

# ***LONDON BOOK FAIR 2010***

## **Fiction**

### **PEEP SHOW**

#### ***A Novel***

**By Joshua Braff • June 2010 • 272 pages • trade paperback original**

It's New York, 1975, and David Arbus has to make a choice following his parents' divorce. He can embrace his mother's newfound religious faith, joining her Orthodox Jewish sect. Or he can go into his father's somewhat unsavory line of work, running a burlesque theater in New York's Times Square. What is a seventeen-year-old boy to do? He joins the family business. *Peep Show* reveals the similarities between two closed worlds in which men and women are separated by a screen, observe peculiar rituals, and display fierce loyalties. "Whether he's writing about religion, pornography, or the family ruined by both in this smart, funny, heartbreaking novel, Joshua Braff does it with authority, wit, and an unflagging compassion for his hopelessly broken characters" (Jonathan Tropper). Joshua Braff is the author of *The Unthinkable Thoughts of Jacob Green*.

**Rights:           Algonquin**

### **EXLEY**

#### ***A Novel***

**By Brock Clarke • October 2010 • 320 pages**

The author of *An Arsonist's Guide to Writers' Homes in New England* returns with a novel about truth and reality, told in the voices of a confused young boy and his slightly unstable therapist.

**Rights:           North America – Algonquin**  
**Rest of the world – Curtis Brown UK**

## **BARNACLE LOVE**

### *Stories*

**By Anthony De Sa • August 2010 • 224 pages • trade paperback original**

Interlinked stories, set in Portugal and Canada, that explore the dreams and disappointments of the immigrant experience.

**Rights:** US – Algonquin  
Rest of the world – The Bukowski Agency

## **THE GIRL WHO FELL FROM THE SKY**

### *A Novel*

**By Heidi Durrow • February 2010 • 272 pages**

Rachel, the daughter of a Danish mother and a black American soldier, is the sole survivor of a family tragedy. With her strict African American grandmother as her new guardian, Rachel moves to a mostly black community where her light brown skin, blue eyes, and beauty bring a constant stream of mixed attention her way. As she attempts to come to terms with an unfathomable past, she confronts her own identity as a biracial young woman in a world that wants to see her as either black or white. “Durrow has written a story that is quite literally breathtaking. There were times when I found myself gasping out loud, and at all times I was haunted by the events that shape Rachel’s existence. I was pulled along each step of the way, wanting to know more and rooting for Rachel to overcome all odds and make her own peace with where she comes from and where her life will take her” (*Elle Magazine*). *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky* is the winner of Barbara Kingsolver’s Bellwether Prize, for which the citation reads: “Out of the clear blue, here is a breathless telling of a tale we’ve never heard before. Haunting and lovely, pitch-perfect, this book could not be more timely.”

**Rights:** Algonquin  
**Rights sold:** UK/ANZ – Oneworld Publications, **Chinese Traditional** – InStars Media,  
**Dutch** – Sirene, **Portuguese (Brazil only)** – Editora LeYa (Texto)

## **WEST OF HERE**

### *A Novel*

**By Jonathan Evison • February 2011 • 496 pages**

“A novel of stunning sweep—part adventure tale, part bittersweet modern comedy” (Dan Chaon), *West of Here* first tells the stories of the people who inhabited a fictional town on the rugged Pacific coast of Washington state circa 1890, and then follows the lives of the descendants of the town’s first citizens in 2006. It is a story of place and time, about footprints, about who makes them and who follows them. It is also a conversation between two eras, one rushing blindly toward the future, and the other struggling to undo the damage of the past. This is just one of four novels selected for presentation at the 2010 BookExpo’s “Editor’s Buzz” panel for potential breakout Fall releases. Jonathan Evison is the author of *All About Lulu*.

**Rights:** World English – Algonquin  
Translation – Foundry Literary + Media

## PICTURES OF YOU

### *A Novel*

**By Caroline Leavitt • November 2010 • 336 pages**

“A magically written, heartbreakingly honest snapshot of the people we leave behind and those we can’t let go” (Jodi Picoult). Isabelle has left her husband and is driving along a foggy highway when her car slams into another, killing April, a woman who appears to have a picture-perfect life. As she picks up the pieces of her own life, Isabelle is drawn into the world of April’s devastated husband and their fragile, asthmatic son. *Pictures of You* is told from the alternating perspectives of these three survivors as they try to solve the mystery of where April was running to, and why. “Heartbreaking, suspenseful, and moving, *Pictures of You* contains all the elements I long for in a great story. This irresistible novel of families betrayed and dreams come true is wise in the ways of the human heart, a manifestation of hope, tragedy, and beauty” (Diana Abu-Jaber). Caroline Leavitt is the award-winning author of eight novels, most recently BookSense pick *Girls in Trouble*.

