The Jubilee Reader

Recent books by African American writers, writers from the African diaspora, and on related topics.
Issue 3 – January/February 2023

Fiction

1,000 Coils of Fear
by Olivia Wenzel
From playwright Olivia Wenzel, a multilayered and rhythmic debut novel about her life as a Black German woman living in Berlin and New York during the chaos of the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Afterlives
by Abdulrazak Gurnah
From the winner of the 2021 Nobel Prize in Literature, a sweeping, multi-generational saga of displacement, loss, and love, set against the brutal colonization of east Africa.

The Attic Child
by Lola Jaye
Two children trapped in the same attic of a large house by the sea, almost a century apart, are bound by a shared secret.

The Birdcatcher
by Gayl Jones
Set on the island of Ibiza, this is the story of a writer whose closest friend, a gifted sculptor, is repeatedly institutionalized for trying to kill her husband.

Black Hamptons
by Carl Weber
When a piece of land comes up for sale in the Hamptons, it sparks a war between two families. Will the tension between them shatter any hopes of a peaceful summer?

Didn’t Nobody Give a Shit What Happened to Carlotta
by James Hannaham
Over the course of one consequential Fourth of July weekend, a trans woman reenters life on the outside after more than twenty years in a men’s prison.
Do You Take This Man
by Denise Williams
After butting heads, an event planner and a wedding officiant begin an enemies-with-benefits arrangement.

Drunk on Love
by Jasmine Guillory
A one-night stand between a winery owner and a sexy Silicon Valley escapee gets complicated when they realize that he’s the winery’s newest employee and she’s his new boss.

The Furrows
by Namwali Serpell
A woman haunted by the childhood disappearance of her little brother meets a man who is mysterious and familiar — a man who shares the name of her missing brother.

A Ghost in Shining Armor
by Therese Beharrie
A woman with the ability to see and help ghosts settle their unfinished business is haunted by a hotter-than-hot phantom who’s determined to help her.

The Hookup Plan
by Farrah Rochon
In this enemies-to-lovers romance, a successful pediatric surgeon falls in love (and into bed) with the millionaire who has to decide whether or not her hospital will stay open.

House of Hunger
by Alexis Henderson
A young woman raised in the slums is drawn into the upper echelons of a debauched society where blood is power.

If I Survive You
by Jonathan Escoffery
In this collection of humorous, heartfelt stories, a Jamaican family flees violence-torn Kingston for Miami, only to learn that America isn’t always the land it was promised to be.

Jackal
by Erin E. Adams
A young Black girl goes missing in the woods outside her rust belt town. She’s not the first, though — and a horrifying secret about the town suggests she may not be the last.

Jollof Rice and Other Revolutions: A Novel in Interlocking Stories
by Omolola Ogunyemi
Nigerian author Omolola Ogunyemi makes her American debut with a novel which explores her homeland’s past, present, and possible future through the interconnected stories of four fearless, globe-trotting women.

The Last Dreamwalker
by Rita Woods
The story of two women who are separated by nearly two centuries, yet are linked by the Gullah Geechee heritage and their connection to a mysterious gift passed from generation to generation.
The Light Always Breaks
by Angela Jackson-Brown
In 1947, the owner of Washington, D.C.’s, most famous Black-owned restaurant crosses paths with a handsome white senator from Georgia. Drawn to one another, their relationship threatens to destroy them and everything they’ve worked for.

Long Past Summer
by Noué Kirwan
When an old photograph resurfaces on the cover of a fashion magazine, a successful New York lawyer must deal with an ex-lover, an ex-friend, and all the drama in between.

The Monsters We Defy
by L. Penelope
A woman able to communicate with spirits assembles a ragtag crew to pull off a daring heist to save her community in this historical fantasy.

Murder in Westminster
by Vanessa Riley
In this historical mystery series debut, an aristocrat whose skin color and notorious family history have left her with few friends she can rely on, is named as the prime suspect in a murder case.

Murder Out of Character
by Olivia Matthews
A small-town librarian finds a list of four names that appear to have nothing in common – except, possibly, murder. Can the librarian and her librarian friends stop a killer bent on revenge?

My Government Means to Kill Me
by Rasheed Newson
A coming-of-age story following the personal and political awakening of a young, gay, Black man in 1980s New York City.

