We’re sharing some of our favorite books and gifts that are available for mail order while the Carlos Museum is closed to the public.

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**Book Towns:** *Forty-Five Paradises of the Printed Word*

The so-called “book towns” of the world are dedicated havens of literature and the ultimate dream of book lovers everywhere. *Book Towns* takes readers on a richly illustrated tour of the 40 semi-officially recognized literary towns around the world and outlines the history and development of each community, and offers practical travel advice. Many “book towns” have emerged in areas of marked attraction such as Ureña in Spain or Fjaerland in Norway, where bookshops have been set up in buildings, including former ferry waiting rooms and banks. While the UK has the best-known examples at Hay, Wigtown, and Sedbergh, the book has a broad international appeal, featuring locations such as Jimbochu in Japan, College Street in Calcutta, and major unofficial “book cities” such as Buenos Aires.

$22.99, hardcover.

**Books: The Essential Insiders Guide**

This book in the well-researched *City Secrets* series is comprised of short, often anecdotal essays that share personal, affectionate accounts of why a contributor’s particular choice of book deserves to be rediscovered and read anew. Nearly every genre is featured in every manner of fiction and nonfiction, including history, biography, autobiography, memoir, humor, nature, crime writing, war...
reportage, and science fiction. The 158 contributors to this collection include Jane Smiley, Calvin Trillin, John Guare, Oscar Hijuelos, Buck Henry, Graydon Carter, Pico Iyer, Robert Pinsky, C. K. Williams, Deborah Eisenberg, and many more. Compulsive short reads will enchant booklovers. $19.95, pocket-size hardcover.

Libraries: Candida Höfer

Traveling around the world, photographer Höfer shows the exquisite beauty to be found in order, repetition, and form—rows of books, lines of desks, soaring shelves, and even stacks of paper create patterns that are both hypnotic and soothing. Photographed with a large-format camera and a small aperture, these razor-sharp images of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, the Escorial in Spain, Villa Medici in Rome, the Hamburg University library, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, and the Museo Archeologico in Madrid to name a few, communicate more than just the superb architecture. Glowing with subtle color and natural light, the photographs shimmer with life and remind us again and again that libraries are more than just repositories for books. With an introduction by Umberto Eco. $65.00, hardcover.

Bookshelf

Object Lessons is a series of short, beautifully designed books about the hidden lives of ordinary things. Every shelf is different and every bookshelf tells a different story. One bookshelf can creak with character in a bohemian coffee shop and another can groan with gravitas in the Library of Congress. Writer and historian Lydia Pyne finds bookshelves to be holders not just of books but of so many other things: values, vibes, and verbs that can be contained and displayed in the buildings and rooms of contemporary human existence. With a shrewd eye toward this particular moment in the history of books, Pyne takes the reader on a tour of the bookshelf that leads critically to this juncture: amid rumors of the death of book culture, why is the life of the bookshelf in full bloom? $14.95, paperback.

The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu: And Their Race to Save the World’s Most Precious Manuscripts

In the 1980s, a young adventurer and collector for a government library, Abdel Kader Haidara, journeyed across the Sahara Desert and along the Niger River tracking down and salvaging tens of thousands of ancient Islamic and secular manuscripts that had fallen into obscurity. Here is the incredible story of how Haidara, a mild-mannered archivist and historian from the legendary city of Timbuktu, later became one of the world’s greatest and most brazen smugglers. Joshua Hammer tells the story of Haidara’s heroic and ultimately successful effort to outwit Al Qaeda and preserve Mali’s—and the world’s—literary patrimony, a victory of art and literature over extremism. $17.00, paperback.

Why Women Read Fiction: The Stories of Our Lives

Ian McEwan once said, “When women stop reading, the novel will be dead.” This book explains why women are the main buyers and readers of contemporary fiction, and how they draw
on it to tell the stories of their lives. Female readers are key to the future of fiction and—as parents, teachers, and librarians—the glue for a literate society. Women treasure the chance to read alone, but have also gregariously shared reading experiences and memories, intellectually and emotionally, with mothers, daughters, grandchildren, and female friends. This book, written by an experienced teacher, scholar of women’s writing, and literature festival director, draws on more than 500 interviews with and questionnaires from women readers and writers. It describes how, where, and when women read fiction and examines why stories and writers influence the way female readers understand and shape their own life stories. It also illuminates the reasons for women’s abiding love of two favorite novels, Pride and Prejudice and Jane Eyre. $18.95, hardcover.


