

Immortality Milan Kundera

"Robert Irwin, perhaps the most influential of the California artists, moved from his beginnings in abstract expressionism through successive shifts in style and sensibility, into a new aesthetic territory altogether, one where philosophical concepts of perception and the world interact. Weschler has charted the journey with exceptional clarity and cogency. He has also, in the process, provided what seems to me the best running history of postwar West Coast art that I have yet seen."—Calvin Tomkins

This collection of essays from the Franco-Czech novelist provides a defense for art during an era that he says no longer puts value on art or beauty and discusses works and artists that are important to him. 25,000 first printing.

Kundera brilliantly examines the work of such important and diverse figures as Rabelais, Cervantes, Sterne, Diderot, Flaubert, Tolstoy, and Musil. He is especially penetrating on Hermann Broch, and his exploration of the world of Kafka's novels vividly reveals the comic terror of Kafka's bureaucratized universe. Kundera's discussion of his own work includes his views on the role of historical events in fiction, the meaning of action, and the creation of character in the post-psychological novel.

Casting light on the most serious of problems and at the same time saying not one serious sentence; being fascinated by the reality of the contemporary world and at the same time completely avoiding realism—that's The Festival of Insignificance. Readers who know Kundera's earlier books know that the wish to incorporate an element of the "unserious" in a novel is not at all unexpected of him. In Immortality, Goethe and Hemingway stroll through several chapters together talking and laughing. And in Slowness, Vera, the author's wife, says to her husband: "you've often told me you meant to write a book one day that would have not a single serious word in it... I warn you: watch out. Your enemies are lying in wait." Now, far from watching out, Kundera is finally and fully realizing his old aesthetic dream in this novel that we could easily view as a summation of his whole work. A strange sort of summation. Strange sort of epilogue. Strange sort of compatibility is inspiring.

Guessing the Obscure Purpose of Over 100 Eccentric Contraptions

The JOKE

The Gold Bug Variations

The Festival of Insignificance

An Essay in Seven Parts

Milan Kundera's sixth novel springs from a casual gesture of a woman to her swimming instructor, a gesture that creates a character in the mind of a writer named Kundera. Like Flaubert's Emma or Tolstoy's Anna, Kundera's Agnes becomes an object of fascination, of indefinable longing. From that character springs a novel, a gesture of the imagination that both embodies and articulates Milan Kundera's supreme mastery of the novel and its purpose: to explore thoroughly the great, themes of existence.

It's a complex universe that Kiran Nagarkar leads us into. Seven Sives are Forty Three explores the dimensions of relationships in terms of an empty physicality and loneliness as an inherent element in modern lives. Translated by Subha Slee, the novel's quest for compatibility is inspiring.

A New York Times Notable Book Irena and Josef meet by chance while returning to their homeland, which they had abandoned twenty years earlier. Will they manage to pick up the thread of their strange love story, interrupted almost as soon as it began and then lost in the tides of history? The truth is that after such a long absence "their memories no longer match."

Laughable loves is a collection of stories that first appeared in print in Prague before 1968, but then was banned. The seven stories are all concerned with love, or rather with the complex erotic games and stratagems employed by women and especially men as they try to come to terms with needs ad impulses that can start a terrifying train of events. Sexual attraction is shown as a game that often turns sour, an experience that brings with it painful insights and releases uncertainty, panic, vanity and a constant need for reassurance.

Bacon

No Tomorrow

Laughable Loves

The Bradshaw Variations

Farewell Waltz

From distorted self-images to brutal portrayals of friends and fellow artists, the portraits of Francis Bacon account for one of the most remarkable aspects of the work of the British painter. This work looks at his stylistic distortions of classicism and his famous deformations. Milan Kundera provides an introduction explaining his personal response to Bacon's work, exploring the paradox that lies in the faithfulness of the distorted images, and linking Bacon's genius with that of Samuel Beckett, both working at the outer limits of their art. France Borel's essay sets Bacon's works in the context of his life and influences and explains his approach to portraiture.

