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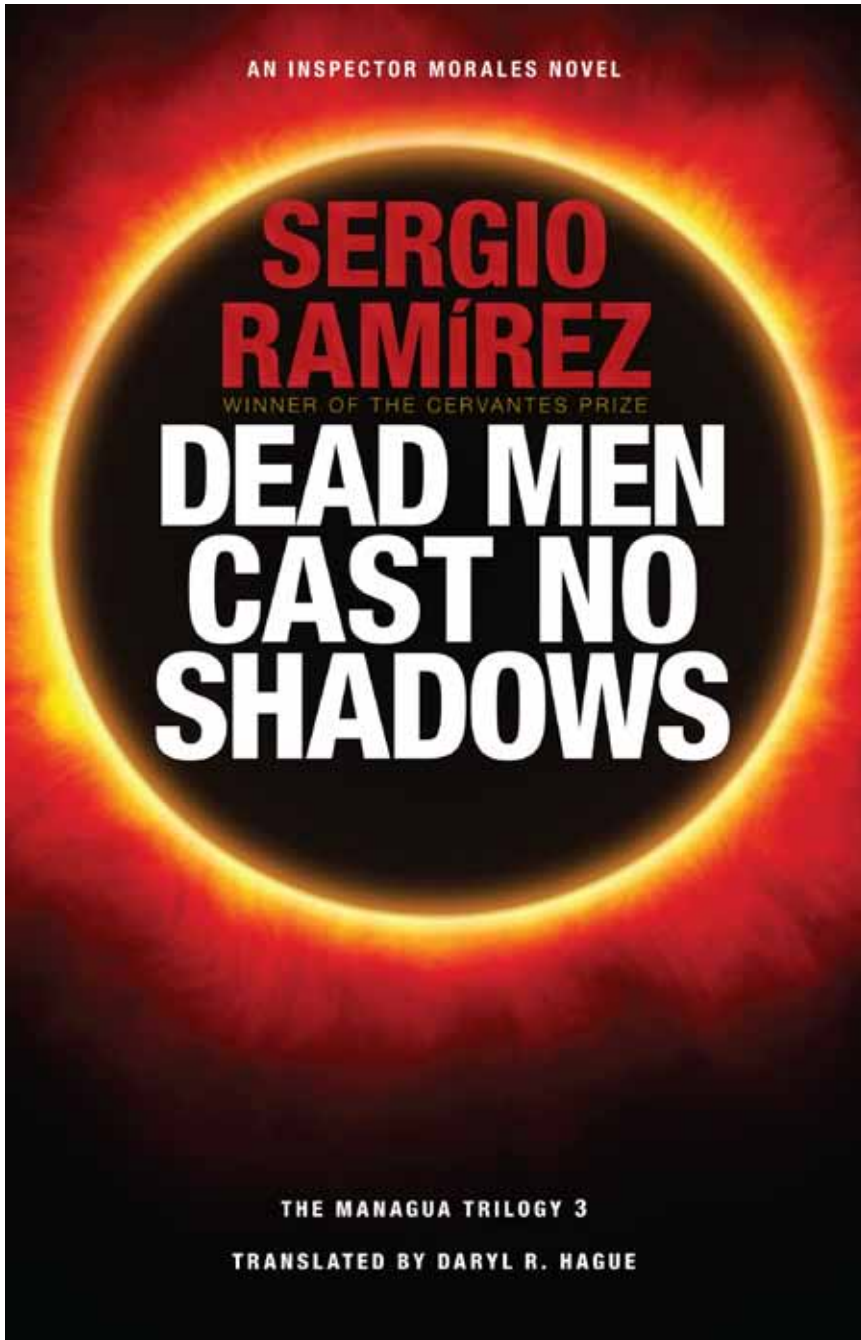
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**FALL/WINTER 2023
NEW TITLES
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**Fiction and
Contemporary
Culture**

