

## Recent Books from New Zealand – Nov 2023

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### *Art*

Transmission Gully: Te Ara Nui O Te Rangihaeata: Celebration Of A Motorway / Alastair Grant  
Wellington, New Zealand: Alastair Grant (Self publish), 2023  
124p. ; 29cm  
9780473671129  
\$ 40.00 / HB  
815gm.

Transmission Gully - Celebration of a Motorway is a photographic outline of the construction of the motorway taken over a period of seven years, from 2015 until the opening on March 30th, 2022. The author was granted access to the construction site by CPB HEB Joint Venture, the contractors, in early 2015 and visited monthly from that time until the opening ceremony. Alastair Grant has previously published "Harbour", a photographic exploration of the great inland harbours of ...

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858977>

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Ki Mua, Ki Muri: 25 Years of Toioho ki Apiti / Cassandra Barnett & Kura Te Waru-Rewiri  
Auckland, New Zealand: Massey University Press, 2023  
344p.  
Include Index  
9781991151155  
\$ 75.00 / HB  
1710gm.

This richly illustrated publication examines the last 25 years of the influential Toioho ki Āpiti programme at Massey University, its global indigenous pedagogical reach, and its ongoing impacts on national and international contemporary art and cultural sectors. Toioho ki Āpiti's transformative and kaupapa Māori-led programme and its pedagogical model is structured around Māori notions of Mana Whakapapa (inheritance rights), Mana Tiriti (treaty rights), Mana Whenua (land rights) and Mana Tangata (human rights) and is unique in Aotearoa.

Its staff and graduates, who include Bob Jahnke, Shane Cotton, Brett Graham, Rachael Rakena, Kura Te Waru-Rewiri, Israel Birch and Ngatai Taepa, are some of the most exciting, powerful and influential figures in contemporary art in Aotearoa New Zealand. Through a series of intimate conversations, Ki Mua, Ki Muri describes the unique environment that has helped form them. Professor Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku and Nigel Borell write the forewords.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858978>

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Puhia: Issue One / (Contributors) Essa Ranapiri, Moana Murray, etc  
New Zealand: Māori Lit Blog, 2023  
46p.

\$ 25.00 / PB  
60gm.

PŪHIA is a new journal for Māori art and literature, published by the voice behind the popular Instagram blog @maorilitblog. It aims to broadcast new and existing Māori voices in the literary world.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858979>

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Pacific Arts Aotearoa / (Edited by) Lana Lopesi  
Aotearoa, New Zealand: Penguin Random House New Zealand, 2023  
544p.  
Include Index  
9781776950515  
\$ 70.00 / HB  
2010gm.

This comprehensive account spans six decades of multidisciplinary Pacific creative genius, remembering the diverse, fresh and energetic contributions of Pacific artists to New Zealand, Oceania and the world.

Edited by leading Pacific writer and scholar Lana Lopesi, this book includes over 300 images and contributions from more than 120 artists, curators and community voices, providing new and previously unheard perspectives on this vast and growing legacy, in one volume.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858980>

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Flora: Celebrating Our Botanical World / Carlos Lehnebach, Claire Regnault, Rebecca Roce, Isaac Te Awa, Rachel Yates  
Wellington, New Zealand: Te Papa Press, 2023  
452p. ; 25cm  
Include Index  
9781991150912  
\$ 80.00 / HB  
2675gm.

This big, glorious big book mines Te Papa's collections to explore and expand upon the way we think about our botanical world and its cultural imprint. A true treasure, it features over 400 selections by an expert, cross-disciplinary museum curatorial team that range from botanical specimens and art to photography, furniture, jewellery, tivaevae, applied art, textiles, stamps and more. Flora's twelve essays provide a deeper contextual understanding of different topics, including the unique characteristics of New Zealand flora as well as how artists and cultures have used flora as a motif and a subject over time. Elegant, expert and engrossing.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858981>

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### *Biography*

Jacinda Arden: The Full Story of an Extraordinary Prime Minister / Michelle Duff  
Revised Edition  
Auckland, New Zealand: Allen & Unwin, 2023  
351p. ; 24cm.  
9781991006622  
\$ 40.00 / PB  
395gm.