By the author of T he unbearable lightness of being'

Martin Gardner's Mathematical Games columns in Scientific American inspired and entertained several generations of mathematicians and scientists. Gardner in his crystal-clear prose illuminated corners of mathematics, especially recreational mathematics, that most people had no idea existed. His playful spirit and inquisitive nature invite the reader into an exploration of the beautiful mathematical ideas along with him. These columns were both a revelation and a gift when he wrote them; no one—before Gardner—had written about mathematics like this. They continue to be a marvel. This volume is a collection of Irving Joshua Matrix columns published in the magazine from 1960-1980. There were several collections of Dr. Matrix, the first in 1967; they were revised as Gardner reconnected with the good doctor over the years. This is the 1985 Prometheus Books edition and contains all the Dr. Matrix columns from the magazine.

A Bilingual New York Review Books Original Vivant Denon's No Tomorrow is one of the masterpieces of eighteenth-century French libertine literature, a book to set beside Choderlos de Laclos' Les Liaisons dangereuses, except that where Laclos' icy novel tells of hellish depravity, Denon's ravishing novella is a paradisal diversion. This tale of seduction is itself a seduction, with a plot that could be said to slowly unveil itself before arriving at last at an unexpected consummation. Summoned by Madame de T—— to her country house, the young hero of Denon's novella is taken on a tour of the grounds, only the beginning of a night that not only will be full of unanticipated delights but will give rise to unforeseen, perhaps unanswerable, questions. Lydia Davis's definitive translation of Denon's slim masterpiece is accompanied by the French text. Peter Brooks's illuminating introduction explores the mysteries of No Tomorrow's original publication and the subtleties of Denon's ethics of pleasure.

Writings, 1958-2008

The Art of the Novel

Encounter

Seven Sives are Forty Three

Ingenious Gadgets

" A magic curtain, woven of legends, hung before the world. Cervantes sent Don Quixote journeying and tore through the curtain. The world opened before the knight-errant in all the comical nakedness of its prose. " In this thought-provoking, endlessly enlightening, and entertaining essay on the art of the novel, renowned author Milan Kundera suggests that " the curtain " represents a ready-made perception of the world that each of us has—a pre-interpreted world. The job of the novelist, he argues, is to rip through the curtain and reveal what it hides. Here an incomparable literary artist cleverly sketches out his personal view of the history and value of the novel in Western civilization. In doing so, he celebrates a prose form that possesses the unique ability to transcend national and language boundaries in order to reveal some previously unknown aspect of human existence.

National Bestseller National Book Critics Circle Award Nominee From the Pulitzer Prize–winning author of The Overstory and the forthcoming Bewilderment, a magnificent double love story of two young couples separated by a distance of twenty-five years. " The most lavishly ambitious American novel since Gravity ' s Rainbow . . . An outright marvel. " —Washington Post Stuart Ressler, a brilliant young molecular biologist, sets out in 1957 to crack the genetic code. His efforts are sidetracked by two, more intractable codes—social, moral, musical, spiritual—and he falls in love with a member of his research team. Years later, another young man and woman team up to investigate a different scientific mystery: Why did the eminently promising Ressler suddenly disappear from the world of science? Strand by strand, these two love stories twist about each other in a double helix of desire. The critically acclaimed third novel from Pulitzer Prize–winning author Richard Powers, The Gold Bug Variations is an intellectual tour-de-force that probes the meaning of love, science, music, and art.

This breathtaking, reverberating survey of human nature finds Kundera still attempting to work out the meaning of life without losing his acute sense of humour. It is one of those great unclassifiable masterpieces that appear once every twenty years or so. 'It will make you cleverer, maybe even a better lover. Not many novels can do that.' Nicholas Lezard, *GC*

Milan Kundera has established himself as one of the great novelists of our time with such books as The Unbearable Lightness of Being, Immortality and The Book of Laughter and Forgetting. In Testaments Betrayed, he proves himself a brilliant defender of the moral rights of the artist and the respect due to a work of art and its creator's wishes. The betrayal of both—often by their most passionate proponents—is the principal theme of this extraordinary work. Readers will be particularly intrigued by Kundera's impassioned attack on society's shifting moral judgments and persecutions of art and artists, from Mayakovsky to Rushdie.