Never Meant to Meet You
by Alli Frank
A kindergarten teacher is forced to contend with her own heartache when an unexpected child shows up on the first day of school with an uncle who has all the class moms aflutter.

On the Rooftop
by Margaret Wilkerson Sexton
In 1950s San Francisco, a mother with dreams of musical stardom for her three daughters must deal with the fact that they have their own ambitions.

Perish
by LaToya Watkins
In this multigenerational story, four members of a Black Texan family deal with the effects of inherited trauma and intergenerational violence when they come together to say goodbye to their matriarch on her deathbed.

People Person
by Candice Carty-Williams
When a dramatic event brings an aspiring lifestyle influencer’s half-siblings back into her life, the entire family is forced to reconnect with the absent father they never really knew.
Rivalry at Play
by Nadine Gonzalez
They were rivals in high school, but now they’re all grown up. She’s an attorney, back home to deal with family business. He’s an entrepreneur who won’t be satisfied until he’s made her his queen. Is a casual fling the best strategy?

Rules of Engagement
by Selena Montgomery
When an undercover intelligence operative and her brooding, sexy partner infiltrate a terrorist group, their masquerade as a couple proves too tempting to resist.

Soul of a Killer
by Abby Collette
In this cozy mystery, fraternal twins trying to run a combined soul food cafe and bookstore find themselves searching for a cold-hearted killer.

Stories from the Tenants Downstairs
by Sidik Fofana
A collection of stories about the tight-knit residents of Banneker Terrace, who must grapple with their own personal challenges and the life-upending threat of gentrification.

Sweet, Soft, Plenty Rhythm
by Laura Warrell
A 40-year-old trumpet player and old-school ladies’ man must face the music when he learns that his drummer is pregnant with his child.

They Come at Knight
by Yasmin Angoe
In this follow-up to Her Name Is Knight, an elite assassin who will stop at nothing to protect her family seeks to uncover an internal threat to the organization for which she works.

The Thread Collectors
by Shaunna J. Edwards
In 1863, the paths of a Jewish woman from New York searching for her husband and a young Black woman who helps enslaved men escape to join the Union Army converge in New Orleans.

Standalone
by Christopher Chambers
When an unlicensed private investigator is forced to find the daughter of an ex-con, he uncovers a secret that unleashes a war within in the corrupt police force and threatens to tear the nation’s capital apart.

To Catch a Raven
by Beverly Jenkins
The newest novel in the Women Who Dare series follows the exploits of a fearless grifter who goes undercover to reclaim the stolen Declaration of Independence.
To Win a Prince
by Toni Shiloh
A fashion aficionado wants to start a business that will help impoverished people. When she discovers that a former prince will be her business consultant, the battle between her desires and reality begins.

Tori and Jace: Trapped in His Love
by Na’Cole
A woman lands the perfect man... but one man just isn’t enough. A young music producer on the way up has no time for love, until the universe places the right woman in front of him. But is she as perfect as she seems?

Transformers: Shattered Glass
by Danny Lore
In this new entry into the Transformers universe, the heroes that once stood as humanity’s protectors are now monstrously evil.

Two Parts Sugar, One Part Murder
by V. M. Burns
In this cozy culinary mystery, a social media expert who’s starting over in small-town Michigan, after inheriting her great-aunt’s baker and a 200-pound English Mastiff, is suspected of the fatal stabbing of the town’s mayor.

Vanessa Jared’s Got a Man
by LaQuette
A 40-something woman coming out of a post-divorce slump is determined to take down her ex when she learns that he’s proposed to another woman — using a ring that he stole from her.

Where We End & Begin
by Jane Igharo
Star-crossed lovers are given a second chance at romance when they reunite at a wedding in Nigeria.

Will Do Magic for Small Change
by Andrea Hairston
In this tale of alien science and earthbound magic, an aspiring actress must untangle a web of mysteries and secrets that involves her family, a warrior woman, and an alien from another dimension who performed at the 1893 World’s Fair.

Witchful Thinking
by Celestine Martin
A high school teacher in a mystic seaside town finds herself under a spell that won’t allow her to say no — not to a public karaoke performance, running a 10K, and, most alarmingly, not to her high school crush.