Year 49

**Great Books
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Dead Men Cast No Shadows

The Managua Trilogy, Vol. 3

by Sergio Ramírez

Translated by Daryl R. Hague

Forcibly exiled to Honduras at the conclusion of *No One Weeps for Me Now*, Inspector Dolores Morales undertakes a dangerous journey back into Nicaragua accompanied by fellow exile Serafin (a.k.a. Rambo). Both are forced to hide from agents of Commissioner Anastasio Prado (a.k.a. Tongolele), head of the secret police who, with ruthless cynicism and the divinatory advice of his mother, serves as enabler-in-chief of the country's deranged politics. Desperate to reunite with his ailing main squeeze, Fanny Toruno, Inspector Morales soon finds himself entangled by other concerns: a massive peaceful student protest erupts throughout Managua, only to be suppressed with extreme prejudice by police and paramilitary forces. Gradually a murky network is revealed, full of secrets, betrayals and dark maneuvers that Inspector Morales will have to face. Though backed by the ineffable Lord Dixon, Doña Sofía Smith and the rest of his associates, he knows a misstep could result in the demise of anyone of them. Even as the 2018 massacre of 400 students is skillfully dramatized, and the portrait of a society shaped by tyranny, corruption, poverty and misery unsparingly painted, Ramírez never loses sight of the humanity of Nicaragua's people and their hopes.

"A lively valedictory caper from an ebullient storyteller. . . . The novel, episodic and long on colorful characters, often resembles a reunion party. Banter flows, and references to pop culture and Nicaragua's recent political turmoil abound. Urbane Lord Dixon, a droll posthumous adviser in the inspector's head, makes wry italicized comments that Morales responds to aloud, . . . confusing everyone around him. Doña Sofía, who began as a cleaning lady and worked her way up to the status of indispensable investigator, joins the team midway to investigate an attack on a beloved priest and the murder of his nephew."—Kirkus Reviews

SERGIO RAMÍREZ was born in Masatepe, Nicaragua in 1942. His first book was published in 1962, earning a law degree the year after. In the 1970s he became active as leader of the Group of Twelve, consisting of intellectuals, businessmen and priests united against the Somoza regime. With the triumph of the Sandinista Revolution in 1979 he presided over the National Council of Education and in 1984 was elected vice-president of Nicaragua, an office he held until 1990. In 1996 he retired from politics. In 2017 he was awarded the Cervantes Prize, the highest award for Spanish-language literature, is today the most prominent Central American author alive. His outspoken opposition to Daniel Ortega's dictatorship, however, resulted in his current exile in Spain.

\$16 paperback, 285 pages, 5.5 x 8.5" 978-1-62054-061-9

Rights: World English

The Sky Weeps for Me

The Managua Trilogy, Vol. 1

by Sergio Ramirez

Translated by Leland H. Chambers

In post-revolutionary Nicaragua, the Chief of Intelligence in the Office of Drug Investigations, Dolores Morales, takes a call from his counterpart, Deputy Inspector Dixon, who alerts him that a large luxury yacht is grounded and abandoned on the Caribbean coast. It appears to be a simple case of drug smuggling. But when Morales opens the scanty evidence package there's only a bloody T-shirt and a singed paperback book...until Doña Sofía, the office janitor, asks "Have that book's pages been checked over yet?" and a woman's business card falls out. Through a maze of deception, corruption, and murders, the irrepressible Doña Sofía joins the two inspectors as sidekick in their race to learn why the boat was scuttled and where the bodies are buried. Soon enough the trio suspect that a Cali drug cartel capo known as Pinocchio, along with Caupolicán, one of their Sandinista comrades from long ago, may be masterminding an international conspiracy.

A host of memorable characters drawn from every stratum of Nicaraguan society — rich and poor, working class and bureaucrats, along with scheming politicians, shady casino operators, and tent revivalists — are caught up in a relentless drama about what happens when revolutionary leaders turn into reactionaries, and a country struggles to hold onto the last shreds of its ideals.