Essay in Nine Parts, An

Twentieth Anniversary Edition

A Time for Everything

The Curtain

Terminal Paradox

ImmortalityHarper Collins

Milan Kundera's lightest novel, a divertimento, an opera buffa, Slowness is also the first of this author's fictional works to have been written in French. Disconcerted and enchanted, the reader follows the narrator of Slowness through a midsummer's night in which two tales of seduction, separated by more than two hundred years, interweave and oscillate between the sublime and the comic. Underlying this libertine fantasy is a profound meditation on contemporary life: about the secret bond between slowness and memory, about the connection between our era's desire to forget and the way we have given ourselves over to the demon of speed. And about "dancers" possessed by the passion to be seen, for whom life is merely a perpetual show emptied of every intimacy and every joy.

Rich in its stories, characters, and imaginative range, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting is the novel that brought Milan Kundera his first big international success in the late 1970s. Like all his work, it is valuable for far more than its historical implications. In seven wonderfully integrated parts, different aspects of human existence are magnified and reduced, reordered and emphasized, newly examined, analyzed, and experienced.

Right up until his death in 2008, John Leonard was a lion in American letters. A passionate, erudite, and wide-ranging critic, he helped shape the landscape of modern literature. He reviewed the most celebrated writers of his age—from Kurt Vonnegut and Joan Didion to Toni Morrison and Thomas Pynchon. He championed Morrison's work so ardently that she invited him to travel with her to Stockholm when she accepted her Nobel Prize. He also contributed many pieces on television, film, politics, and the media, which continue to surprise and impress with their fervor and prescience. Reading for My Life is a monumental collection of Leonard's most significant writings—spanning five decades—from his earliest columns for the Harvard Crimson to his final essays for The New York Review of Books. Here are Leonard's best writings—many never before published in book form—on the cultural touchstones of a generation, each piece a testament to his sharp wit, fierce intelligence, and lasting love of the arts. Definitive reviews of Doris Lessing, Vladimir Nabokov, Maxine Hong Kingston, Tom Wolfe, Don DeLillo, Milan Kundera, and Philip Roth, among others, display his passion and nearly encyclopedic knowledge of literature in the second half of the twentieth century. His essay on Ed Sullivan and the evolution of television remains a classic. Throughout Leonard's essays is a political spirit, pleading for social justice, advocating for the women's movement, and forever calling attention to writers whose work challenged and excited him. With an introduction by E. L. Doctorow and remembrances by Leonard's friends, family, and colleagues, including Gloria Steinem and Victor Navasky, Reading for My Life stands as a landmark collection from one of America's most beloved and influential critics.

Slowness

Life is Elsewhere

Identity

Milan Kundera's Fiction

Published simultaneously with Identity, his new novel, here is a masterful new translation of Milan Kundera's most brilliantly plotted and sheerly entertaining novel -- a dark farce of sex, murder, and motherhood. Set in an Old-Fashioned Central European Spa Town, Farewell Waltz follows the lives of eight characters: a pretty nurse and her repairman boyfriend; an oddball gynecologist; a rich American who is at once a saint and a Don Juan; a popular trumpeter and his beautiful obsessively jealous wife; a disillusioned former political prisoner about to leave his country and his young female ward. Perhaps the most accessible of Milan Kundera's novels, Farewell Waltz poses the most serious questions with a blasphemous lightness that makes us see that the modern world has deprived us even of the right to tragedy. Translated from the French text prepared by the author himself a quarter century after the novel was originally written, Farewell Waltz sparkles anew with wit, humor, and irony. A valuable addition to HarperFlamingo's impressive Kundera backlist, it offers readers a chance to discover, or rediscover, one of the very best works of a legendary writer. "It is hard to imagine anything more chilling and profound that Kundera's apparent lightheartedness". -- Elizabeth Pochoda "Kundera ... remains faithful to this subtle, wily, devious talent for a fiction of "erotic possibilities". - -- New York Times Book Review