The Women Could Fly
by Megan Giddings
In a world in which witches are real and single women are closely monitored unless they are married by age 30, a single woman whose mother was suspected of witchcraft is given the opportunity to honor one last request from her mother’s will.
Non-Fiction

Arts and Literature

Black Ephemera: The Crisis and Challenge of the Musical Archive
by Mark Anthony Neal
An exploration of the crisis of the Black musical archive in a time when Black American culture has become a global import, yet that cultural DNA has become obscured in the transformation from analog to digital.

Black Hollywood: Reimagining Iconic Movie Moments
by Carell Augustus
Photographer Carell Augustus and Black celebrities and performers recreate iconic scenes from classic Hollywood movies and television.

Claude McKay: The Making of a Black Bolshevik
by Winston James
An account of the early political and intellectual trajectory of Claude McKay, a central figure in Caribbean literature, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Black radical tradition.

by Jonathan P. D. Abrams
An oral history of hip-hop that traces its rise from playgrounds in its Bronx beginnings to the forefront of modern pop culture.

Protectors of Wakanda: A History and Training Manual for the Dora Milaje
by Karama Horne
Learn what it takes to become a member of the Dora Milaje — Wakanda’s elite, all-female guard — with this exclusive in-world history and training manual.

Rap Capital: An Atlanta Story
by Joe Coscarelli
A street-level history about the flawed and inspired individuals who have created one of the most consequential music cultures of today — Atlanta rap.

Biography and Memoir

America Made Me a Black Man: A Memoir
by Boyah J. Farah
A memoir of American racism from a Somali American who survived hardships in his birth country only to experience the dehumanization of Blacks in his adopted land, the United States.

Be the One You Need: 21 Life Lessons I Learned While Taking Care of Everyone But Me
by Sophia A. Nelson
A memoir from the author of The Woman Code providing life lessons that emphasize the importance of self-care, self-love, and self-understanding.
The Black Period: On Personhood, Race, and Origin
by Hafizah Geter
A poet reclaims her origin story as the queer daughter of a Muslim Nigerian immigrant and a Black American visual artist in a memoir that combines lyrical prose, biting criticism, and haunting visuals.

California Soul: An American Epic of Cooking and Survival
by Keith Corbin
A memoir about gangs, drugs, cooking, and living life on the line — on the streets and in the kitchen.

Everything I Never Dreamed: My Life Surviving and Standing Up to Domestic Violence
by Ruth M. Glenn
A raw and uplifting memoir from the CEO and president of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, chronicling her personal battle against abuse and violence.

The Forerunner: A Story of Pain and Perseverance in America
by Cori Bush
A memoir that sheds light on a harrowing personal journey and urges political leadership to prioritize meeting the needs of our most marginalized communities.

Fruit Punch: A Memoir
by Kendra Allen
A memoir about the exultant and harrowing experience of growing up as a Black child who was desperate to create a reality for herself in America.

Illustrated Black History: Honoring the Iconic and the Unseen
by George McCalman
A collection of 145 original portraits and biographical reflections that celebrate Black pioneers in politics, science, literature, music, and more.

Scenes From My Life: A Memoir
by Michael Kenneth Williams
In this memoir, actor Michael Kenneth Williams traces his life from his childhood and his early years as a dancer to his battles with addiction and the bar fight that left his face with his distinguishing scar.

Token Black Girl: A Memoir
by Danielle Prescod
Racial identity, pop culture, and delusions of perfection collide in this frank memoir by fashion and beauty insider Danielle Prescod.

A Visible Man: A Memoir
by Edward Enninful
In this memoir of breaking barriers, Edward Enninful — the first Black editor-in-chief of British Vogue — discusses his journey through one of the world’s most exclusive industries.
**Walking in My Joy: In These Streets**
by Jenifer Lewis
Self-described “traveling fool and nature freak” Jenifer Lewis recounts her real-life travel adventures from around the world, demonstrating how she walks in her joy by seeking pleasure in everyday encounters.

When They Tell You to be Good
by Prince Shakur
In this memoir, Prince Shakur recounts his radicalization and self-realization through examinations of place, childhood, queer identity, and a history of uprisings.

