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How to Be an Artist

Art has the power to change our lives. For many, becoming an artist is a lifelong dream. But how to make it happen? In How to Be an Artist, art critic Jerry Saltz of New York magazine, one of the art world’s most celebrated and passionate voices, offers an indispensable handbook for creative people of all kinds. Saltz offers invaluable insight into what really matters to emerging artists: originality, persistence, a balance between knowledge and intuition, and that most precious of qualities, self-belief. Teeming with full-color artwork from visionaries ancient and modern, this beautiful and useful book will help artists of all kinds—painters, photographers, writers, performers—realize their dreams. $22.00, hardcover.

The Selected Poems of Tu Fu: Expanded and Newly Translated by David Hinton

Tu Fu (712-770 AD) has for a millennium been widely considered the greatest poet in the Chinese tradition. Most of Tu Fu’s best poems were written in the last decade of his life, as an impoverished refugee fleeing the devastation of civil war. In the midst of these challenges, his always personal poems manage to combine a remarkable range of possibilities: elegant
simplicity and great complexity, everyday life and grand historical drama, private philosophical depth and social engagement in a world consumed by war. Gary Snyder wrote: “Tu Fu said ‘A poet’s ideas are noble and simple.’ But Tu Fu does not seem so simple to us. One of the world’s finest poets is made available here.” $18.95, paperback.

**How the World Thinks: A Global History of Philosophy**

Julian Baggini sets out to expand our horizons, exploring the philosophies of Japan, India, China, and the Muslim world as well as the lesser-known oral traditions of Africa and Australia’s first peoples. Interviewing thinkers from around the globe, Baggini asks questions such as: why is the West more individualistic than the East? What makes secularism a less powerful force in the Islamic world than in Europe? And how has China resisted pressures for greater political freedom? $12.99, paperback.

**Irrationality: A History of the Dark Side of Reason**

From sex and music to religion and war, irrationality makes up the greater part of human life and history. Challenging conventional thinking about logic, natural reason, dreams, art and science, pseudoscience, the Enlightenment, the internet, jokes, lies, and death, Irrationality shows how history reveals that any triumph of reason is temporary and reversible, and that rational schemes, notably including many from Silicon Valley, often result in their polar opposite. Illuminating unreason at a moment when the world appears to have gone mad again, Irrationality is fascinating, provocative, and timely. $29.99, hardcover.

**The Black Death: A Personal History**

In this fresh approach to the history of the Black Death, John Hatcher, a world-renowned scholar of the Middle Ages, recreates everyday life in a mid-fourteenth century rural English village. By focusing on the experiences of ordinary villagers as they lived—and died—during the Black Death (1345–50 AD), Hatcher vividly places the reader directly into those tumultuous years and describes in fascinating detail the day-to-day existence of people struggling with the tragic effects of the plague. Dramatic scenes portray how contemporaries must have experienced and thought about momentous events and how they tried to make sense of it all. $18.00, paperback.

**So Much Longing in So Little Space: The Art of Edvard Munch**

Bestselling memoirist/novelist Karl Ove Knausgaard combines piercing artistic insight with freewheeling historical, biographical, and autobiographical digressions, bringing to life Munch’s emotionally and psychologically intense work with extraordinary and fitting feeling and urgency. A singular and exceptionally stylish work of art criticism, and a perfect match of subject and author, this book with its reproductions of a number of Munch’s most significant paintings is an essential and
fascinating volume for both Knausgaard’s legion of loyal readers and devotees of the visual arts alike. $17.00, paperback.

**The Ends of the World: Volcanic Apocalypses, Lethal Oceans, and Our Quest to Understand Earth’s Past Mass Extinctions**

Using the visible clues five past devastations have left behind in the fossil record, *The Ends of the World* takes us inside “scenes of the crime” from South Africa to the New York Palisades to tell the story of each extinction. Brannen examines the fossil record—which is rife with creatures like dragonflies the size of sea gulls and guillotine-mouthed fish—and introduces us to the researchers on the front lines who, using the forensic tools of modern science, are piecing together what really happened at the crime scenes of the Earth’s biggest who-dunits. $16.99, paperback.