What made Jacinda Ardern such an incredibly popular New Zealand prime minister? And why did her popularity then fall so dramatically? What happened during her leadership, and how did the unprecedented events of her tenure eventually lead to her resignation?

This in-depth analysis of Jacinda Ardern's extraordinary leadership from award-winning journalist Michelle Duff examines these questions, and much more.

Substantially revised to provide a comprehensive overview, this edition of the bestselling biography covers Ardern's rise to power and her nearly six years as Aotearoa New Zealand's prime minister, a period that included a global pandemic, a devastating terrorist attack and a deadly volcanic eruption.

Covering the turbulent time between Labour's historic landslide election victory in 2020 and Ardern's shock resignation in early 2023, Duff also looks at the increasingly misogynistic pushback experienced by Ardern. Pandemic-induced tensions led to a rise in social and political polarisation in Aotearoa, having major ramifications for Ardern's time as prime minister.

This is an engrossing and powerful exploration of one of the most intriguing political stories of our time — telling us as much about an extraordinary prime minister's ascendancy and fall as it does about the country that elected her.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858982>

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Untouchable Girls: The Topp Twins' Story / Jools & Lynda Topp

Auckland, New Zealand: Allen & Unwin, 2023

320p. ; 25cm.

9781991006387

\$ 45.00 / HB

975gm.

The incredible story of how a couple of country kids from Huntly became much-loved Kiwi icons and TV stars, with their own unique brand of original country music and comedy that has captivated audiences in New Zealand and overseas for more than 40 years.

Jools and Lynda Topp aka The Topp Twins tell this story in their own words, describing their adventurous lives through laugh-out-loud anecdotes and heartwarming tales.

As well as enjoying long careers as country music stars and comedians, with their characters like Camp Mother & Camp Leader and Ken & Ken, the twins have always stood up for their political beliefs and have been embraced by New Zealanders from all walks of life.

Including never-before-told stories and images, this is a nostalgic and important historic record of the lives of two ground-breaking and inspiring women, and of the times through which they've lived.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=857399>

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Murray Ball: A Cartoonist's Life / Mason Ball

Auckland, New Zealand: HarperCollins Publishers, 2023

287p. ; 24cm

9781775542490

\$ 45.00 / HB

605gm.

The long-awaited biography of cartoonist Murray Ball, creator of Footrot Flats

In Murray Ball: A Cartoonist's Life, Murray's son Mason Ball shares all the hits and misses and long years of hard graft that went into what would become the wildly successful creative enterprise: Footrot Flats. From his unique viewpoint and with candid honesty, Mason reveals the real-life backstory to Murray's most iconic characters and themes, telling

the story of the man - and father - who could see the quirks of human nature and capture them with the stroke of a pen.

Richly illustrated with family photos and cartoons by the bloke who brought us that most lovable character, the Dog.

Let me show you how my dad became a leading cartoonist of his generation, how his endearing characters evolved and where the insightful and humorous ideas sprang from.

Let's see the man behind the drawing desk and delve into the workings of his mind. - Mason Ball

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858983>

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## Cookbooks

Continuous Ferment: A History of Beer And Brewing In New Zealand / Grey Ryan  
Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 2023

xii, 367p. ; 24cm

Include Index

9781869409876

\$ 70.00 / PB

855gm.

Since the first brew by Captain James Cook and the crew of the Resolution at Dusky Sound in April 1773, the story of beer has been deeply intertwined with the history of Aotearoa – from the early settlers' prodigious consumption of golden ale to the six o'clock swill, from prohibition to the 'Black Budget', from the domination of Lion and DB to the rise of craft beer.

In this remarkable story of New Zealanders and beer, Greg Ryan tackles the big questions: Why did people drink and did they do so excessively by contemporary international standards? What did people drink and in what circumstances? How did tastes change over time? What role did brewers and publicans play in the community, other than as dispensers of alcohol?