"Ramirez displays a gift for gritty and offbeat literary crime fiction. . . The grimness of the inquiry is leavened by humor, mostly provided by an ambitious orderly in the department who poses as a cleaning lady in a casino linked to the case. Ramirez balances plot and setting well, creating atmospheric tension informed by the lingering legacy of the revolution."— Publishers Weekly



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256 pages, 5.5 x 8.5"
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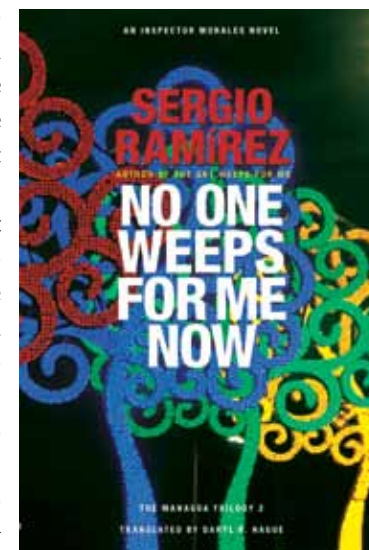
No One Weeps for Me Now

The Managua Trilogy, Vol. 2

by Sergio Ramirez

Translated by Daryl R. Hague

Years after his unceremonious firing from the National Police after an act of heroic insubordination recounted in *The Sky Weeps for Me*, Inspector Dolores Morales — barely scraping by as a private eye — finds himself summoned before Miguel Soto, a powerful Nicaraguan oligarch whose step-daughter has gone missing. Morales is assigned the lucrative if daunting task of finding her, given that all he has are her name, two photographs, and three days to carry out the search. But thanks to the intrepid Dona Sofía's ingenuity, and the watchful if ethereal presence of former partner Bert Dixon, along with a host of colorful if reluctant confederates enlisted from among Managua's demimonde, Morales skillfully starts to expose and untangle a scandal of national proportions. The inspector's unexpected discoveries attract the personal attention and animosity of Nicaragua's director of national intelligence, whereupon the pursuer becomes the pursued, and Morales is presented with a painful dilemma.



\$16.00 paperback
5.5 x 8.5", 288 pp.
978-1-62054-050-3
Rights: World English

"What makes his novel a page-turner is not its plot twists but the delightfully unique individuals Morales encounters in his probe. A playful crime yarn that lands like Raymond Chandler reimaged by Almodóvar."—Kirkus Reviews

"Ramirez again combines a taut thriller plot with a searing portrayal of Nicaragua and elements of magical realism with the brilliant second volume of his Managua Trilogy. . . . Ramirez vividly depicts the mean streets and peppers the perfectly hardboiled crime saga with wonderfully strange details, such as a man "carrying an Uzi as if cradling a doll." Readers will eagerly await the conclusion."—Publishers Weekly

A Thousand Deaths Plus One

A Novel

by Sergio Ramírez

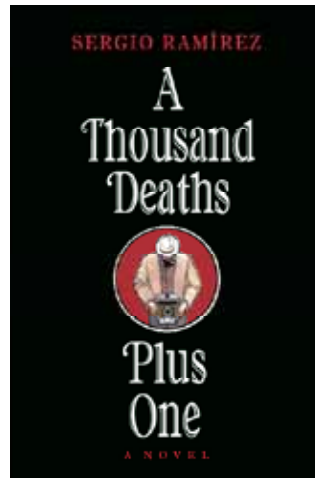
Translated from the Spanish by Leland H. Chambers

This dazzling novel allows English-speaking readers to discover what others have known for years: that Sergio Ramírez is one of the world's most imaginative and gifted storytellers. Leaping across cultures, continents and centuries, populated by figures from Turgenev to Queen Victoria to a bird named Pericles, *A Thousand Deaths Plus One* pulls readers into a phantasmagorical world as vivid as any ever created by a Latin American writer.—STEPHEN KINZER, author of *Blood of Brothers*

"A Thousand Deaths Plus One is an elaborate fiction that stakes itself firmly in the real. A fascinating set of stories and bits of history, it also neatly addresses the issue of capturing history and human fates, in photographs or in writing—both documentary and fictional."—*Complete Review.com*

"Through a mysterious photographic exhibit in a solitary park kiosk, Sergio Ramírez introduces us to a past of crisscrossing paths where a Nicaraguan photographer leads Napoleon III into the utopian adventure of building a transoceanic canal through Central America. A novel of many worlds and many voices, *A Thousand Deaths Plus One*, is an intricate and masterful tapestry of words woven to reveal obscure yet defining historical moments and the men and women whose folly and vision shaped them."—Gioconda Belli