**The Madness of Knowledge: On Wisdom, Ignorance, and Fantasies of Knowing**

Many human beings have considered the powers and the limits of human knowledge, but few have wondered about the power that the idea of knowledge has over us. Here is the first book to investigate this emotional inner life of knowledge: the lusts, fantasies, dreams, and fears that the idea of knowing provokes; in-depth discussions of the imperious will to know; of Freud’s *epistemophilia* (or love of knowledge); and the curiously insistently links between madness, magical thinking, and the desire for knowledge. $35.00, hardcover.

Imported from the UK! The relationship between England and its gardens might be described as a love affair; gardening is a national passion, rooted in history. This survey brings the voices of the past alive in newspaper reports, letters, diaries, books, essays and travelogues, offering contemporary gardening advice, principles of design, reflections on nature, landscape and plants, and a unique perspective on the origins of the English fascination with gardens. Exploring the different styles, techniques, and innovations, and the creation of many of the stunning spaces that visitors still flock to see today, this is an evocative and rewarding collection for all gardeners and garden-lovers seeking insight, ideas, and surprises. $18.95, hardcover.

**Why Women Read Fiction: The Stories of Our Lives**

Helen Taylor, an experienced teacher, scholar of women’s writing, and literature festival director, 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. Taylor explores why women are the main buyers and readers of fiction, members of book clubs, attendees at literary festivals, and organizers of trips to fictional sites and writers’ homes, and offers a cornucopia of witty and wise women’s voices to understand why, in poet Jackie Kay’s words, “our lives are mapped by books.”
**Music: A Subversive History**

Musical obsessive Ted Gioia tells a 4,000-year history of music as a global source of power, change, and upheaval. He shows how social outcasts have repeatedly become trailblazers of musical expression: slaves and their descendants, for instance, have repeatedly reinvented music, from ancient times all the way to the jazz, reggae, and hip-hop sounds of the current day. He reclaims the story of music for the riffraff, insurgents, and provocateurs from Sappho to the Sex Pistols to Spotify. $35.00, hardcover.


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**Atlas Obscura: The Second Edition**

Created by the founders of AtlasObscura.com, the vibrant online travel community, this completely revised and updated second edition includes 120 new entries that offer readers even more of the most unusual, curious, bizarre, and mysterious places on earth as well as a full-color gatefold Atlas Obscura road trip map with a dream itinerary. Oversized, beautifully packaged, compellingly written, scrupulously researched, and filled with photographs, illustrations, maps, charts, and more, it is the book that inspires equal parts wonder and wanderlust. $37.50, hardback.


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**Transcendence: How Humans Evolved Through Fire, Language, Beauty, and Time**

What enabled us to go from simple stone tools to smart phones? How did bands of hunter-gatherers evolve into multinational empires? In *Transcendence*, Gaia Vince argues that modern humans are the product of a nuanced coevolution of our genes, environment, and culture that goes back into deep time. She explains how, through four key elements—fire, language, beauty, and time—our species diverged from the evolutionary path of all other animals, unleashing a compounding process that turned itself into something marvelous. $30.00, hardcover.

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**Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind**

A runaway bestseller around the world! Dr. Yuval Noah Harari spans the whole of human history, from the very first humans to walk the earth to the radical—and sometimes devastating—breakthroughs of the Cognitive, Agricultural, and Scientific Revolutions. He explores how the currents of history have shaped our human societies, the animals and plants around us, and even our personalities. Have we become happier? Can we ever free our behavior from the heritage of our ancestors? And what, if anything, can we do to influence the course of the centuries to come? $24.99, paperback.
Ancient Egyptian Magic: A Hands-On Guide

Newly published! In the ancient world, if you needed a love charm, wanted to contact your dead wife, or needed the ability to fly like a bird, the magicians of Egypt were the ones who could make it happen. Historian Christina Riggs explores how the Egyptians thought about magic, who performed it and why, and helps readers understand why we’ve come to think of ancient Egypt in such a mystical way. Here you can learn how to cure scorpion bites, ensure that an annoying neighbor gets his comeuppance, and how to save a fortune on pregnancy tests—urinating on barley grains will answer that question. $24.95, hardcover.

Legendary Ladies: 50 Goddesses to Empower and Inspire You

From the beloved author and artist behind Bad Girls Throughout History comes this lushly illustrated book of goddesses from around the world: Aphrodite, the Greek goddess whose love overcame mortality; Mazu, the Chinese deity who safely guides travelers home; and Lakshmi, the Hindu provider of fortune and prosperity. These powerful deities and many more are celebrated in gorgeous artwork and enlightening essays that explore the feminine divine and encourage readers to empower themselves. $19.95, hardcover.

