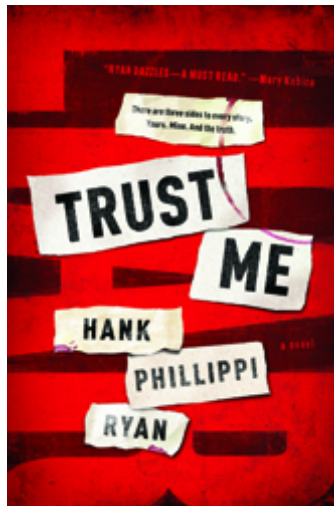
*A Lady's Guide to Etiquette
and Murder*
by Dianne Freeman
June 2018, Kensington
Hardcover, \$24*



Bridge of Clay: A Novel
by Markus Zusak
October 2018, Knopf Books for
Young Readers
Hardcover, \$26



*P is for Pterodactyl: The Worst
Alphabet Book Ever*
by Raj Haldar and Chris Carpenter
illustrated by Maria Beddia
November 2018, Sourcebooks



Trust Me
by Hank Phillippi Ryan
August 2018, Forge Books
Hardcover, \$25*

**Aunt Agatha's price--not publisher's list price*

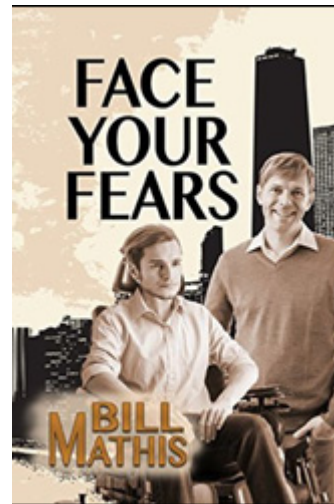
Crazy Wisdom Picks



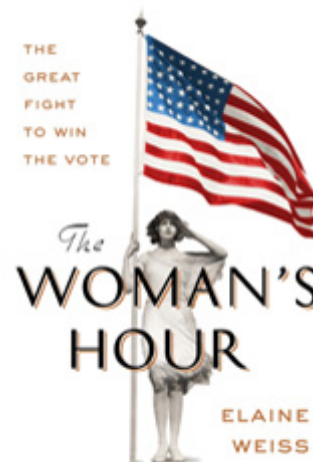
Family Trust: A Novel
by Kathy Wang
October 2018, William Morrow

Jabberwocky
Hardcover, \$17.99

Common Language Picks



Face Your Fears
by Bill Mathis
June 2018, Createspace
Independent Publishing Platform
Paperback, \$11.99



*The Woman's Hour:
The Great Fight to Win the Vote*
by Elaine Weiss

Hardcover, \$26.99

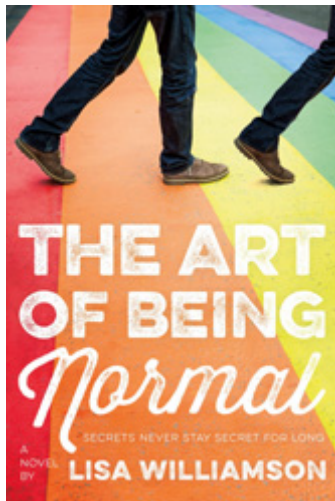


Bibliophile: An Illustrated Miscellany
by Jane Mount (Illustrator)
September 2018, Chronicle Books
Hardcover, \$24.95

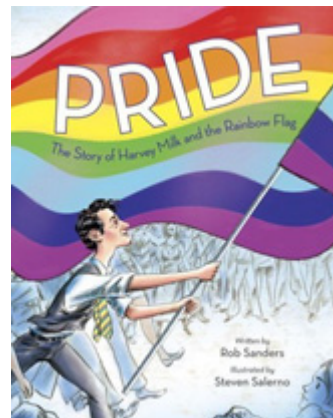
March 2018, Viking
Hardcover, \$28



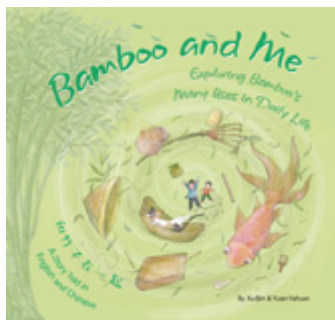
Fangirl by Rainbow Rowell
November 2018, Wednesday Books
Paperback, \$10.99