The fact that we will die, and that our death can come at any time, pervades the entirety of our living. There are many ways to think about and deal with death. Among those ways, however, a good number of them are attempts to escape its grip. In this book, Todd May seeks to confront death in its power. He considers the possibility that our mortal deaths are the end of us, and asks what this might mean for our living. What lessons can we draw from our mortality? And how might we live as creatures who die, and who know we are going to die? In answering these questions, May brings together two divergent perspectives on death. The first holds that death is not an evil, or at least that immortality would be far worse than dying. The second holds that death is indeed an evil, and that there is no escaping that fact. May shows that if we are to live with death, we need to hold these two perspectives together. Their convergence yields both a beauty and a tragedy to our living that are inextricably entwined.Drawing on the thoughts of many philosophers and writers - ancient and modern - as well as his own experience, May puts forward a particular view of how we might think about and, more importantly, live our lives in view of the inescapability of our dying. In the end, he argues, it is precisely the contingency of our lives that must be grasped and which must be folded into the hours or years that remain to each of us, so that we can live each moment as though it were at once a link to an uncertain future and yet perhaps the only link we have left.

Beware of what lurks in the corn. Fairies don't exist. At least that's what Thomas Cavanaugh's parents say. But the events of that one night, when he follows a fairy into the cornfield on his parents' farm, prove them wrong. What seems like a destructive explosion was, Thomas knows, an encounter with Daurð, a force that threatens to destroy the fairy's world and his sanity. Years later, after a troubled childhood and a series of dead-end jobs, he is still haunted by what he saw that night. One day he crosses paths with a beautiful young woman and a troubled young man, soon realizing that he first met them as a kid while under psychiatric care after his encounters in the cornfield. Has fate brought them together? Are they meant to join forces to save the fairy's world and their own? Or is one of them not who they claim to be? When The Unbearable Lightness of Being was first published in English, it was hailed as "a work of the boldest mastery, originality, and richness" by critic Elizabeth Hardwick and named one of the best books of 1984 by the New York Times Book Review. It went on to win the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction and quickly became an international bestseller. Twenty years later, the novel has established itself as a modern classic. To commemorate the anniversary of its first English-language publication, HarperCollins is proud to offer a special hardcover edition. A young woman in love with a man torn between his love for her and his incorrigible womanizing; one of his mistresses and her humbly faithful lover -- these are the two couples whose story is told in this masterful novel. Controlled by day, Tereza's jealousy awakens by night, transformed into ineffably sad death-dreams, while Tomas, a successful surgeon, alternates loving devotion to the dependent Tereza with the ardent pursuit of other women. Sabina, an independent, free-spirited artist, lives her life as a series of betrayals -- of parents, husband, country, love itself -- whereas her lover, the intellectual Franz, loses all because of his earnest goodness and fidelity. In a world in which lives are shaped by irrevocable choices and by fortuitous events, a world in which everything occurs but once, existence seems to lose its substance, its weight. Hence we feel, says the novelist, "the unbearable lightness of being" -- not only as the result of a classic, Through the Looking Glass, but also in the public sphere, and the two inevitably intertwine. This magnificent novel encompasses the extremes of comedy and tragedy, and embraces, it seems, all aspects of human existence. It juxtaposes geographically distant places (Prague, Geneva, Paris, Thailand, the United States, a forlorn Bohemian village); brilliant and playful reflections (on "eternal return," on kitsch, on man and animals -- Tomas and Tereza have a beloved doe named Karenin); and a variety of styles (from the farcical to the elegiac) to take its place as perhaps the major achievement of one of the world's truly great writers.

Death

Testaments Betrayed

The Unbearable Lightness of Being

Immortality

Agnes's Final Afternoon

A funny, revealing look at inventions that never caught on with the public introduces the electric comb, automatic shaving cream filler, and a cuff holder for card sharks intent on hiding an ace up their sleeves, as well as other ill-fated ideas.

A lush, feminist re-imagining on what happened to Wendy after Neverland, for fans of Circe and The Mere Wife. Find the second star from the right, and fly straight on 'til morning, all the way to Neverland, a children's paradise with no rules, no adults, only endless adventure and enchanted forests -- all led by the charismatic boy who will not grow old. But Wendy Darling grew up. She has a husband and a young daughter called Jane, a life in London. But one night, after all these years, Peter Pan returns. Wendy finds him outside her daughter's window, looking to claim a new mother for his Lost Boys. But instead of Wendy, he takes Jane. Now a grown woman, a mother, a patient and a survivor, Wendy must follow Peter back to Neverland to rescue her daughter and finally face the darkness at the heart of the island.