Richly illustrated, astute and entertaining, Continuous Ferment is both a fascinating analysis of New Zealand's social history and a book for anyone with an enthusiasm for malt and hops, barrels and bottles, pilsners and porters.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858984>

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A Feeling For Food / Lis Cowey

Wellington, New Zealand: The Cuba Press, 2023

160p.

Include Index

9781988595702

\$ 45.00 / PB

380gm.

'A Feeling for Food' began as a letter to two sons leaving home, giving them the recipes of the food they'd grown up with so they could feed themselves, but Lis Cowey soon realised she was giving them another kind of nourishment that was all about who they were, where they'd come from and the adventures awaiting them. For behind every recipe there's a story about where Lis found it, who cooked it and why, and each story provides a thread linking a table of food in front of her with a table of food in the past made by other hands, or one on the far side of the world. From Great-Granny Nelson's relish to their uncle Paul's fluffy pancakes, from the bacon and egg pie that always goes on picnics to the bagels Lis ate in New York and the tarte Tatin in France that she simply had to learn to make, Lis asks Fred

and Carlo and her other readers to pay attention as a way to discover their own food stories and fortify themselves body and soul in a big wide hungry world.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858985>

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### *History*

The Best Country to Give Birth? Midwifery, Homebirth and the Politics of Maternity in Aotearoa New Zealand, 1970-2022 / Linda Bryder

Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 2023

408p. ; 23cm

Include Index

9781776711086

\$ 60.00 / PB

605gm.

'In 2012, following his investigation of the deaths of two babies in childbirth at Waikato Hospital, Hamilton coroner Gordon Matenga asked, 'Does New Zealand have the safe, world-leading system the Government says we do, or are we losing babies because the balance has swung too far towards the idea that because childbirth is natural, then the philosophy of "non-intervention" is best?' 'Babies' deaths reignite maternity row', the New Zealand Herald announced.'

— from the introduction by Linda Bryder

Is New Zealand 'the best country to give birth'? Historian of medicine Linda Bryder explores how New Zealand developed a unique approach to the role of midwives in childbirth in the 1990s, and analyses the consequences of that change for mothers and babies.

The Best Country to Give Birth? traces the genesis of the 1990 Nurses Amendment Act, which allowed midwives to practise alone in the community, back to the homebirth movement of the 1970s, and explores the aftermath of the Act including the withdrawal of GPs from maternity care. In investigating the consequences of the reforms, it uncovers repeated criticism of services – and what were deemed preventable deaths – from coroners, commissioners for health and disability, other health professionals including some midwives, academic researchers, and parents and families.

How and why does maternity care in Aotearoa differ from other countries? How has it shaped the equitable care of our mothers and babies? Why have critical reports had so little impact? This is a major historical account of an issue at the heart of our maternity care.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858986>

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Days of Darkness: Taranaki 1878-1884 / Hazel Riseborough

3rd Edition

Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books Ltd, 2023

xiv, 294p. ; 23cm

Include Index

9781991033666

\$ 50.00 / PB

645gm.

The narrative of the Parihaka community sheds light on a critical period in Aotearoa's colonial past. As the government seized their land, Maori communities across the region engaged in non-violent resistance, with Parihaka emerging as a powerful symbol of defiance under the leadership of Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi. Rather than a history of Parihaka itself, Hazel Riseborough's compelling account delves into the government's systematic efforts to dismantle Maori rights and self-determination. First published in 1989,

Days of Darkness is published now in a new edition which includes opening words contributed by the Parihaka community.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858987>

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History of New Zealand and its Inhabitants / Dom Felice Vaggioli, (Translated by) John Crockett

Dunedin, New Zealand: Otago University Press, 2023

xxvi, 326p. ; 24cm

Include Index

9781990048623

\$ 45.00 / PB

800gm.

History of New Zealand and its Inhabitants is the English language translation of a lively, opinionated book by Dom Felice Vaggioli, an Italian monk who was one of the first Benedictine priests to be sent to Aotearoa NZ. While working in Auckland, the Coromandel and Gisborne during the years 1879–1887, he observed lifestyles and customs and gathered information about the country's history, including first-hand accounts of the signing of Te Tiriti and the conflicts in Taranaki and Waikato.