The Aviary (Paperscapes)

More than 50 avian species will delight you in this unique book that transforms into art: a lovely gift for bird-watchers of all ages! Paper press-outs allow you to view each bird in relief as you read descriptions from an expert ornithologist on the diverse range of winged wildlife. Key characteristics are described for each feathered friend, and when you’ve freed all the birds, you can display the open book on your shelf as an art piece. $22.99, hardcover.

Being Human: Bodies, Minds, Persons

What is consciousness? Is the mind a machine? What makes each of us a person? How do our bodies relate to our minds? Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, addresses these frequently asked questions with lucid meditations that draw from findings in neuroscience, philosophy, psychology, and literature. $12.00, paperback.
The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins

Matsutake is the most valuable mushroom in the world, and a weed that grows in human-disturbed forests across the northern hemisphere. Through its ability to nurture trees, matsutake helps forests to grow in daunting places. It is also an edible delicacy in Japan, where it sometimes commands astronomical prices. In all its contradictions, matsutake offers insights into areas far beyond just mushrooms and addresses a crucial question: what manages to live in the ruins we have made? A tale of diversity within our damaged landscapes, this book follows one of the strangest commodity chains of our times to explore the unexpected corners of capitalism. Here, we witness the varied and peculiar worlds of matsutake commerce: the worlds of Japanese gourmets, capitalist traders, Hmong jungle fighters, industrial forests, Yi Chinese goat herders, Finnish nature guides, and more. By investigating one of the world’s most sought-after fungi, The Mushroom at the End of the World presents an original examination into the relation between capitalist destruction and collaborative survival within multispecies landscapes, the prerequisite for continuing life on earth. $19.95,

The Map of Knowledge: A Thousand-Year History of How Classical Ideas Were Lost and Found

This thrilling history tracks three crucial books as they were passed hand to hand through seven cities during a perilous thousand-year journey of survival. After the great library at Alexandria was destroyed, Baghdad, Cordoba, Toledo, Salerno, and Palermo were rare outposts of knowledge in a dark world, where dedicated scholars collected, translated, and shared texts. This book takes us into the sparkling intellectual life that flourished there, highlighting the crucial role played by Arab scholars in improving the cornerstone ideas of Western thought, and how foundational works on math, astronomy, and medicine by Euclid, Ptolemy, and Galen eventually reached Venice, the major center of scientific printing, where their legacy was assured. $17.95, paperback.

Princesses Behaving Badly: Real Stories from History—Without the Fairy-Tale Endings

Real princesses didn’t always get happy endings. Sure, plenty were graceful and benevolent leaders, but just as many were ruthless in their quest for power, and all of them had skeletons rattling in their majestic closets. Princess Stephanie von Hohenlohe was a Nazi spy. Empress Elisabeth of the Austro-Hungarian Empire slept wearing a mask of raw veal. Princess Olga of Kiev slaughtered her way to sainthood. And Princess Lakshmibai waged war on the battlefield with her toddler strapped to her back. $16.99, paperback.

The Maze: A Labyrinthine Compendium

Mazes have been a part of civilization for at least 4,000 years. The idea of the maze taps into so many subconscious notions: the game, the quest, the
Four Words for Friend: Why Using More Than One Language Matters Now More Than Ever

In a world that has English as its global language and rapidly advancing translation technology, it’s easy to assume that the need to use more than one language will diminish—but Marek Kohn argues that plural language use is more important than ever. In a divided world, it helps us to understand ourselves and others better, to live together better, and to make the most of our various cultures.

Kohn, whom the Guardian has called “one of the best science writers we have,” brings together perspectives from psychology, evolutionary thought, politics, literature, and every-

Source of Self Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations

Here is Toni Morrison in her own words—a rich gathering of her most important essays and speeches spanning four decades. These pages give us her searing prayer for the dead of 9/11, her Nobel lecture on the power of language, her searching meditation on Martin Luther King Jr., and her heart-wrenching eulogy for James Baldwin. She looks deeply into the fault lines of culture and freedom: the foreigner, female empowerment, the press, money, “black matter(s),” human rights, the artist in society, and the Afro-American presence in American literature.

$16.95, paperback.