This first-ever history of the legendary bohemian bookstore in Paris, published by the bookshop itself, interweaves essays and poetry from dozens of writers associated with the shop—Allen Ginsberg, Anais Nin, Ethan Hawke, Robert Stone and Jeanette Winterson, among others—with hundreds of never-before-seen archival pieces. It includes photographs of James Baldwin, William Burroughs and Langston Hughes, a foreword by British novelist Jeanette Winterson and an epilogue by Sylvia Whitman, the daughter of the store’s founder, George Whitman. $34.95, hardback.

Bowie’s Bookshelf: The Hundred Books That Changed David Bowie’s Life

Three years before David Bowie died, he shared a list of 100 books that changed his life. His choices span fiction and nonfiction, literary and irreverent, and include timeless classics alongside eyebrow-raising obscurities. In 100 short essays, music journalist John O’Connell studies each book on Bowie’s list and contextualizes it in the artist’s life and work. How did the power imbued in a single suit of armor in the Iliad impact a man who loved costumes, shifting identity, and the siren song of the alter-ego? How did the Gnostic Gospels inform Bowie’s own hazy personal cosmology? How did the poems of T.S. Eliot and Frank O’Hara, the fiction of Vladimir Nabokov and Anthony Burgess, the comics of The Beano and The Viz, and the groundbreaking politics of James Baldwin influence Bowie’s lyrics, his sound, and his artistic outlook? How did the 100 books on this list influence one of the most influential artists of a generation? $18.00, hardcover.

A Book of Book Lists: A Bibliophiles’s Compendium

These lists are not of the “100 Books You MUST Read Before You Die” variety, but lists that tell stories, lists that make you smile, make you wonder, and see titles together in entirely new ways. From Bin Laden’s bookshelf to the books most frequently left in hotels, from prisoners’ favorite books to Members of Parliament’s most borrowed books, these lists are proof that a person’s bookcase tells you everything you
need to know about them, and sometimes more. $12.95 paperback.

**A History of Reading**

Tracing the complete story of reading from the age when symbol first became sign through to the electronic texts of the present day, Steven Roger Fischer’s fascinating history offers a sweeping view across time and geography of our evolving relationship with text. Fischer takes us to Asia and the Americas and discusses the forms and developments of completely divergent writing systems and scripts. With the Middle Ages in Europe and the Middle East, innovative reinventions of reading emerged—silent and liturgical reading; the custom of lectors; and a focus on reading in general education, whereupon printing transformed society’s entire attitude toward reading. He also assesses a future in which read communication will likely exceed oral communication through the use of the personal computer and the internet. Looking at “visual language” and modern theories of how reading is processed in the human brain, he asks how the New Reader can reshape reading’s fate, suggesting a radical new definition of what reading could be. $13.99, paperback.

**Bookshops: A Reader’s History**

Jorge Carrion collects bookshops: from Gotham Book Mart and the Strand Bookstore in New York City to City Lights Bookshop and Green Apple Books in San Francisco and all the bright spots in between (Prairie Lights, Tattered Cover, and countless others). In this thought-provoking, vivid, and entertaining essay, Carrion meditates on the importance of the bookshop as a cultural and intellectual space. Filled with anecdotes from the histories of some of the famous (and not-so-famous) shops he visits on his travels, thoughtful considerations of challenges faced by bookstores, and fascinating digressions on their political and social impact, this book is both a manifesto and a love letter to these spaces that transform readers’ lives. $15.95, paperback.

**The Written World: The Power of Stories to Shape People, History, and Civilization**

In this groundbreaking book, Martin Puchner leads us on a remarkable journey through time and around the globe to reveal how stories and literature have created the world we have today. Through 16 foundational texts selected from more than 4,000 years of world literature, he shows us how writing has inspired the rise and fall of empires and nations, the spark of philosophical and political ideas, and the birth of religious beliefs. We meet Murasaki, a lady from eleventh-century Japan who wrote the first novel, *The Tale of Genji*, and follow the adventures of Miguel de Cervantes as he battles pirates, both seafaring and literary. We watch Goethe discover world literature in Sicily, and follow the rise in influence of *The Communist Manifesto*. Puchner takes us to Troy, Pergamon, and China, speaks with Nobel laureates Derek Walcott in the Caribbean and Orhan Pamuk in Istanbul, and introduces us to the wordsmiths of the oral epic Sunjata in West Africa. $20.00, paperback.
Paper: Paging Through History