"As one might expect of a man whose books have won many major awards, A Thousand Deaths Plus One is an accomplished novel, ably translated.... [It] weaves together three basic story lines, all anchored in the first person, which skillfully evoke the history of Nicaragua over the past century and a half, even though much of the action is set in Europe.... [S]erious yet playful, challenging and rewarding writing for anyone who wants to sample the best of today's Spanish-language fiction."—Peyton Moss, *ForeWord Reviews*



\$25.00 clothbound, sewn
295 pages, 5.75 x 8.75"
978-0929701-87-5
Jacket by Paul Bacon
Rights: World English

Divine Punishment

A Novel

by Sergio Ramirez

Translated by Nick Caistor with Hebe Powell

In this, one of the great works of a storied literary career, Sergio Ramírez transforms the most celebrated criminal trial in Nicaraguan history—the 1933 murders attributed, perhaps falsely, to a Lothario named Oliverio Castañeda of his employer and two high society women—into an examination of Nicaraguan society at the brink of the first Somoza dictatorship. Passion, money, sex, gossip, political intrigue, medical malpractice and judicial corruption all merge into a novel that reads like a courtroom drama wrapped in yellow journalism fronting a political scandal of the first order.

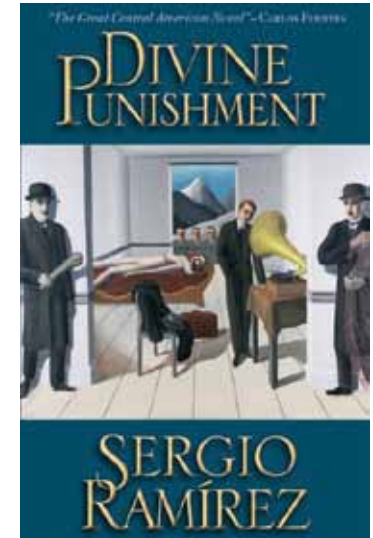
"This is a big, beautiful novel—a compelling historical drama of competing narratives and colorful characters that is self-aware and tinged with black humor."