The Sarpedon Krater: The Life and Afterlife of a Greek Vase

Perhaps the most spectacular of all Greek vases, the Sarpedon krater depicts the body of Sarpedon, a hero of the Trojan War, being carried away to his homeland for burial. It was decorated some 2,500 years ago by Athenian artist Euphronios, and its subsequent history involves tomb raiding, intrigue, duplicity, litigation, international outrage, and possibly even homicide. How this came about is told by Nigel Spivey in a concise, stylish book that braids together the creation and adventures of this extraordinary object with an exploration of its abiding influence. Spivey takes the reader on a dramatic journey, beginning with the krater’s looting from an Etruscan tomb in 1971 and its acquisition by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, followed by a high-profile lawsuit over its status and its eventual return to Italy. He explains where, how, and why the vase was produced, retrieving what we know about the life and legend of Sarpedon. Spivey also pursues the figurative motif of the slain Sarpedon portrayed on the vase and traces how this motif became a standard way of representing the dead and dying in Western art, especially during the Renaissance. Fascinating and informative, The Sarpedon Krater is a multifaceted introduction to the enduring influence of Greek art on the world.

$25.00 hardcover.

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Kohn, whom the Guardian has called “one of the best science writers we have,” brings together perspectives from psychology, evolutionary thought, politics, literature, and every-

spiritual journey. This beautifully illustrated book will delight lovers of mazes, acting as a guide, directory, and puzzle book combined. Specially commissioned illustrations represent 60 real and imagined mazes from around the world with a bird’s eye view of each maze so that readers can make their own journey. Each maze is also accompanied by a fascinating and witty short history.

$29.99, hardback.
In seven brief chapters, Watts captures the essence of Zen Buddhism as a religion and a way of life. He explains fundamental Zen concepts, introduces revered Zen thinkers, places Zen within the broader context of Eastern religion, and traces the influence of Zen in the arts. Illustrated with calligraphy and drawings by the author, this reprint of an old classic will delight fans of Alan Watts, while introducing new readers to a legendary author who infused groundbreaking scholarship with literary brilliance. $16.00, hardcover.

Zen: A Short Introduction

According to Alan Watts, “Zen taste deplores the cluttering of a picture or of a room with many objects.” In that sense, this minimalist book embodies the aesthetic of Zen itself. As with brush-strokes in a Japanese ink painting, the words have been used sparingly and arranged precisely, with no unnecessary detail.

In Bed with the Ancient Egyptians

In this fascinating and intimate insight into ancient Egyptian sex and sexuality, author Charlotte Booth demystifies an ancient way of life, drawing on archaeological evidence and the written record to build a picture of what really went on in the bedrooms of the pharaohs and their subjects. Sex was a prominent part of ancient Egyptian society. It featured heavily in religion, mythology and artwork, and was not considered the taboo it is sometimes treated as in modern cultures. This book examines all aspects of ancient Egyptian sex lives, from idealized beauty and attitudes towards sexuality, to representations of fertility in art and the relationship between sex and religion. Many of the trials and tribulations that were faced are as relevant today as they were in the past: marriage, divorce and adultery are all discussed as well as prostitution, homosexuality, sexual health and fertility. $16.95, paperback.

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 womble 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.
How to Drink: A Classical Guide to the Art of Imbibing

In the summer of 1885, three Frenchmen arrived in London for a few days’ intellectual shopping: a prince, a count, and a commoner with an Italian name. In time, each of these men would achieve a certain level of renown, but who were they then and what was the significance of their sojourn to England? Answering these questions, Julian Barnes unfurls the stories of their lives which play out against the backdrop of the Belle Époque in Paris. Our guide through this world is Samuel Pozzi, the society doctor, free-thinker and man of science with a famously complicated private life who was the subject of one of John Singer Sargent’s greatest portraits. In this vivid tapestry of people (Henry James, Sarah Bernhardt, Oscar Wilde, Proust, James Whistler, among many others), place, and time, we have a fresh portrait of the Belle Époque; an illuminating look at the long-standing exchange of ideas between Britain and France; and a life of a man who lived passionately in the moment but whose ideas and achievements were far ahead of his time. $26.95, hardcover.

This international best-seller is an encyclopedic A-Z masterpiece, the perfect introduction to the very core of Western humanism. Author Clive James rescues, or occasionally destroys, the careers of many of the greatest thinkers, humanists, musicians, artists, and philosophers of the twentieth century. Soaring to Montaigne-like heights, Cultural Amnesia is precisely the book to burnish these memories of a Western civilization that James fears is nearly lost. $19.95, paperback.
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. $30.00, hardcover.