Since quitting work to look after his eight-year-old daughter, Alexa, Thomas Bradshaw has found solace and grace in his daily piano study. His pursuit of a more artistic way of life shocks and irritates his parents and in-laws. Why has he swapped roles with Tonie Swann, his intense, intellectual wife, who has accepted a demanding full-time job? How can this be good for Alexa? Tonie is increasingly seduced away from domestic life by the harder, headier world of work, where long-forgotten memories of ambition are awakened. She soon finds herself outside their tight family circle, alive to previously unimaginable possibilities. Over the course of a year full of crisis and revelation we follow the fortunes of Tonie, Thomas, and his brothers and their families: Howard, the successful, indulgent brother, and his gregarious wife, Claudia; and Leo, lacking in confidence and propped up by Susie, his sharp-tongued, heavy-drinking wife. At the head of the family, the aging Bradshaw parents descend on their children to question and undermine them. The Bradshaw Variations reveals how our choices, our loves, and the family life we build will always be an echo—a variation—of a theme played out in our own childhood. This masterful and often shockingly funny novel, Rachel Cusk's seventh, shows a prizewinning writer at the height of her powers.

In this dark farce of a novel, set in an old-fashioned Central European spa town, eight characters are swept up in an accelerating dance: a pretty nurse and her repairman boyfriend; an oddball gynecologist; a rich American (at once saint and Don Juan); a popular trumpeter and his beautiful, obsessively jealous wife; a disillusioned former political prisoner about to leave his country and his young woman ward.Perhaps the most brilliantly plotted and sheer entertaining of Milan Kundera's novels, Farewell Waltz poses the most serious questions with a blasphemous lightness that makes us see that the modern world has deprived us even of the right to tragedy. Written in Bohemia in 1969-70, this book was first published (in 1976) in France under the title La valse aux adieux (Farewell Waltz), and later in thirty-four other countries. This beautiful new translation, made from the French text prepared by the novelist himself, fully reflects his own tone and intentions. As such it offers an opportunity for both the discover and the rediscovery of one of the very best of a great writer's works.

Portraits and Self-portraits

The Girl in the Corn

The Farewell Party

The Novels of Milan Kundera

A Novel

National Book Award Winner, PEN America Award Winner, and New York Times Bestseller! Perfect for fans of This Is Us, Robin Benway's beautiful interweaving story of three very different teenagers connected by blood explores the meaning of family in all its forms—how to find it, how to keep it, and how to love it. Being the middle child has its ups and downs. But for Grace, an only child who was adopted at birth, discovering that she is a middle child is a different ride altogether. After putting her own baby up for adoption, she goes looking for her biological family, including—Maya, her loudmouthed younger bio sister, who has a lot to say about their newfound family ties. Having grown up the snarky brunette in a house full of chipper redheads, she's quick to search for traces of herself among these not-quite-strangers. And when her adopted family's long-buried problems begin to explode to the surface, Maya can't help but wonder where exactly it is that she belongs. And Joaquin, their stoic older bio brother, who has no interest in bonding over their shared biological mother. After seventeen years in the foster care system, he's learned that there are no heroes, and secrets and fears are best kept close to the vest, where they can't hurt anyone but him. Don't miss this moving novel that addresses such important topics as adoption, teen pregnancy, and foster care.

The author intially intended to call this noel, " The Lyrical Age." The lyrical age, according to Kundera, is youth, and this novel, above all, is an epic of adolescence; an ironic epic that tenderly erodes scarosanct values: childhood, motherhood, revolution, and even poetry. Jaromil is in fact a poet. His mother made hima poet and accompanies him (figuratively) to his love bed and (literally) to his deathbed. A ridiculous and touching character, horrifying and totally innocent ("innocence with its bloody smile"), Jaromil is at the same time a true poet. He's no creep, he's Rimbaud. Rimbaud entrapped by the communist revolution, entrapped in a somber farce.

Karen von Kunes traces Milan Kundera's creative ideas to a 1950 police report filed in Stalinist era Czechoslovakia. Demonstrating how this incident influenced Kundera's literary trajectory and ultimately contributed to his acclaim as a writer, von Kunes interprets his work in a new way.