The Art of Being Normal: A Novel
by Lisa Williamson
April 2018, Square Fish
Paperback, \$9.99

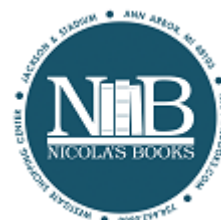


Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag
by Rob Sanders, illustrated by
Steven Salerno
April 2018, Random House Books
for Young Readers
Hardcover, \$20.99



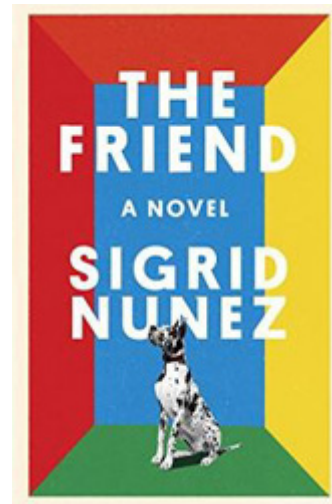
*Bamboo and Me: Exploring
Bamboo's Many Uses in Daily Life*
by Xu Bin, illustrated by Yuan
Yahuan
October 2018, Reader's Digest

Nicola's Books Picks



Association
Hardcover, \$16.99

Literati Picks



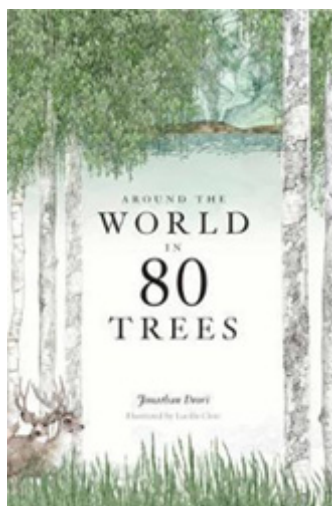
The Friend: A Novel
by Sigrid Nunez
February 2018, Riverhead Books
Hardcover, \$25



A Place for Us: A Novel
by Fatima Farheen Mirza
June 2018, SJP for Hogarth
Hardcover, \$27

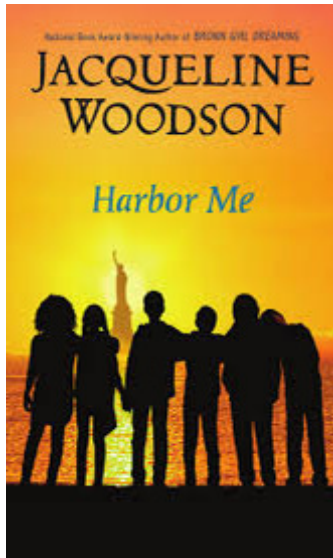


*Sister Pie: The Recipes & Stories of
a Big-Hearted Bakery in Detroit*
by Lisa Ludwinski
October 2018, Lorena Jones Books
Hardcover, \$25

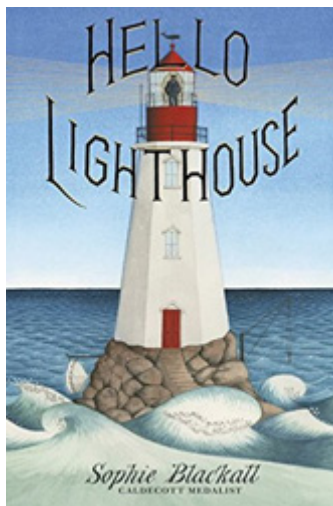


Around the World in 80 Trees
by Jonathan Drori, illustrated by
Lucille Clerc

May 2018, Laurence King
Publishing
Hardcover, \$24.99

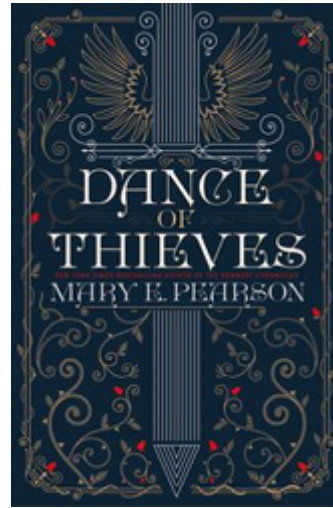


Harbor Me
by Jacqueline Woodson,
August 2018, Nancy Paulsen Books
Hardcover, \$17.99