**Wolf Hustle: A Black Woman on Wall Street**
by Cin Fabré
From landing clients worth hundreds of millions, to gaining, losing, and then regaining fortunes in seconds, Cin Fabré examines her years spent building a career on Wall Street.

You Should Sit Down for This: A Memoir About Wine, Life, and Cookies
by Tamera Mowry
In this memoir, TV star Tamera Mowry-Housley tells how she tapped into her faith to hone her happiness and create a path forward for herself.

You’ve Been Chosen: Thriving Through the Unexpected
by Cynthia Marshall
An optimistic memoir by one of the most influential Black business leaders in America today, offering hope and practical guidance for navigating life’s most difficult challenges.

**Cooking**

KosherSoul: The Faith and Food Journey of an African American Jew
by Michael Twitty
The James Beard award-winning author of the *The Cooking Gene* explores the cultural crossroads of Jewish and African diaspora cuisine and issues of memory, identity, and food.

**Sunday Best: Cooking Up the Weekend Spirit Every Day**
by Adrienne Cheatham
In this collection, Adrienne Cheatnam showcases her signature style of cooking, sharing more than 100 recipes that combine her family’s Southern roots, her classical training in professional kitchens, and her multicultural influences.

The Way Home: A Celebration of Sea Islands Food and Family With Over 100 Recipes
by Kardea Brown
Food Network star Kardea Brown celebrates Gullah Geechee culinary traditions and provides 125 family recipes in this cookbook.
Current Affairs

Africa is Not a Country: Notes On a Bright Continent
by Dipo Faloyin
An opinionated, stereotype-busting portrait of contemporary Africa in all its splendid diversity, by one of its leading new writers.

Black Skinhead: Reflections on Blackness and Our Political Future
by Brandi Collins-Dexter
Cultural, personal, and political essays that explore the alliance between Black voters and the Democratic party and reveal decades of simmering disaffection in Black America.

Black Women Will Save the World: An Anthem
by April Ryan
White House correspondent April Ryan reflects on “The Year That Changed Everything” — 2020 — and the unprecedented role that African American women played in upholding democracy.

No More Police: A Case for Abolition
by Mariame Kaba
Bestselling author Mariame Kaba and attorney Andrea Ritchie explore why policing perpetuates harm, how many contemporary police reforms have failed, and why an investment in community resources can create greater safety.

Red Hot City: Housing, Race, and Exclusion in Twenty-first Century Atlanta
by Daniel Immergluck
An examination of how Atlanta’s growth-at-all-costs planning and policy have exacerbated inequality and racial division within the city.

The Third Reconstruction: America’s Struggle for Racial Justice in the Twenty-First Century
by Peniel E. Joseph
Examining the climax of a “Third Reconstruction,” historian Joseph draws connections between the election of Barack Obama, the rise of Black Lives Matter, and to the failed assault on the Capitol.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Mamas: What I Learned About Kids, Class, and Race from Moms Not Like Me
by Helena Andrews-Dyer
A Washington Post culture writer chronicles the challenges she faces as a Black mother in a mostly white mommy group in a time of gentrification, racial reckoning, and a global pandemic.
The Waymakers: Clearing the Path to Workplace Equity With Competence and Confidence
by Tara Jaye Frank
Using case studies, data, and candid storytelling, Tara Jaye Frank outlines how leaders with power and position can clear the path to workplace equity.

Education
The Ultimate Guide to HBCUs
by Braque Talley
An all-in-one guide to Historically Black Colleges and Universities which includes profiles of every HBCU in the country, highlights of their programs and degrees offered, and more.

Essays
Black Powerful
by Natasha Marin
Award-winning viral curator and poet Natasha Marin follows up Black Imagination with a collection of sharply rendered reflections from more than 100 Black voices.

Starry Messenger: Cosmic Perspectives on Civilization
by Neil deGrasse Tyson
In this collection of essays, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson shines new light on the crucial fault lines of our time — war, politics, religion, truth, beauty, gender, and race.

Victory is Assured: Uncollected Writings of Stanley Crouch
by Stanley Crouch
In this posthumous collection of previously unpublished essays, writer and critic Stanley Crouch tackles subjects as varied as Malcolm X and Quentin Tarantino’s Django Unchained.