All too often, this brilliant novel of thwarted love and revenge miscarried has been read for its political implications. Now, a quarter century after The Joke was first published and several years after the collapse of the Soviet-imposed Czechoslovak regime, it becomes easier to put such implications into perspective in favor of valuing the book (and all Kundera 's work) as what it truly is: great, stirring literature that sheds new light on the eternal themes of human existence. The present edition provides English-language readers an important further means toward reevaluation of the Joke. For reasons he describes in his Author's Note, Milan Kundera devoted much time to creating (with the assistance of his American publisher–editor) a completely revised translation that reflects his original as closely as any translation possibly can: reflects it in its fidelity not only to the words and syntax but also to the characteristic dictions and tonalities of the novel's narrators. The result is nothing less than the restoration of a classic.

An Essay on the Work of Milan Kundera

Günter Grass, Milan Kundera, Salman Rushdie, and Jan Kjøerstad

Reading for My Life

A Critical Approach to Existential Betrayals

Ignorance

Eleanor Rigby is the story of Liz, a self-described drab, overweight, crabby, and friendless middle-aged woman, and her unlikely reunion with the charming and strange son she gave up for adoption. His arrival changes everything, and sets in motion a rapid-fire plot with all the twists and turns we expect of Coupland. By turns funny and heartbreaking, Eleanor Rigby is a fast-paced read and a haunting exploration of the ways in which loneliness affects us all.

Migration and Literature offers a thought-provoking analysis of the thematic and formal role of migration in four contemporary and canonized novelists.

There are situations in which we fail for a moment to recognize the person we are with, in which the identity of the other is erased while we simultaneously doubt our own. This also happens with couples--indeed, above all with couples, because lovers mark more than anything else "losing sight" of the loved one. With stunning artfulness in expanding and playing variations on the meaningful moment, Milan Kundera has made this situation--and the vague sense of panic it inspires--the very fabric of his new novel. Here brevity goes hand in hand with intensity, and a moment of bewilderment marks the start of a labyrinthine journey during which the reader repeatedly crosses the border between the real and the unreal, between what occurs in the world outside and what the mind creates in its solitude. Of all contemporary writers, only Kundera can transform such a hidden and disconcerting perception into the material for a novel, one of his finest, most painful, and most enlightening. Which, surprisingly, turns out to be a love story.

Agnes's Final Afternoon imitates the protagonist of Milan Kundera's novel Immortality on the last afternoon of her life. Like all readers of fiction, Agnès steps out of the world of planned routes, responsibilities, and social self and gives herself up to the discovery of a new landscape, an experience that will transform her. François Ricard's essay enters into the writings of Milan Kundera in much the same way. The landscape he explores includes a chain of ten novels, composed between 1959 and 1999, and two books containing one of the most lucid reflections on the novel.

Eleanor Rigby

Migration and Literature

Seeing Is Forgetting the Name of the Thing One Sees

The Magic Numbers of Dr. Matrix

Wendy, Darling

In the sixteenth century, Antinous Bellori, a boy of eleven, is lost in a dark forest and stumbles upon two glowing beings, one carrying a spear, the other a flaming torch ... This event is decisive in Bellori's life, and he thereafter devotes himself to the pursuit and study of angels, the intermediaries of the divine. Beginning in the Garden of Eden and soaring through to the present, A Time for Everything reimagines pivotal encounters between humans and angels: the glow of the cherubim watching over Eden; the profound love between Cain and Abel despite their differences; Lot's shame in Sodom; Noah's isolation before the flood; Ezekiel tied to his bed, prophesying ferociously; the death of Christ; and the emergence of sensual, mischievous cherubs in the seventeenth century. Alighting upon these dramatic scenes - from the Bible and beyond - Knausgaard's imagination takes flight: the result is a dazzling display of storytelling at its majestic, spellbinding best. Incorporating and challenging tradition, legend, and the Apocrypha, these penetrating glimpses hazard chilling questions: can the nature of the divine undergo change, and can the immortal perish?

Discussion Notes on Milan Kundera's Immortality

Expanded Edition

The Book of Laughter and Forgetting

Country Life

Far from the Tree