Fall 2017
PenguinPress
Fall 2017

*Autumn*/Karl Ove Knausgaard

*Little Fires Everywhere*/Celeste Ng

*World Without Mind*/Franklin Foer

*Americana*/Bhu Srinivasan

*Devotions*/Mary Oliver

*Grant*/Ron Chernow

*Stalin*/Stephen Kotkin

*Soonish*/Zach Weinersmith and Kelly Weinersmith

*Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts*/Christopher de Hamel

*You Can’t Spell America Without Me*/Alec Baldwin and Kurt Andersen

*Playing with Fire*/Lawrence O’Donnell

*Friends Divided*/Gordon S. Wood

*The Dawn Watch*/Maya Jasanoff

*The Infinite Future*/Tim Wirkus

Cover image: © Qusai Akoud
AUTUMN

KARL OVE KNAUSGAARD

ISBN: 9780399563300
Price: $27.00
On sale: 8/22/2017
28 August. Now, as I write this, you know nothing about anything, about what awaits you, the kind of world you will be born into. And I know nothing about you...

I want to show you our world as it is now: the door, the floor, the water tap and the sink, the garden chair close to the wall beneath the kitchen window, the sun, the water, the trees. You will come to see it in your own way, you will experience things for yourself and live a life of your own, so of course it is primarily for my own sake that I am doing this: showing you the world, little one, makes my life worth living.

Autumn begins with a letter Karl Ove Knausgaard writes to his unborn daughter, showing her what to expect of the world. He writes one short piece per day, describing the material and natural world with the precision and mesmerizing intensity that have become his trademark. He describes with acute sensitivity daily life with his wife and children in rural Sweden, drawing upon memories of his own childhood to give an inimitably tender perspective on the precious and unique bond between parent and child. The sun, wasps, jellyfish, eyes, lice—the stuff of everyday life is the fodder for his art. Nothing is too small or too vast to escape his attention. This beautifully illustrated book is a personal encyclopedia on everything from chewing gum to the stars. Through close observation of the objects and phenomena around him, Knausgaard shows us how vast, unknowable and wondrous the world is.

KARL OVE KNAUSGAARD’s first novel, Out of the World, was the first ever debut novel to win the Norwegian Critics’ Prize and his second, A Time to Every Purpose Under Heaven, was widely acclaimed. A Death in the Family, the first of the My Struggle cycle of novels, was awarded the prestigious Brage Award. The My Struggle cycle has been heralded as a masterpiece wherever it appears.
From the bestselling author of *Everything I Never Told You*, the intertwined stories of the picture-perfect Richardson family and the mother and daughter who upend their lives.

“I read *Little Fires Everywhere* in a single, breathless sitting. With brilliance and beauty, Celeste Ng dissects a microcosm of American society just when we need to see it beneath the microscope...”
—Jodi Picoult, NYT bestselling author of *Small Great Things* and *Leaving Time*

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned—from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules.

Enter Mia Warren—an enigmatic artist and single mother—who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenaged daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the mother-daughter pair. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community.

When the Richardsons’ friends attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town—and puts Mia and Elena on opposing sides. Suspicious of Mia and her motives, Elena is determined to uncover the secrets in Mia’s past. But her obsession will come at unexpected and devastating costs.

*Little Fires Everywhere* explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood—and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster.

*CELESTE NG* grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Shaker Heights, Ohio. She attended Harvard University and earned an MFA from the University of Michigan. Her debut novel, *Everything I Never Told You*, won the Hopwood Award, the Massachusetts Book Award, the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature and the ALA’s Alex Award and is a 2016 NEA fellow. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
WORLD WITHOUT MIND

FRANKLIN FOER

isbn: 9781101981115
price: $27.00
on sale: 9/12/2017
Over the past few decades there has been a revolution in terms of who controls knowledge and information. This rapid change has imperiled the way we think. Without pausing to consider the cost, the world has rushed to embrace the products and services of four titanic corporations. We shop with Amazon; socialize on Facebook; turn to Apple for entertainment; and rely on Google for information. These firms sell their efficiency and purport to make the world a better place, but what they have done instead is to enable an intoxicating level of daily convenience. As these companies have expanded, marketing themselves as champions of individuality and pluralism, their algorithms have pressed us into conformity and laid waste to privacy. They have produced an unstable and narrow culture of misinformation, and put us on a path to a world without private contemplation, autonomous thought, or solitary introspection—a world without mind. In order to restore our inner lives, we must avoid being coopted by these gigantic companies, and understand the ideas that underpin their success.