Back in Italy, he published his history of New Zealand in 1896, only to have most of this Italian edition destroyed by the British because Vaggioli, who was not backward in coming forward with his anti-Protestant and anti-British views, was so critical of the colonialist project. The book nearly disappeared completely, but a few copies survived.

About a century later, John Crockett was doing some research in the archive of the Auckland Catholic Diocese when the archivist showed him an old book in Italian – Storia della Nuova Zelanda by Dom Felice Vaggioli. Crockett realised he was holding a unique interpretation of the impact of colonisation on Māori and set about translating the book into English. Crockett's vivid translation of Vaggioli's work was published by Otago University Press in 2000. Out of print for several years, that edition is hard to find and much sought-after.

Now reprinted with a striking new cover, the 2023 edition of History of New Zealand and its Inhabitants brings Vaggioli's unique document into the public eye once more. This lively and sometimes controversial account of prominent historical events in nineteenth-century Aotearoa New Zealand provides a remarkable resource for people interested in Māori–Pākehā relations or the history of colonisation.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858988>

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Knowledge Is a Blessing on Your Mind: Selected Writings, 1980-2020 / Anne Salmond

Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 2023

606p. ; 23cm

Include Index

9781869409906

\$ 65.00 / HB

1280gm.

For fifty years, Dame Anne Salmond has navigated 'te ao hurihuri' – travelling to hui in her little blue VW Beetle with Eruera and Amiria Stirling in the 1970s, working for a university marae alongside Merimeri Penfold, Patu Hohepa and Wharetoroa Kerr in the 1980s, giving evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal on the meaning of Te Tiriti in the 2000s. From Hui to The Trial of the Cannibal Dog to today's debates about the future of Aotearoa, Anne Salmond has explored who we are to each other.

This book traces Anne Salmond's journey as an anthropologist, as a writer and activist, as a Pākehā New Zealander, as a friend, wife and mother. The book brings together her key

writing on the Māori world, cultural contact, Te Tiriti and the wider Pacific – much of it appearing in book form for the first time – and embeds these writings in her life and relationships, her travels and friends.

This is the story of Aotearoa and the story of one woman's pathway through our changing land.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858989>

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An Indigenous Ocean: Pacific Essays / Damo Salesa  
Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books Ltd, 2023  
388p.

Include Index  
9781991033604  
\$ 50.00 / HB  
880gm.

In this captivating collection of essays, acclaimed Pacific scholar Damon Salesa takes us on a journey through the rich cultural and historical tapestry of the Pacific. From the far-reaching indigenous civilisations that flourished in Oceania, to the colonial encounters that shaped Samoa's history, and the complex relationship between New Zealand and the Pacific, Salesa's work offers a nuanced and insightful perspective on the vast region's past, present and future.

Spanning a wide range of topics, from race and inequality to Pacific studies and empire, these essays demonstrate Salesa's remarkable scholarship and his ability to bridge the gaps between academic disciplines and cultural traditions. With a deep appreciation for the complexities of Te Moana-nuia-Kiwa, and a commitment to uncovering the hidden histories that shape our understanding of the region, 'Essays' is an essential contribution to the field of Pacific studies and a fascinating read for anyone interested in the history and culture of Oceania.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858990>

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### *Literature*

Spoiled Fruit: Queer Poetry from Aotearoa / (Eds) Damien Levi & Amber Esau  
New Zealand: Aporo Press, 2023  
88p.

Include Biography  
9780473686840  
\$ 35.00 / PB  
130gm.