Health
by Nana Darkoa Sekyiamah
In this celebration of the liberation, individuality, and joy of their multifaceted sexuality, blogger Nana Darkoa Sekyiamah talks openly and intimately to African women around the world about sex.

History
American Sirens: The Incredible Story of the Black Men Who Became America’s First Paramedics
by Kevin Hazzard
The story of an unjustly forgotten group of Black men in Pittsburgh who became the first paramedics in America, saving lives and changing the course of emergency medicine.
By Hands Now Known: Jim Crow’s Legal Executioners
by Margaret A. Burnham
A renowned legal scholar investigates Jim Crow-era violence, the legal apparatus that sustained it, and its enduring legacy.

Grace: President Obama and Ten Days in the Battle for America
by Cody Keenan
Barack Obama’s chief speechwriter recounts ten dramatic days during the Obama presidency, when a president’s words could bring the nation together or tear it apart.

Half American: The Epic Story of African Americans Fighting World War II at Home and Abroad
by Matthew F. Delmont
A definitive history of World War II from the African American perspective, written by civil rights expert and Dartmouth history professor Matthew Delmont.

The Long Alliance: The Imperfect Union of Joe Biden and Barack Obama
by Gabriel Debenedetti
An inside look at the historically close, complicated, occasionally codependent, and at times uncertain relationship between Joe Biden and Barack Obama.

My People: Five Decades of Writing About Black Lives
by Charlayne Hunter-Gault
A collection of ground-breaking reportage from Emmy Award-winning journalist Charlayne Hunter-Gault chronicling the experience of Black life in America today.

by Thomas E. Ricks
Pulitzer Prize-winning war reporter Thomas E. Ricks offers a fresh perspective on the civil rights movement, arguing that recruiting, training, discipline, and organization — the hallmarks of a successful military campaign — played as important a role as the movement’s emphasis on nonviolence.

Poetry

Black Oak: Odes Celebrating Powerful Black Men
by Harold Green III
From the author of Black Roses, poetry honoring the lives and achievements of groundbreaking men such as Tyler Perry, Barry Jenkins, Billy Porter, Chance the Rapper, LeBron James, Colin Kaepernick, and John Legend.

Heart First Into This Ruin: The Complete American Sonnets
by Wanda Coleman
The first complete collection of Wanda Coleman’s original and inventive sonnets, long regarded as among her finest work.
Science

*The Milky Way: An Autobiography of Our Galaxy*
by Moiya McTier

In this autobiography of the titular galaxy, astrophysicist Moiya McTier details what humans have discovered about it — from its formation to its eventual death — and what we don’t yet know.

Self-Help

*Marriage Be Hard: 12 Conversations to Keep You Laughing, Loving, and Learning With Your Partner*
by Kevin Fredericks

Husband-and-wife team of comedian Kevin Fredericks and influencer Melissa Fredericks discuss the keys to upholding your vows (while staying sane) in this comic, candid guide to relationships.

*Platonic: How the Science of Attachment Can Help You Make and Keep Friends as an Adult*
by Marisa G. Franco

How do we make and keep friends in a society that often prizes romantic love at the expense of other relationships? Franco unpacks the often counterintuitive findings about the bonds between us.

*Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto*
by Tricia Hersey

Tricia Hersey, aka The Nap Bishop, encourages us to connect to the liberating power of rest, daydreaming, and naps as a foundation for healing and justice.

*Sis, Take a Breath: Encouragement for the Woman Who’s Trying to Live and Love Well (But Secretly Just Wants to Take a Nap)*
by Kirsten Watson

In this work of Christian self-help, mother and podcaster Kirsten Watson offers guidance and encouragement on how to keep on going — and smiling — when the world seems overwhelming.

*Stop Waiting for Permission: Harness Your Gifts, Find Your Purpose, and Unleash Your Personal Genius*
by Stephen Chandler

From the pastor of one of America’s fastest-growing churches, this manifesto will show you how to dream, plan, and ultimately achieve your great calling in life.

*You Owe You: Ignite Your Power, Your Purpose, and Your Why*
by Eric Thomas

In this self-help manifesto, Eric Thomas argues that you should take control of your life — advice he wishes he was given when he was lost, homeless, failing in school, and dealing with the challenges of being a Black man in America.