Elegantly tracing the intellectual history of computer science—from the Descartes and the enlightenment to Alan Turing to Stuart Brand and the hippie origins of today’s Silicon Valley—Foer exposes the dark underpinnings of our most idealistic dreams for technology. The corporate ambitions of Google, Facebook, Apple, and Amazon, he argues, are trampling longstanding liberal values, especially intellectual property and privacy. This is a nascent stage in the total automation and homogenization of social, political, and intellectual life. By reclaiming our private authority over how we intellectually engage with the world, we have the power to stem the tide.

At stake is nothing less than who we are, and what we will become. There have been monopolists in the past but today’s corporate giants have far more nefarious aims. They’re monopolists who want access to every facet of our identities and influence over every corner of our decision-making. Until now few have grasped the sheer scale of the threat. Foer explains not just the looming existential crisis but the imperative of resistance.

Franklin Foer reveals the existential threat posed by big tech, and in his brilliant polemic gives us the toolkit to fight their pervasive influence.

FRANKLIN FOER is National Correspondent at The Atlantic and a fellow at the New America Foundation. He is the author of How Soccer Explains the World, which has been translated into 27 languages and a winner of a National Jewish Book Award. For seven years, he edited The New Republic magazine.
From the days of the Mayflower and the Virginia Company, America has been a place for people to dream, invent, build, tinker, and bet the farm in pursuit of a better life. Americana takes us on a four-hundred-year journey of this spirit of innovation and ambition through a series of Next Big Things -- the inventions, techniques, and industries that drove American history forward: from the telegraph, the railroad, guns, radio, and banking to flight, suburbia, and sneakers, culminating with the Internet and mobile technology at the turn of the twenty-first century. The result is a thrilling alternative history of modern America that reframes events, trends, and people we thought we knew through the prism of the value that, for better or for worse, this nation holds dearest: capitalism.

In a winning, accessible style, Bhu Srinivasan boldly takes on four centuries of American enterprise, revealing the unexpected connections that link them. We learn how Andrew Carnegie’s early job as a telegraph messenger boy paved the way for his leadership of the steel empire that would make him one of the nation’s richest men; how the gunmaker Remington reinvented itself in the postwar years to sell typewriters; how the inner workings of the Mafia mirrored the trend of consolidation and regulation in more traditional business; and how a 1950s infrastructure bill triggered a series of events that produced one of America’s most enduring brands: KFC. Reliving the heady early days of Silicon Valley, we are reminded that the start-up is an idea as old as America itself.

Entertaining, eye-opening, and sweeping in its reach, Americana is an exhilarating new work of narrative history.

BHU SRINIVASAN is an accomplished media entrepreneur whose career has spanned digital media, pop culture, technology, publishing, and financial content. Srinivasan arrived in the U.S. with his family at the age of eight, and as a child lived in the South, the Rust Belt, Southern California, and the Pacific Northwest. He lives in New Canaan, CT with his wife and four children.
Throughout her celebrated career, Mary Oliver has touched countless readers with her brilliantly crafted verse, expounding on her love for the physical world and the powerful bonds between all living things. Identified as “far and away, this country’s best selling poet” by Dwight Garner, she now returns with a stunning and definitive collection of her writing from the last fifty years.

Carefully curated, these 200 plus poems feature Oliver’s work from her very first book of poetry, No Voyage and Other Poems, published in 1963 at the age of 28, through her most recent collection, Felicity, published in 2015. This timeless volume, arranged by Oliver herself, showcases the beloved poet at her edifying best. Within these pages, she provides us with an extraordinary and invaluable collection of her passionate, perceptive, and much-treasured observations of the natural world.

Born in a small town in Ohio, MARY OLIVER published her first book of poetry in 1963 at the age of 28. Over the course of her long career, she has received numerous awards. Her fourth book, American Primitive, won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1984. She has led workshops and held residencies at various colleges and universities, including Bennington College, where she held the Catharine Osgood Foster Chair for Distinguished Teaching. Oliver currently lives in Florida.
Ulysses S. Grant’s life has typically been misunderstood. All too often he is caricatured as a chronic loser and inept businessman, fond of drinking to excess; or as the triumphant but brutal Union general of the Civil War; or as a credulous and hapless president whose tenure came to symbolize the worst excesses of the Gilded Age. These stereotypes don’t come close to capturing adequately his spirit and the sheer magnitude of his monumental accomplishments. A biographer at the height of his powers, Chernow has produced a portrait of Grant that is a masterpiece, the first to provide a complete understanding of the general and president whose fortunes rose and fell with dizzying speed and frequency.