Spoiled Fruit is the debut title from micro press Aporo Press. This collection gathers 20 queer poets from across Aotearoa, compiles work largely first published on bad apple and asks these poets to reflect upon their work to create new pieces. Emerging from this introspection are themes of growth, evolution, change and transition. Like spoiled fruit fallen and left to rot, new growth emerges. Edit by Damien Levi and Amber Esau. Contributions from Nicola Andrews, ki anthony, kate aschoff, Jo Bragg, Cadence Chung, Rhys Feeney, Ted Greensmith-West, Haukupu, Kyra Lawler, Rex Letoa Paget, Casey Lucas, Ivy Lyden-Hancy, Amy Marguerite, Jackson McCarthy, Hannah Patterson, Ngaio Simmons, sylvan spring, El Spurlock, Fetuolemoana Tamapeau and Laura Vincent.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858991>

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Big Fat Brown Bitch / Tusiata Avia

Wellington, New Zealand: Te Herenga Waka University Press, 2023  
112p. ; 21cm  
9781776921294  
\$ 30.00 / PB  
165gm.

Admire my big fat brown body, bitches!  
Admire it!

The Big Fat Brown Bitch runs, sleeps, cries, laughs, splits open. She is sitting in a garage in South Auckland with her two brothers and discussing the majestic architecture of atoms. She is playing an audio book of The Power of Positive Thinking at herself. She is jumping over the lazy dog. She is lying face down in the mud and doing an apology on behalf of us all. She is receiving an election-year visit and a death threat. She is strapped to the cross. She is turning into a werewolf. The Big Fat Brown Bitch is coming for you.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858992>

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On Our Watch / Alison Carter, Catherine Delahunty, Julie Sargisson & Lora Mountjoy  
New Zealand: Outwatch Press, 2023  
102p.  
9780473663605  
\$ 30.00 / PB  
185gm.

Two years ago Hauraki writers Alison Carter, Lora Mountjoy, Julie Sargisson and Catherine Delahunty decided to make more space in their lives for poetry. The four women met regularly to share and critique their poems. This book contains work which came out of this time, poetry which touches on family and relationships but also explores the personal, political and environmental concerns which were part of life "on our watch".

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858993>

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The Glass Guitar / Peter Olds  
New Zealand: Cold Hub Press, 2023  
xiv, 57p.  
9780473691370  
\$ 35.00 / PB  
115gm.

The Glass Guitar comprises thirty-three previously uncollected and mostly unpublished poems in which Peter Olds reflects frankly on some of his characteristic preoccupations: the imperfections of life and art; his travels in space and time; his sometimes challenging relationship with his mentor, friend, and fellow poet James K. Baxter. In his introduction John Gibb describes Olds as "a navigator of contrasting and sometimes contradictory worlds, a kind of battered Zen ambassador of humanity, an at times irreverent pilgrim making his way through life" and argues the case for Olds as a multi-disciplinary artist, as evidenced in *Out of the Jaws of Wesley*, a miscellany of Olds' poems, prose, book cover designs and art work, (Cold Hub Press, 2022).

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858994>

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Residual Gleam: Selected Poems & Translations / Roger Hickin  
New Zealand: Cold Hub Press, 2023  
86p.  
9780473691387



\$ 35.00 / PB  
135gm.

The poems of Residual Gleam speak of obsolete roosters and eccentric philosophers, of moth-eaten overcoats, of alcoholic raconteurs in long-gone public bars, of lost needles and Orkney kirkyards and out-of-tune pianos . . .

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858995>

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Hoof / Kerrin P. Sharpe

Wellington, New Zealand: Te Herenga Waka University Press, 2023

80p. ; 21cm.

9781776921225

\$ 35.00 / PB

110gm.

Hoof by Kerrin P. Sharpe arrives with new urgency and longing. These are poems about a father who can only remember one word, ponies that grow hooves of basalt as they pull Scott and Shackleton around Ōtamahua in sledges, and a woman named Johanna living in a small village in Greenland. She writes about the strange places that watch over our parents, and the delicate but brutal mechanics of surgery. Famous people appear here too: Leonard Cohen, Ted Hughes, William Blake, and Benedict Cumberbatch at a bus stop.

Hoof is an invitation to travel by train through the poet's world. The trains that begin each of the three sections in the book give the reader time to stop and stare.

'Sharpe expresses herself in a pithy but understandable way, is astute at conjuring up fantastic images, and even while dealing with serious matters, she knows how to be funny.