From Byzantine manuscripts right through to nineteenth-century masterpieces, through peonies, callas, and chrysanthemums, these exquisite reproductions dazzle in their accuracy and their aesthetics. Whether in gently furled leaves, precisely textured fruits, or the sheer beauty and variety of colors, we celebrate an art form as tender as it is precise, and ever more resonant amid our growing awareness of our ecological surroundings and the preciousness of natural flora. A beautiful book from the art publisher Taschen Books. Sale: $19.98, hardcover.

As a photo essayist at Life magazine in the 1940s and ’50s, W. Eugene Smith established himself as an intimate chronicler of human culture. When Smith died at age 59 in 1978, he left behind eighteen dollars in the bank and 44,000 pounds of archives. His death certificate read “stroke,” but, as was said of the immortal jazzman Charlie Parker, Smith died of “everything,” from drug and alcohol benders to weeklong work sessions with no sleep. In Gene Smith’s Sink, Stephenson merges traditional biography with rhythmic digressions to revive Smith’s life and legacy. Traveling across twenty-nine states, Japan, and the Pacific, Stephenson profiles a lively cast of characters, including the playwright Tennessee Williams, to whom Smith likened himself; the avant-garde filmmaker Stan Brakhage, with whom he once shared a Swiss chalet; the artist Mary Frank, who was married to his friend Robert Frank; the jazz pianists Thelonious Monk and Sonny Clark, whose music was taped by Smith in his loft; and a series of obscure caregivers who helped keep Smith on his feet. $15.00, paperback.

A comprehensive story of coffee from its discovery on a hill in ancient Abyssinia to the advent of Starbucks. Mark Pendergrast (bestselling author of For God, Country & Coca-Cola) reviews the dramatic changes in coffee culture over the past decade, from the disastrous “coffee crisis” that caused global prices to plum-
met to the rise of the Fair Trade movement and the “third-wave” of quality-obsessed coffee connoisseurs. As the scope of coffee culture continues to expand, *Uncommon Grounds* remains more than ever a brilliantly entertaining guide to the currents of one of the world’s favorite beverages. $24.99, paperback.

**The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power**

In this masterwork of original thinking and research, Shoshana Zuboff provides startling insights into the phenomenon that she has named surveillance capitalism: a global architecture of behavior modification threatening human nature in the twenty-first century just as industrial capitalism disfigured the natural world in the twentieth. Vast wealth and power are accumulated in ominous new “behavioral futures markets,” where predictions about our behavior are bought and sold, and the production of goods and services is subordinated to a new “means of behavioral modification.” The threat has shifted from a totalitarian Big Brother state to a ubiquitous digital architecture: a “Big Other” operating in the interests of surveillance capital. One of the most celebrated recent books of nonfiction. $22.99, paperback.

**Confessions of a Bookseller**

Just published, the follow-up to the bestselling *Diary of a Bookseller* (see below!) and a memoir every bit as warm and welcoming as a visit to your very favorite bookstore.

Inside a stone-faced Georgian townhouse on the Wigtown high-road, jammed with more than 100,000 books and one portly shop cat, Shaun Bythell manages the ups and downs of Scotland’s largest used bookshop with a sharp eye and even sharper wit. $25.95, hardcover.

**The Diary of a Bookseller**

Kassia St. Clair’s best-selling book turns her lifelong obsession with colors and where they come from (Van Gogh’s chrome yellow sunflowers or punk’s fluorescent pink, for example) into a unique study of human civilization. A former assistant books and arts editor at *The Economist*, her popular columns on color for *Elle Decoration* sparked this book. $20.00, hardcover.
The Golden Thread: How Fabric Changed History

From colorful 30,000-year-old threads found on the floor of a Georgian cave to the Indian calicoes that sparked the Industrial Revolution, The Golden Thread weaves an illuminating story of human ingenuity. Design journalist Kassia St. Clair guides us through the technological advancements and cultural customs that would redefine human civilization from the fabric that allowed mankind to achieve extraordinary things (traverse the oceans and shatter athletic records) and survive in unlikely places (outer space and the South Pole). She peoples her story with a motley cast of characters, including Xiling, the ancient Chinese empress credited with inventing silk, to Richard the Lionhearted and Bing Crosby. $23.95, hardcover.