Before the Civil War, Grant was flailing. His business ventures had been dismal, and despite distinguished service in the Mexican War, he ended up resigning from the army in disgrace amid recurring accusations of drunkenness. But in the Civil War, Grant began to realize his remarkable potential, soaring through the ranks of the Union army, prevailing at the Battle of Shiloh and in the Vicksburg campaign and ultimately defeating the legendary Confederate general Robert E. Lee after a series of unbelievably bloody battles in Virginia. Along the way Grant endeared himself to President Lincoln and became his most trusted general and the strategic genius of the war effort. His military fame translated into a two-term presidency, but one plagued by corruption scandals involving his closest staff. All the while Grant himself remained more or less above reproach. But, more importantly, he never failed to seek freedom and justice for black Americans, working to crush the Ku Klux Klan and earning the admiration of Frederick Douglass, who called him “the vigilant, firm, impartial, and wise protector of my race.” After his presidency, he was again brought low by a trusted colleague, this time a dashing young swindler on Wall Street, but he resuscitated his image by working with Mark Twain to publish his memoirs, which are recognized as a masterpiece of the genre.

With his famous lucidity, breadth, and meticulousness, Chernow finds the threads that bind these disparate stories together, shedding new light on the man whom Walt Whitman described as “nothing heroic... and yet the greatest hero.” His probing portrait of Grant’s lifelong struggle with alcoholism transforms our understanding of the man at the deepest level. This is America’s greatest biographer, bringing movingly to life one of our finest but most underappreciated presidents. The definitive biography, Grant is a grand synthesis of painstaking research and literary brilliance that makes sense of all sides of Grant’s life, explaining how this simple Midwesterner could at once be so ordinary and so extraordinary.

RON CHERNOW is the prize-winning author of six books and the recipient of the 2015 National Humanities Medal. His first book, The House of Morgan, won the National Book Award, Washington: A Life won the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for Biography, and Alexander Hamilton was the inspiration for the Broadway musical. Chernow lives in Brooklyn, New York.
When we left Stalin at the end of *Stalin: Paradoxes of Power: 1878-1928*, it was 1928, and he had finally climbed the mountaintop and achieved dictatorial power of the Soviet empire. The vastest peasant economy in the world would be transformed into socialist modernity, whatever it took.

What it took, or what Stalin believed it took, was the most relentless campaign of shock industrialization the world has ever seen. This is the story of the five year plans, the new factory towns, and the integration of an entire system of penal labor into the larger economy. With the Great Depression throwing global capital into crisis, the Soviet Union’s New Man looked like nothing so much as the man of the future. As the shadows of the 30’s deepen, Stalin’s drive to militarize Soviet society takes on increasing urgency, and the ambition of Nazi Germany becomes the predominant geopolitical reality he faces when Hitler claims that communism is a global “Judeo-Bolshevik” conspiracy to bring the Slavic race to power.

But just because they’re out to get you doesn’t mean you’re not paranoid. Stalin’s paranoia is increasingly one of the most horrible facts of life for his entire country. Stalin’s obsessions drive him to violently purge almost a million people, including military leadership, diplomatic corps and intelligence apparatus, to say nothing of a generation of artistic talent. And then came the pact that shocked the world, and demoralized leftists everywhere: Stalin’s pact with Hitler in 1939, the carve-up of Poland, and Stalin’s utter inability to see Hitler’s build-up to the invasion of the USSR. Yet for all that, in just 12 years of total power, Stalin has taken this country from a peasant economy to a formidable modern war machine that rivaled anything else in the world. When the invasion came, Stalin wasn’t ready, but his country would prove to be prepared. That is a dimension of the Stalin story that has never adequately been reckoned with before, and it looms large here.

*Stalin: Waiting for Hitler: 1929-1941* is, like its predecessor, nothing less than a history of the world from Stalin’s desk. It is also, like its predecessor, a landmark achievement in the annals of its field, and in the biographer’s art.

**STEPHEN KOTKIN** is the John P. Birkelund Professor in History and International Affairs at Princeton University, where he has taught since 1989. He is also a research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. He directs Princeton’s Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies program. His books include *Uncivil Society*, *Armageddon Averted*, and *Magnetic Mountain*. Kotkin was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for *Stalin: Volume I: Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928*. 
SOONISH

ZACH WEINERSMITH and KELLY WEINERSMITH

Ten Emerging Technologies That’lI Improve and/or Ruin Everything

Kelly and Zach Weinersmith

ISBN: 9781594206016
PRICE: $30.00
ON SALE: 10/17/2017
What will the world of tomorrow be like? How does progress happen? And why do we not have a lunar colony already? What is the hold-up?