A great gift.' —NZ Listener

'One of the most original and idiosyncratic voices currently writing in New Zealand.' —Lynley Edmeades, Landfall

'Kerrin P. Sharpe is a very fine poet whose previous books hooked me with their agility, their lightness of touch, their grounding. . . . Entering the poem is like entering a show both magical and wondrous, and you just want to get another ticket and go through again.' —

Paula Green, NZ Poetry Shelf

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858996>

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Sixty Something: Volumes 1 & 2 / Bernard Cadogan

Aotearoa, New Zealand: The Giant's Trough Press, 2023

xii, 181p.

9780473688271

\$ 35.00 / PB

325gm.

But a small sample from Bernard Cadogan's body of work, this volume's 120 poems are imbued with the personality of the poet as well as the times we live in.

His themes are both specific and universal, with a creative mix of philosophy, history and personal storytelling.

Traversing joy and loss, hope and anxiety, love and despair, they reveal a poet at the top of their game.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858997>

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Selected Poems / Geoff Cochrane

Wellington, New Zealand: Te Herenga Waka University, 2023

239p. ; 21cm.

9781776921201

\$ 40.00 / PB  
420gm.

This Selected Poems presents the best of Geoff Cochrane's many published collections, from Aztec Noon (1992) to Chosen (2020).

"The best work of the late, prolific poet who saw things at ground level, gleaned from the 20 collections he wrote." —NZ Listener Highlights of 2023

'Geoff Cochrane's is a whole world, rendered in lines at once compressed and open, mysterious and approachable.' —Damien Wilkins

'Over the years, Cochrane's work has been a joy to me, a solace, a proof that art can be made in New Zealand which shows ourselves in new ways.' —Pip Adam

'Everyone reading local poetry has, or should have, a Geoff Cochrane moment, a blissful book in which they discover his compressed, "courtly" (as Damien Wilkins once described Geoff's writing) poetry mined from his singularly Wellington life, past and present. . . . He was intense, committed, thoughtful, isolated and, in his own way, courageous.' —James Brown

'Would he break your heart, make you chuckle or tear you a new one – one never quite knew. . . . He had this way of creating a moment of meeting that elided everything else, a calm where all our antennae raised as one and you never knew what would come out of his mouth, or his work.' —Carl Shuker

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858998>

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The Girl from London / Olivia Spooner  
Auckland, New Zealand: MOA Press, 2023  
344p.  
9781869715120  
\$ 40.00 / PB  
485gm.

London, 1940. Ruth, a young schoolteacher, volunteers as an escort helping to evacuate children from war-torn England to Australia and New Zealand. Her three-month voyage is fraught - their passage is perilous, and the children anxious and homesick. Nine-year-old Fergus is more troubled than most and Ruth forms an unexpected bond with the boy. It's not just Fergus who captures Ruth's attention. Bobby, a fellow volunteer who initially infuriates Ruth with his laidback charm, somehow gets under her skin and throws her ordered life into chaos. Tragedy strikes on their return voyage, when the Rangitane is attacked by German raiders. As the ship goes down, the surviving passengers are taken as prisoners of war aboard the German vessel. To the rest of the world, they are missing, presumed dead.

New Zealand 2005. Hazel boards a plane to London, eager to explore Europe. Sitting next to her is a man named Joe. On her lap is a treasured book from her grandfather, Fergus. A book that will finally reveal Ruth's story.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=858999>

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His Favourite Graves / Paul Cleave  
Auckland, New Zealand: Upstart Press Ltd, 2023  
324p.  
9781776940455  
\$ 40.00 / PB  
490gm.

Acacia Pines, USA. Sheriff Cohen's life is falling apart — his father accidentally burned down the retirement home, his wife has moved out, and his son is bullying other kids at school.

When high-school student, Lucas Connor, is abducted, Cohen sees a chance to get his life back on track — to win back his wife and scoop the reward money on offer. But as the body count rises, it becomes clear that Cohen is going to have to make the kind of decision from which there's no coming back ... a decision with deadly consequences ...  
<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=859000>

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Checkerboard Hill / Jade Kake  
Wellington, New Zealand: Huia Publishers  
296p.  
9781775508083  
\$ 40.00 / PB  
535gm.