—*Publishers Weekly*

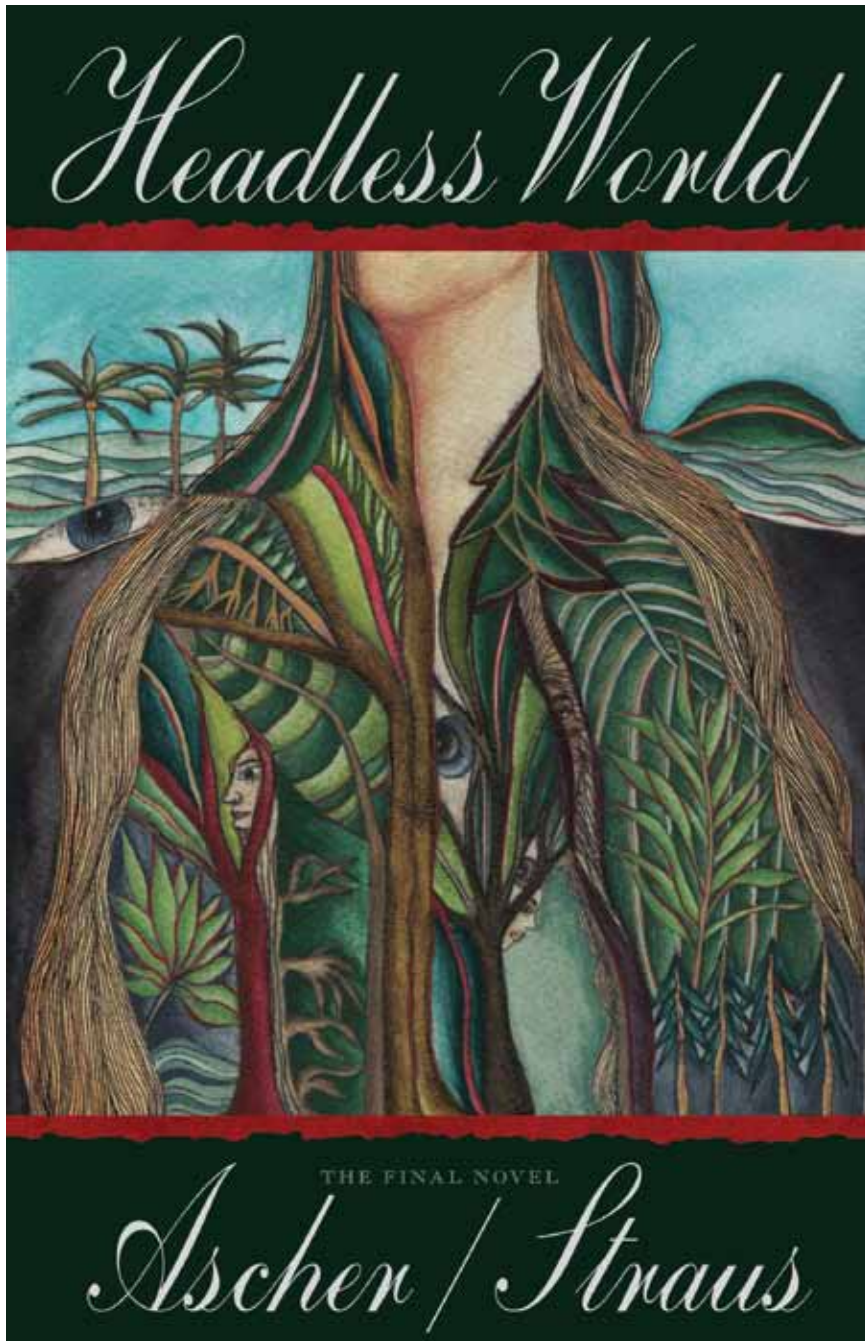
"Divine Punishment is by far the best novel by Sergio Ramírez . . . and one of my favorite novels, period. Set in the Nicaraguan city of León in the 1930s, and based on a true story, it concerns the case of Oliverio Castañeda, a young charmer and social climber accused of killing neighbors, patrons, and lovers by poisoning. The convoluted affair (still used as a case study in Central American law schools) was never solved, and Ramírez himself capably leaves it open-ended. Hilarious, riveting, beautifully constructed and written."—DAN BELLM

" . . . the main character is language, as well as the entire society of the city of León. . . . [Divine Punishment] is a poetic novel, as well as being dramatic and pathetic, and tragic, humorous, macabre, romantic, realistic, and political . . ."