In this smart and funny book, celebrated cartoonist Zach Weinersmith and noted researcher Dr. Kelly Weinersmith give us a snapshot of what’s coming next -- from robot swarms to nuclear fusion powered-toasters. By weaving their own research, interviews with the scientists who are making these advances happen, and Zach’s trademark comics, the Weinersmiths investigate why these technologies are needed, how they would work, and what is standing in their way.

New technologies are almost never the work of isolated geniuses with a neat idea. A given future technology may need any number of intermediate technologies to develop first, and many of these critical advances may appear to be irrelevant when they are first discovered. The journey to progress is full of strange detours and blind alleys that tell us so much about the human mind and the march of civilization.

To this end, Soonish investigates ten different emerging fields, from programmable matter to augmented reality, from space elevators to robotic construction, to show us the amazing world we will have, you know, soonish.

ZACH WEINERSMITH is the cartoonist behind the popular geek webcomic Saturday Morning Breakfast Cereal. His work has been featured in The Economist, The Wall Street Journal, Slate, Forbes, Science Friday, Boingboing, the Freakonomics Blog, the RadioLab blog, Entertainment Weekly, Mother Jones, CNN, Discovery Magazine, and more.

DR. KELLY WEINERSMITH is Adjunct Faculty in the BioSciences Department at Rice University, where she studies parasites that manipulate the behavior of their hosts. In addition to being a respected researcher, she cohosts Science...Sort Of, which is one of the top 20 natural science podcasts. Kelly spoke at Smithsonian Magazine’s “The Future is Here 2015,” and her work has been featured in The Atlantic, Science, and Nature.
MEETINGS WITH REMARKABLE MANUSCRIPTS
CHRISTOPHER DE HAMEL
Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts is a remarkable examination of twelve illuminated manuscripts from the medieval period. Noted authority Christopher de Hamel invites the reader into intimate conversations with these texts to explore what they tell us about nearly a thousand years of medieval history - and sometimes about the modern world too.

In so doing, de Hamel introduces us to kings, queens, saints, scribes, artists, librarians, thieves, dealers, and collectors. He traces the elaborate journeys which these exceptionally precious artifacts have made through time, shows us how they have been copied, who has owned them or lusted after them (and how we can tell), how they have been embroiled in politics, how they have been regarded as objects of supreme beauty and as symbols of national identity.

From the earliest book in medieval England to the incomparable Book of Kells to the oldest manuscript of the Canterbury Tales, these encounters tell a narrative of intellectual culture and art over the course of a millennium. Two of the manuscripts visited are now in libraries of North America, the Morgan Library in New York and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

Part travel book, part detective story, part conversation with the reader, Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts allows us to experience some of the greatest works of art in our culture to give us a different perspective on history and on how we come by knowledge.
YOU CAN’T SPELL AMERICA WITHOUT ME
ALEC BALDWIN and KURT ANDERSEN
YOU CAN’T SPELL AMERICA WITHOUT ME
ALEC BALDWIN and KURT ANDERSEN

Political satire as deeper truth: Donald Trump’s presidential memoir, as recorded by two world-renowned Trump scholars, and experts on greatness generally

“I have the best words, beautiful words, as everybody has been talking and talking about for a long time. Also? The best sentences and, what do you call them, paragraphs. My previous books were great and sold extremely, unbelievably well—even the ones by dishonest, disgusting so-called journalists. But those writers didn’t understand Trump, because quite frankly they were major losers. People say if you want it done right you have to do it yourself, even when ‘it’ is a ‘memoir.’ So every word of this book was written by me, using a special advanced word processing system during the many, many nights I’ve been forced to stay alone in the White House—only me, just me, trust me, nobody helped. And it’s all 100% true, so true—people are already saying it may be the truest book ever published. Enjoy.”

Until Donald Trump publishes his account of his entire four or eight or one-and-a-half years in the White House, the definitive chronicle will be

You Can’t Spell America Without Me: The Really Tremendous Inside Story of My Fantastic First Year As President.