When a family member dies in Australia, Ria flies from New Zealand and returns to the family and home in Australia she suddenly left decades before as a teenager. Waiting for her return are her husband and son in New Zealand. Neither family has met the other, and Ria has always kept her Māori, Australian, New Zealand identities and lives separate. But the family tensions, unfinished arguments, connections to places and meeting of former friends, lead Ria to revisit her memories and reflect on the social and cultural tensions and racism she experienced, and the decisions she made.  
<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=859001>

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Devil's Breath: Revenge is the Sweetest Poison / Jill Johnson  
Edinburgh, New Zealand: Black & White Publishing Ltd, 2023  
304p.  
9781785305313  
\$ 40.00/ PB  
355gm.

Eustacia Rose is a Professor of Botanical Toxicology who lives alone in London with only her extensive collection of poisonous plants for company. She tends to her garden with meticulous care. Her life is quiet. Her schedule never changes. Until the day she hears a scream and the temptation to investigate proves irresistible. Through her telescope, Professor Rose is drawn into the life of an extraordinarily beautiful neighbour, Simone, and nicknames the men who visit her after poisonous plants according to the toxic effect they have on Simone. But who are these four men? And why does Eustacia Rose recognize one of them? Just as she preserves her secret garden, she feels inexplicably compelled to protect her neighbour. But when her precious garden is vandalized and someone close to Simone is murdered with a toxin derived from a rare poisonous plant, Eustacia finds herself implicated in the crime and decides to take matters into her own hands . . .  
<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=859002>

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Bird Life / Anna Smail  
Wellington, New Zealand: Te Herenga Waka University Press, 2023  
302p.  
9781776921249  
\$ 40.00 / PB  
305gm.

In Ueno Park, Toyko, as workers and tourists gather for lunch, the pollen blows, a fountain erupts, pigeons scatter, and two women meet, changing the course of one another's lives.

Dinah has come to Japan from New Zealand to teach English and grieve the death of her brother, Michael, a troubled genius who was able to channel his problems into music as a classical pianist — until he wasn't. In the seemingly empty, eerie apartment block where Dinah has been housed, she sees Michael everywhere, even as she feels his absence sharply.

Yasuko is polished, precise, and keenly observant — of her students and colleagues at the language school, and of the natural world. When she was thirteen, animals began to speak to her, to tell her things she did not always want to hear. She has suppressed these powers for many years, but sometimes she allows them to resurface, to the dismay of her adult son, Jun. One day, she returns home, and Jun has gone. Even her special gifts cannot bring him back.

As these two women deal with their individual traumas, they form an unlikely friendship in which each will help the other to see a different possible world, as Smail teases out the tension between our internal and external lives and asks what we lose by having to choose between them.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=859003>

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End Times / Rebecca Priestley

Wellington, New Zealand: Te Herenga Waka University Press, 2023

231p. ; 21cm.

9781776921188

\$ 40.00 / PB

290gm.

In the late 1980s, two teenage girls found refuge from a world of cosy conformity, sexism and the nuclear arms race in protest and punk. Then, drawn in by a promise of meaning and purpose, they cast off their punk outfits and became born-again Christians. Unsure which fate would come first – nuclear annihilation or the Second Coming of Jesus – they sought answers from end-times evangelists, scrutinising friends and family for signs of demon possession and identifying EFTPOS and barcodes as signs of a looming apocalypse. Fast forward to 2021, and Rebecca and Maz – now a science historian and an engineer – are on a road trip to the West Coast. Their journey, though full of laughter and conversation and hot pies, is haunted by the threats of climate change, conspiracy theories, and a massive overdue earthquake.

End Times interweaves the stories of these two periods in Rebecca's life, both of which have at heart a sleepless fear of the end of the world. Along the way she asks: Why do people hold on to some ideas but reject others? How do you engage with someone whose beliefs are wildly different from your own? And where can we find hope when it sometimes feels as if we all live on a fault line that could rupture at any moment?

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=859004>

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