Craeft: An Inquiry Into the Origins and True Meaning of Traditional Crafts

Archaeologist and medieval historian Alexander Langlands reaches as far back as the Neolithic period to recover our lost sense of craft, combining deep history with detailed scientific analyses and his own experiences making traditional crafts. Craeft brims with vivid storytelling, rich descriptions of natural landscape, and delightful surprises that will convince us to introduce more craft into our lives. $16.95, paperback.

The Rumi Prescription: How an Ancient Mystic Poet Changed My Modern Manic Life

To writer, activist, and Emory Alum, Melody Moezzi, Rumi’s writings became a lifeline. In The Rumi Prescription, we follow her path of discovery as she translates Rumi’s works for herself – to gain wisdom and insight in the face of a creative and spiritual roadblock. With the help of her father, who is a lifelong fan of Rumi’s poetry, she immerses herself in this rich body of work, and discovers a thirteenth-century prescription for modern life. $27.00, hardcover.

The Mirror & the Light

In her concluding volume of the trilogy that began with Wolf Hall, Hilary Mantel completes Cromwell’s journey from self-made man to one of the most feared, influential figures of his time. Portrayed by Mantel with pathos and terrific energy, Cromwell is as complex as he is unforgettable: a politician and a fixer, a husband and a father, a man who both defied and defined his age. $30, hardcover.
Mythos: The Greek Myths Reimagined

A new modern collection of Greek myths, stylishly retold by legendary writer, actor, and comedian Stephen Fry. Fry transforms the adventures of Zeus and the Olympians into emotionally resonant and deeply funny stories without losing any of their original wonder. $29.95, hardcover.

When Women Ruled the World: Six Queens of Egypt

Hatshepsut, Nefertiti, and Cleopatra controlled the totalitarian state as power-brokers and rulers. Egyptologist Kara Cooney delivers a fascinating tale of female power, exploring the reasons why it has seldom been allowed through the ages—and why we should care. $16.99 paperback.

The Shadow of Vesuvius: A Life of Pliny

When Pliny the Elder perished at Stabiae during the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD, he left behind an enormous compendium of knowledge, his 37-volume Natural History, and a teenaged nephew who revered him as a father. Grieving his loss, Pliny the Younger inherited the Elder’s notebooks—filled with pearls of wisdom—and his legacy. Interweaving the younger Pliny’s Letters with extracts from the Elder’s Natural History, Daisy Dunn paints a vivid, compellingly readable portrait of two of antiquity’s greatest minds. $16.95, paperback.

The Boundless Sea: A Human History of the Oceans

Far more than merely another history of exploration, The Boundless Sea shows how maritime networks gradually formed a continuum of interaction and interconnection. Working chronologically, Abulafia moves from the earliest forays of peoples taking hand-hewn canoes into uncharted waters, to the routes taken daily by supertankers in the thousands. History on the grandest scale and scope, written with passion and precision, this is a project few could have undertaken. Abulafia, whom The Atlantic calls “superb writer with a gift for lucid compression and an eye for the telling detail,” proves again why he ranks as one of the world’s greatest storytellers. $39.95, hardcover.
Bad Art Mug

Featuring genuine paintings from the Museum of Bad Art in Somerville, Massachusetts. Each one will bring to mind the Old Masters and how they've been dead a long, long time. Now you can become a patron of... well, this kind of thing. Mixed media meets mixed feelings and mixed reviews. The Bad Art mug will add beauty to your home as it makes you appreciate the beauty of everything that surrounds it. Ars longa, vita brevis, so have a beverage. $12.95, boxed.

Artistic Cat Art Mug

This mug understands the temperamental artist: Inspiration is elusive. Hidden. Unpredictable. It appears when you least expect it. Pounces, stirs things up. This transfixing mug features portraits of beautiful creatures by such artists as Bosch, Goya, Klee, Picasso, Chagall, and many more, with a pawprint on the inside bottom. $12.95, boxed.

The Night Sky: Fifty Postcards

Whether through sketches, scientific experiments, photography, or painting, we are fascinated by the study of what lies beyond. This handsome gold foil-stamped box holds fifty postcards, each with a single sublime image: pages from Galileo's sketchbooks, Chinese star maps, artist interpretations of the universe, and rarely seen images from the NASA archives. This sparkly box is perfect for your favorite stargazer or celestial-inspired friend. $16.95, boxed postcards.