He was elected because he was the most frank presidential candidate in history, a man always eager to tell the unvarnished truth about others’ flaws as well as his own excellence. Now that refreshingly compulsive un-PC candor is applied to his time as leader of the free world. The mind-boggling private encounters with world leaders. The genius backroom strategy sessions with White House advisers. His triumphs over the dishonest news media. The historic, world-changing decisions -- many of them secret until now. What he really thinks of Melania and Ivanka and Jared, Donald Jr. and Eric and the other one. And many spectacular, historic, exclusive photographs of him in private and public, making America great again.

Presented by two of America’s foremost Trump scholars, Alec Baldwin and Kurt Andersen.

ALEC BALDWIN is a multiple Emmy, Golden Globe, and Screen Actors Guild Award-winning actor, producer, comedian, and philanthropist. He has also been nominated for an Oscar and a Tony Award and the author of the New York Times bestseller A Promise to Ourselves.

KURT ANDERSEN is an author/novelist and host of the public radio show Studio 360. He is also co-founder of Spy and author of Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire: A 500-Year History, which Random House is publishing in July 2017.
Long before Lawrence O’Donnell was the anchor of his own political talk show, he was the Harvard Law-trained political aide to Senator Patrick Moynihan, one of postwar America’s wisest political minds. The 1968 election was O’Donnell’s own political coming of age, and Playing With Fire represents his master class in American electioneering, as well as an extraordinary human drama that captures a system, and a country, coming apart at the seams in real time.

Nothing went to script. LBJ was confident he’d dispatch with Nixon, the GOP frontrunner; Johnson’s greatest fear and real nemesis was RFK. But Kennedy and his team, despite their loathing of the president, weren’t prepared to challenge their own party’s incumbent. Then, out of nowhere, Eugene McCarthy shocked everyone with his disloyalty and threw his hat in the ring. A revolution seemed to be taking place, and LBJ, humiliated and bitter, began to look mortal.

Then RFK leapt in, and all hell broke loose. Two assassinations and a week of bloody riots in Chicago around the Democratic Convention later, and the old Democratic Party was a smoldering ruin, and, in the last triumph of old machine politics, Hubert Humphrey stood alone in the wreckage.

Suddenly Nixon was the frontrunner, having masterfully maintained a smooth façade behind which he feverishly held his party’s right and left wings in the fold through a succession of ruthless maneuvers to see off George Romney, Nelson Rockefeller, Ronald Reagan, and the great outside threat to his new Southern Strategy, the arch-segregationist George Wallace. But then, amazingly, Humphrey began to close, and so, in late October, Nixon pulled off one of the greatest dirty tricks in American political history, an act that may well meet the statutory definition of treason. The tone was set for Watergate and all else that was to follow, all the way through to today.

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams could scarcely have come from more different worlds, or been more different in temperament. Jefferson, the optimist with enough faith in the innate goodness of his fellow man to be democracy’s champion, was an aristocratic Southern slave owner, while Adams, the overachiever from New England’s rising middling classes, painfully aware he was no aristocrat, was a skeptic about popular rule and a defender of a more elitist view of government. They worked closely in the crucible of revolution, crafting the Declaration of Independence and leading, with Franklin, the diplomatic effort that brought France into the fight. But ultimately, their profound differences would lead to a fundamental crisis, in their friendship and in the nation writ large, as they became the figureheads of two entirely new forces, the first American political parties. It was a bitter breach, lasting through the presidential administrations of both men, and beyond.

But late in life, something remarkable happened: these two men were nudged into reconciliation. What started as a grudging trickle of correspondence became a great flood, and a friendship was rekindled, over the course of hundreds of letters. In their final years they were the last surviving founding fathers and cherished their role in this mighty young republic as it approached the half century mark in 1826. At last, on the afternoon of July 4th, 50 years to the day after the signing of the Declaration, Adams let out a sigh and said, “At least Jefferson still lives.” He died soon thereafter. In fact, a few hours earlier on that same day, far to the south in his home in Monticello, Jefferson died as well.

Arguably no relationship in this country’s history carries as much freight as that of John Adams of Massachusetts and Thomas Jefferson of Virginia. Gordon Wood has more than done justice to these entwined lives and their meaning; he has written a magnificent new addition to America’s collective story.