—ERNESTO CARDENAL



\$30 hardcover
512 pages, 5.75 x 8.75"
978-1-62054-014-5
Rights: World English



\$20.00 trade pbk, 336 pages, 5.5 x 8.5", 978-1-62054-049-7, Rights: World

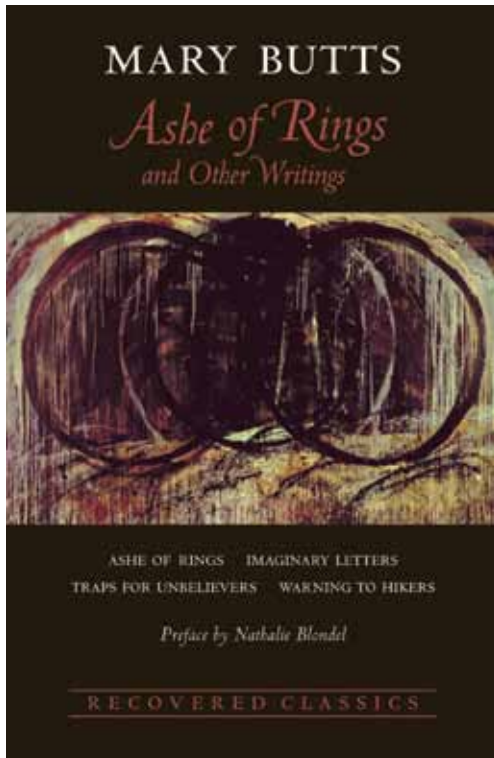
Headless World

The Final Novel
by Ascher/Straus

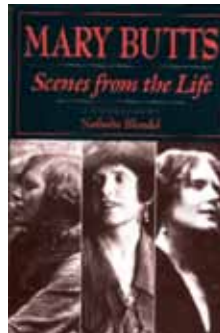
Arriving thirty-four years after *The Other Planet*, *Headless World* is the crowning achievement of Sheila Ascher and Dennis Straus. A narrative of one hundred thirty-one texts divided mid-way by a solid red page, *Headless World* confronts the invention of Time within the universe of human experience, memory, and desire. Impressionistic, disruptive, and hermetically philosophical, it is strangely alluring, disturbingly prophetic, and comically horrifying. The edges between human reality and inhuman fantasy are sharply observed and imbued with saturated colors, sensual cravings, sonic banality, ontological mystery, theatrical cruelty, and an encroaching trans-human future.

*“There’s something uncanny about *Headless World*, as if Death was broadcasting a mysteriously encoded sit-com to let us know it’s on its way, or as if an alien species that had devoured our memories was now using them to shift the syntax of our thoughts. As if several childhoods that had only ever appeared on television suddenly came to life as an amnesiac’s fragmented memories of the twentieth century, the laughs played for horror and the horror for laughs. A strange object, unlike any other book you’ll ever read, relentless, hilarious, a ferocious trance, a secret key. The final Ascher/Straus novel will help you think about time and memory and what’s been missing from the screens that replaced our heads—almost all of us, almost everything. A brilliant lucid dream about technologies that continue to root so deeply into reality that they’ve become the fairy tales we recite to children as we’re decapitating them one more time.”*—Stephen Beachy, author of *Glory Hole* and *boneyard*

From the late 1960s to the present, the collaboration of Sheila Ascher and Dennis Straus produced a significant body of innovative fiction. Sheila Ascher passed away at the end of December, 2020, leaving this work — their longest and most complex novel — destined to be their last. McPherson has published four earlier volumes over the years (*Letter to an Unknown Woman*, *The Other Planet*, *The Menaced Assassin* and *Red Moon/Red Lake*). Their fiction has appeared in major literary magazines since the mid-1970s, including *Chicago Review*, *The Paris Review*, *Chelsea*, *Central Park*, *New American Writing*, *Sun and Moon*, *Epoch*, and others. For the past several years both *Exile* and *Your Impossible Voice* have been publishing eagerly awaited installments of *Headless World*.



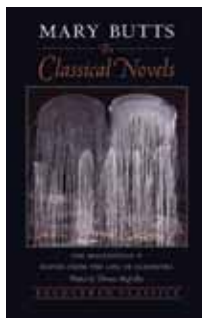
Ashe of Rings and Other Writings
 Novel, novella, essays
 \$20 paper, 304 pages
 5.5 x 8.5" 978-0-929701-52-3



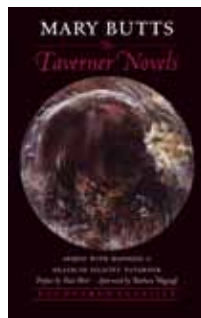
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Mary Butts:
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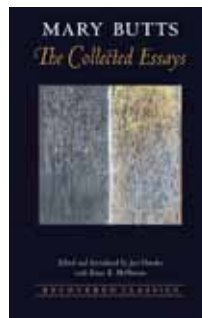
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The Collected Essays
 edited by Joel Hawkes
 \$30 paper, 978-1-62054-032-0
 399 pages, index
 Preface by Joel Hawkes

Ashe of Rings, and Other Writings by Mary Butts

Preface by Nathalie Blondel

This volume of works by Mary Butts encompasses the full range of her talents. *Ashe of Rings*, her first-published novel, was written during WWI when she was in her mid-twenties. Serialized in *The Little Review* in 1921, it was published in 1925 by Robert McAlmon's famous Contact Press. The Rings of the title are Badbury Rings, a set of concentric earthworks in South Dorset. Echoing the Rings with its tripartite structure, *Ashe of Rings* renders the social trauma of wartime London while evoking an occult dimension through which the actions of the protagonists symbolically reverberate. *Imaginary Letters* is a 60-page epistolary novella; it is also a lyrical prosepoem evoking all the qualities, flaws and mysteries of Russia seen through the eyes of a disappointed lover in 1920s Paris. Two long-form essays follow. *Warning to Hikers* and *Traps for Unbelievers* both appeared in 1932, and each was prescient, directly addressing the respective needs (1) for preserving the natural landscape, and (2) for retaining a capacity for spiritual renewal amid the pressures of modern life.