Paper is one of the simplest and most essential pieces of human technology. For the past two millennia, the ability to produce it in ever more efficient ways has supported the proliferation of literacy, media, religion, education, commerce, and art; it has formed the foundation of civilizations, promoting revolutions and restoring stability. By tracing paper’s evolution from antiquity to the present, with an emphasis on the contributions made in Asia and the Middle East, author Mark Kurlansky challenges common assumptions about technology’s influence, affirming that paper is here to stay. $16.95, paperback

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Libraries are much more than mere collections of volumes. The best are magical, fabled places whose fame has become part of the cultural wealth they are designed to preserve. To research this book, Stuart Kells traveled around the world with his young family like modern-day “library tourists.” Kells discovered that stories about libraries are stories about people, containing every possible human drama. The Library is a celebration of books as objects, a celebration of the anthropology and physicality of books and bookish space, and an account of the human side of these hallowed spaces by a leading and passionate bibliophile. $16.95, paperback

The Cabinet of Linguistic Curiosities: A Yearbook of Forgotten Words

In this linguistic “wunderkammer” you’ll find both a word and a day to remember, every day of the year. Each day has its own dedicated entry, on which a curious or notable event—and an equally curious or notable word—are explored. On the day flirting was banned in New York City, for instance, you’ll discover why to “sheep’s-eye” someone once meant to look at them amorously. On the day a disillusioned San Franciscan declared himself Emperor of the United States, you’ll find the word “mamamouchi,” a term for people who consider themselves more important than they truly are. And on the day George Frederic Handel completed his 259-page Messiah after 24 days of frenzied work, you’ll see why a French loanword, literally meaning “a small wooden barrow,” is used to refer to an intense period of work undertaken to meet a deadline. $20.00, hardcover

Bookworm: A Memoir

Imported from England! When Lucy Mangan was little, stories were everything. They opened up different worlds and cast new light on this one. She was whisked away to Narnia—and Kirrin Island—and Wonderland. She ventured down rabbit holes and wibble burrows into midnight gardens and chocolate factories. No wonder she only left the house for her weekly trip to the library. In Bookworm, Lucy brings the favorite characters of our collective childhoods back to life and disinters a few
forgotten treasures poignantly, wittily using them to tell her own story, that of a born and unrepentant bookworm. $17.95, paperback.

**The Diary of a Bookseller**

Scottish antiquarian bookstore owner Shaun Bythell’s acerbic yet hilarious day-by-day memoir of book-selling, and especially of the challenging array of customers and sellers with whom he jousts daily, is an oddly compulsive read. This is one of those uniquely entertaining books you’ll want to urge into the hands of all your bibliophile friends. $17.99, paperback.

This is a spirited and witty guide to the world of disheveled used bookstores and dusty basements where shelves sag under the burden of so many books. In the limitless sea of books, here’s one that will make you laugh as it helps you find your way to titles and authors you’ll really want to read. Author (and Atlanta resident) Murray Browne writes: “This predilection [for browsing used bookstores] has grown into a real (albeit quirky) passion for thinking about the many ways books affect our lives—how and where we shop for them, the people we know who read them, and the small passages that stick in our heads for years only to reappear at the oddest moments. The minds of book people are mosaics of ideas, thoughts, and phrases that have originated in books... I’m fascinated by how we hold and shape these fragments, how they coalesce into what I call my bookshopper state of mind.” In chapters such as “Book Lovers Are Not Necessarily People Lovers,” “Prerequisites: What Every Good Bookstore Should Have,” “Books as Gifts,” and “The Classic Book Group,” Murray Browne offers a lifeline to readers who love to browse for books and are always looking for that next great read. $12.95, paperback.

**The Book Lover’s Journal: My Personal Reading Record**

At last, a specialized journal to record the books you’ve read. Months and years from now, this journal
will help you instantly recall long-forgotten details of your reading experience. This is also the place to record books you’d like to read next—just take it with you to the bookstore or library. You’ll find pages to list books borrowed, lent, or given (even a place to list books you’d like to give), your book sources, and book group contact information, plus lists of acclaimed authors and titles to inspire future reading choices and a section devoted to your reading life. $14.99, spiralbound journal.

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Based on his earlier bestseller *Footnotes from the World’s Greatest Bookstores* (also available for purchase for $22.00, hardcover), Bob Eckstein brings his heart-tugging illustrations to a postcard set. Here are 100 postcards that celebrate the pillar of every community—the independent bookstore—with 50 total illustrations to both send and save. $20.00, boxed set.