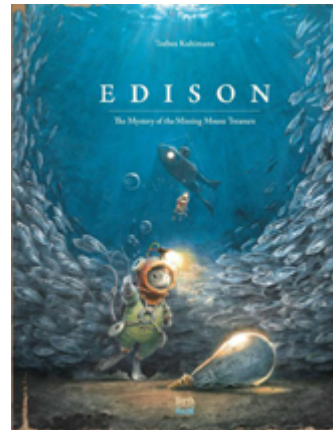


Hello Lighthouse
by Sophie Blackall
April 2018, Little, Brown Books for
Young Readers
Hardcover, \$18.99

Vault of Midnight Picks



Dance of Thieves
by Mary E. Pearson
August 2018, Henry Holt & Co.
Hardcover, \$18.99



*Edison: The Mystery of the Missing
Mouse Treasure*
by Torben Kuhlmann
October 2018, NorthSouth Books
Hardcover, \$19.95

Bookstore Closing





Isola: Chapter One
by Brenden Fletcher, Karl Kerschl,
Msassyk
October 2018, Image Comics
Paperback, \$9.99



*Brazen: Rebel Ladies Who Rocked
the World*
by Penelope Bagieu
March 2018, First Second
Paperback, \$17.99

We are saddened by the recent news that Common Language Bookstore will be closing on December 31st. Since 1991, this LGBTQ and feminist bookstore has served as an important resource in our community and its closing will be a tremendous loss. Read the statement by owners Keith Orr and Martin Contreras [here](#), and be sure to stop in before the month is through!



Our hearts continue to be with the staff of Dawn Treader Book Shop, whose manager, [Corby Gillmore](#), 43, passed away unexpectedly on October 29th. Corby was the son of owner Bill Gillmore and had managed Dawn Treader for 23 years. The continued success of this well-loved, longtime bookstore is a testament to the quality of Corby's stewardship, and we are grateful for his contribution to Ann Arbor's book culture. He will be greatly missed.

Save the Date!

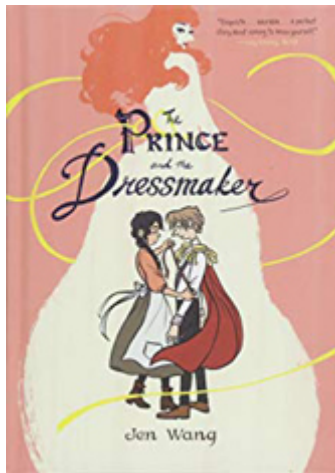
Wednesday, January 16th:
[Washtenaw Reads Author Event
with Michelle Kuo](#)

Thursday, January 24th: [Pulitzer
Prize-winning author James
Forman, Jr.](#)

Sunday, February 24th: [Detroit Book](#)



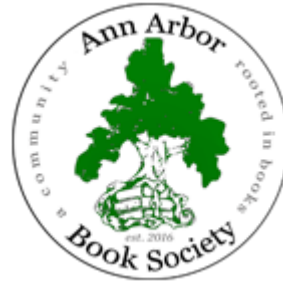
On a Sunbeam
by Tillie Walden
October 2018, First Second
Hardcover, \$32.99
Paperback, \$21.99



The Prince and the Dressmaker
by Jen Wang
February 2018, First Second
Hardcover, \$24.99
Paperback, \$16.99

[City's Third Annual African-American Family Book Expo](#)

Saturday February 23rd and
Sunday, February 24th: [Friends of
the Ann Arbor District Library Bag
Sale](#)



We are thrilled to announce that the IRS has determined the Ann Arbor Book Society is a 501(c)3 public charity! We are happy to finally achieve our nonprofit status and look forward to finding new ways to connect Ann Arbor's readers in 2019 and beyond.

Snapshot of the Past

Celebrate Kwanzaa!



In her new book, ***The Complete Kwanzaa: Celebrating Our Cultural Harvest***, Detroit author Dorothy Winbush Riley offers a comprehensive guide to the cultural foundations of Kwanzaa, the African-American holiday celebrated from December 26 to January 1. Ms. Riley will be at Borders to explain the history and origins of Kwanzaa and describe the Kwanzaa feasting and gift-giving traditions.

**Tuesday, December 12
7:30 P.M.**

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Sun 10-8
668-7652 Books • 668-7100 Music

Ad in Agenda, December 1995. Courtesy of the [Ann Arbor District Library](#).

The Ann Arbor Book Society wishes you a warm and safe holiday season surrounded by family and friends, and the time to read a few good books!

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Ann Arbor, MI 48107

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