"Portions of Ashe of Rings are set against the backdrop of World War II and the novel, written in 1918-19, should be viewed alongside Forster's Howard's End (1910), Ford's The Good Soldier (1914), Lawrence's Women in Love (1920), and Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway (1925). Butts's voice is distinctive, her language innovative. Her characters (Anthony, Melitta, Vanna and Valentine Ashe; Judy Marston; the Russian artist Serge Fyodorovitch; and soldier Peter Amburton) are caught in a net of competition, personal struggle, and jealousy. Creative instincts clash with destructive impulses. Supernatural, mystical forces lie just below the surface, centered around the Rings, a prehistoric site near the Ashe family estate, a sacred place where we feel supernatural events once occurred and could again transpire."—*The Review of Contemporary Fiction*

By the time of her premature death in 1937, Mary Butts's creative work had gained a formidable reputation. Hailed for brave originality and stylistic panache, her many stories, novels, and poems were mentioned in comparison with Katherine Mansfield, D. H. Lawrence, and T. S. Eliot. Her career was championed variously by Ezra Pound, Robert McAlmon, Ford Madox Ford, Charles Williams, Evelyn Waugh and May Sinclair. Over the last several decades there has been a resurgence of interest in Mary Butts, and, after being "lost" for more than 60 years, her work has joined her contemporaries H.D., Djuna Barnes, Virginia Woolf, and Mina Loy in the pantheon of literary Modernism.

The Transients

A Novel

by Sergio Missana

Translated from the Spanish by Jessica Powell

Tomás Ugarte, an advertising executive in Santiago, Chile, is grappling with a mid-life crisis when he begins to experience inexplicable episodes of amnesia. Hoping to outrace this dilemma, he plans to travel abroad for a year and chart the second half of his life. Instead, he will journey into an unexpected and very foreign territory, one where the boundary between the self and the other becomes dangerously interchangeable. Much like the works of Auster and Murakami, *The Transients* defies easy categorization: it is a genuinely disturbing psychological novel that borders on the uncanny. A bewitching puzzle-box with a propulsive plot, as well as a high-wire act of prose, at its core lies a metaphysical mystery that ensnares both the protagonist and the reader. Stretching from the streets of Santiago onto a treacherous escarpment in the Chilean Andes and to the hills of Valparaiso, and then careening out into the vast beckoning of the Atacama desert, *The Transients* traverses the porousness of reality . . . and the malleability of consciousness.

“Fortunately, neither Ugarte nor his author surrender to esotericism: those other lives are too sharp to be hallucinated and too imbricated with the “real” to be supernatural.... **[Missana’s] exact and detailed prose, and the steady hand that never loses the thread of a complex plot, are among the author’s great achievements.** But the greatest is that . . . as we read we fall into a cascade of reflected consciousness...”—Carlos Franz, *El Mercurio*

The author of seven acclaimed novels, **SERGIO MISSANA** is a Chilean writer, journalist, scholar, editor, scriptwriter and environmental advocate. He is a professor of Latin American literature at the Stanford University Overseas Studies Program in Santiago, Chile, and Executive Director of the Climate Parliament. **JESSICA POWELL** has translated works by Neruda, Iturralde, Bioy Casares, and Ocampo, among other important Spanish language authors. She lives in Santa Barbara.



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Rights: World English

Shadow Talk

by Robert Kelly

Illustrated by Emma Polyakov

As C. S. Lewis aptly reminds us, “Some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again.” And here they are: twenty-five new fairy tales for readers of all ages by a master fabulist and poet, accompanied by an equal number of original illustrations by the captivating artist, Emma Polyakov.