**GORDON S. WOOD** is the Alva O. Way University Professor and professor of history at Brown University. He books have received the Pulitzer, Bancroft and John H. Dunning prizes, as well as a National Book Award nomination and the New York Historical Society Prize in American History. They include *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, Revolutionary Characters, The Purpose of the Past, The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin, and The Idea of America.*
THE DAWN WATCH
MAYA JASANOFF

The Dawn Watch
Joseph Conrad in a Global World

MAYA JASANOFF

isbn: 9781594205811
price: $30.00
on sale: 11/7/2017
Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, Goethe and the Romantics—great artists can become tutelary spirits for their age. As Maya Jasanoff argues, Joseph Conrad did not merely embody the soul of his time, he anticipated our own. Through his journeys from Poland to France, England to Malaysia, Belgium to Congo, he witnessed a turning point in international history. He learned first-hand about immigration, terrorism, imperial oppression, the dangers of nationalism, and the promise and peril of rapid technological innovation. His life and work present an inside history of globalization and eerily reflect the hypocrisies of the West’s most cherished ideals.

Joseph Conrad was born Jozef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski in 1857, in a region of Poland then controlled by Russia, Europe’s most autocratic empire. By 1862, his father had been arrested for fomenting revolution and his family sentenced to exile, where a series of miserable forced relocations precipitated the illnesses that killed both of Conrad’s parents before he was eleven. At sixteen, fleeing an orphan’s sadness, he abandoned everything he knew to pursue the unlikely dream of becoming a sailor. From the deck of a ship, he saw the surging, competitive “new imperialism” that placed a flag on every populated part of the world by century’s end. He got a close look, too, at the places “beyond the end of telegraph cables and mail-boat lines,” as empires expanded their reach into the so-called dark places of the earth.

Through an expert blend of history, biography, literary criticism, and travelogue, Maya Jasanoff traces the strands of Conrad’s experiences and the stories of his four greatest works—The Secret Agent, Lord Jim, Heart of Darkness, and Nostromo. This spellbinding narrative casts new light on his age, and offers fresh insight into our own. Genre-bending, intellectually thrilling, and deeply humane, The Dawn Watch embarks us on a bold expedition to the veritable dark heart of Conrad and our global world.

THE INFINITE FUTURE
TIM WIRKUS

ISBN: 9780735224322
PRICE: $28.00
ON SALE: 1/16/2018
THE INFINITE FUTURE
TIM WIRKUS

An exhilarating, original novel, set in Brazil, Idaho, and outer space, about an obsessive librarian, a down-at-heel author, and a disgraced historian who go on the hunt for a mystical, life-changing book—and find it.

_The Infinite Future_ is a mindbending novel that melds two page-turning tales in one. In the first, we meet three broken people, joined by an obsession with a forgotten Brazilian science-fiction author named Salgado-MacKenzie. There’s Danny, a writer who’s been scammed by a shady literary award committee; Sergio, journalist turned sub-librarian in São Paulo; and Harriet, an excommunicated Mormon historian in Salt Lake City, who years ago corresponded with the reclusive Brazilian writer. The motley trio sets off to discover his identity, and whether his fabled masterpiece—never published—actually exists. Did his inquiries into the true nature of the universe yield something so enormous that his mind was blown for good?

In the second half, Wirkus gives us the lost masterpiece itself—the actual text of _The Infinite Future_, Salgado-MacKenzie’s wonderfully weird magnum opus. The two stories merge in surprising and profound ways. Part science-fiction, part academic satire, and part book-lover’s quest, this wholly original novel captures the heady way that stories inform and mirror our lives.

“Brilliant, playful, and profound, _The Infinite Future_ offers its readers stories within stories within stories, all of them thrilling and wise. Tim Wirkus has written a strange and beautiful magic trick of a book, and I was enthralled. I loved it.”
—Edan Lepucki, author of _California_ and _Woman No. 17_

“_The Infinite Future_ is uniquely pleasurable. Again and again it changes the terms of its telling—wrapping stories within stories and narrators within narrators, enclosing the mystical in the earthly and the fantastic in the realistic....Wirkus has a gift for maintaining a story’s equilibrium, and with each new narrative layer he explores, I found myself instantly reinvested in the proceedings.”
—Kevin Brockmeier, author of _The Brief History of the Dead_

TIM WIRKUS is the author of one previous novel, _City of Brick_ and _Shadow_ (Tyrus Books, 2014), which was a finalist for the Shamus Award and the winner of the Association for Mormon Letters Best Novel Award. His short fiction has appeared in _The Best American Non-Required Reading_, _Subtropics_, _Cream City Review_, _Weird Fiction Review_, _Gargoyle_, and elsewhere. His novella, _Sandy Downs_, won the 2013 Quarterly West novella contest. He’s currently a doctoral candidate in the University of Southern California’s Creative Writing and Literature Program.