These tales possess such alluring titles as “The Fox and the Other Side,” “The Priest’s Peculiar Wife,” “The Boy in the Camel,” “The Leper’s Touch,” and “The Seal Wife.” They employ suitably beguiling entities as well: spectral foxes, a telepathic ape and antelope, shadows that speak, an odd djinn, a puzzled king, an umbrella-loving serpent, protean elves, and other visions of the ultimate reality just beyond sight.

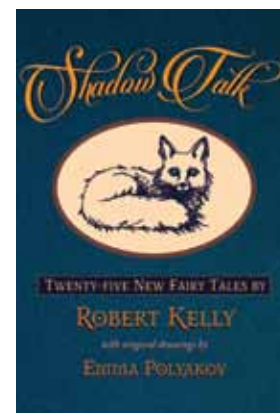


“After an inexplicable absence, how delicious to return to the fairy tale, that realm ruled by allurement, and discover a wealth of wonders: a rainbow that assures arousal, a boy who inhabits a camel, a butterfly shepherd who is also a cat! Prepare to be enchanted!”
— Rikki Ducornet, author of *Brightfellow* and *Trafik*

“*Shadow Talk* is full of deft, seemingly playful little fictions that quietly and covertly work their way under your skin. These twenty-five fairy tales bring Calvino’s notion of lightness to the fairy tale genre. What results is something of a reinvention of the form that only Robert Kelly could manage.” — Brian Evenson, author of *Song for the Unraveling of the World*



The author himself remarks: “A story is the best gift we can give one another. A story can stay in mind or come to life again. When a story is simple enough it becomes a myth. Meanwhile I try to tell all the stories the mind tells me. And keep listening.”



Renato!

The Complete Novel
by Eugene Mirabelli

Introduction by Douglas Glover

“This multi-generational Italian-American saga is nothing short of spectacular! . . . Beautiful, hot-blooded, *Renato!* is a reminder that though the world may change as well as our respective places in it, love will ground us, should we choose to embrace it. . . . Like his protagonist, at age ninety Mr. Mirabelli has persevered through the years and the publication of this book is nothing less than what appears to be the culmination of a lifetime spent burnishing words to smooth perfection. Embrace Mr. Mirabelli’s captivating work and prepare to be richly rewarded.

— *Literary Features Syndicate*

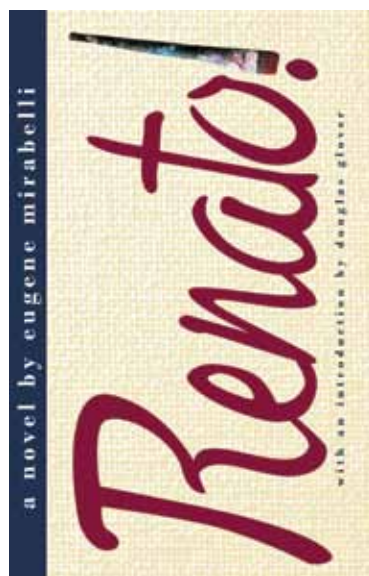
“*Renato!* is “a bittersweet, beautiful story that merits wide attention . . . [and] speaks wisely to life’s truths.”— *Kirkus Reviews*

“Mirabelli has reinvented the peculiarly Italian, extravagantly melodramatic and often comic vision—the opera—in the novel form.... He is a master of montage, sudden narrative breaks, interwoven plots and themes.... This truly is a wise and comforting book, funny and sad, wonderfully intelligent...”— Douglas Glover

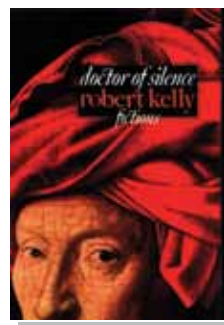
“A major canvas...The real and the surreal blend together seamlessly; the love affair endures.”—Nicholas Delbanco, author of *Why Writing Matters*

“A blazing magnum opus” —*Publishers Weekly*

“For anyone who loves the work of James Salter or William Trevor, Eugene Mirabelli is another writer to treasure.”—Elizabeth Hand



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Christopher Wagstaff, editor
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2023



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