**Rights:        Algonquin**

## I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD

### *A Love Story*

**By Pete Nelson • April 2010 • 272 pages**

Selected by independent booksellers across the nation as their # 1 **Indie Next pick** for April 2010, *I Thought You Were Dead* is a “heartwarming, heartbreaking, and heart-wrenchingly funny” novel in which a down-on-his-luck writer recovers from alcoholism and divorce with the help of a talking dog named Stella. Paul Gustavson’s wife has left him. His father, with whom he always had trouble speaking, has suffered a stroke and now can’t talk at all. Instead of writing a brilliant novel, Paul is stuck working on *Nature for Morons*. His girlfriend is seeing another guy. And the fact that Paul drinks too much isn’t helping matters. The only real consolation in Paul’s life is his retriever, Stella, whose dry wit and undying loyalty are sure to strike a chord with fans of *Marley and Me* and *The Art of Racing in the Rain*. As the proprietor of one independent bookshop says: “Dante may have had his Beatrice, but Paul Gustavson has Stella, a venerable dog who is his guiding light for matters of the mind and heart. Their ongoing dialogue is smart, sweet, and poignant, and together they take on their fears of thunderstorms and seedy bars (hers) and normal, loving relationships without the buffer of alcohol (his), each bringing out the best in each other. This book is clever, heartwarming, and engaging.” Pete Nelson is the author of several books, including the nonfiction work *Left for Dead*.

**Rights:        Algonquin**

**Rights sold:   Chinese Simplified – Everight, German – Page & Turner (Random House),  
                     Italian – Sonzogno (Marsilio)**

## **A CURABLE ROMANTIC**

### *A Novel*

**By Joseph Skibell • September 2010 • 593 pages**

“A fresh and wholly original take on Freud and the Esperantists—intellectual comedy of the highest order” (J.M. Coetzee). In Joseph Skibell’s brilliant new novel, Jakob Sammelsohn, who has already been through two unsuccessful marriages by the age of twelve, finds his way to Vienna circa 1890. First he courts Emma Eckstein, one of Freud’s most famous patients, running afoul of Freud himself. Then his search for love draws him into the Esperanto movement, where he befriends the beautiful Loë Bernfeld as well as the inventor of the universal language, Dr. Zamenhof. And finally, Dr. Sammelsohn finds himself in the Warsaw Ghetto in the 1940s, on what may be the path to Heaven. Throughout, Jakob is haunted by his deceased second wife, who inhabits the bodies of other women hoping to finally consummate his marriage to her. This is a marvel of invention, often fantastical but firmly grounded in history and in Jewish tradition. Joseph Skibell is the author of *A Blessing on the Moon*, which Algonquin will reissue in paperback to coincide with the publication of *A Curable Romantic*.

**Rights:       Algonquin**

## **THE FROZEN RABBI**

### *A Novel*

**By Steve Stern • May 2010 • 384 pages**

Fifteen-year-old Bernie Karp is digging through his parents’ basement freezer in search of a piece of liver when he is shocked to discover, hidden under the meat, a frozen 19<sup>th</sup>-century Polish rabbi. Steve Stern’s wonderfully inventive novel is the story of the rabbi, and of the generations of Bernie’s family that participated in bringing him from the old world to the new. Beginning with the sudden flood that caused the rabbi to become encased in ice in 1889, through an amazing trip over both land and sea to America, and finally to the Memphis basement where Bernie finds both rabbi and religion, the rabbi brings both luck and misfortune—and never more so than when he thaws and sets out to preach to a new generation of believers. “Stern elevates his virtuoso storytelling and whirling magical satire to cosmic heights in this lovingly irreverent and revelatory novel of the timeless conflict between the sacred and the profane, and the perpetual search for home and meaning” (**starred Booklist**). Steve Stern, winner of the National Jewish Book Award, is the acclaimed author of *The Angel of Forgetfulness*, among other works.

**Rights:       Algonquin**

**Rights sold:   German – Blessing Verlag (Random House)**

## **BLIND YOUR PONIES**

### *A Novel*

**By Stanley Gordon West • January 2011 • 400 pages • trade paperback original**

A word-of-mouth phenomenon which has already sold 40,000 copies in a self-published edition, *Blind Your Ponies* is a story of courage and love and grit, and of quirky and appealing characters chasing an impossible dream. After the death of his wife, Sam Pickett retreats to a small Montana town to teach and coach basketball. When a tall Norwegian exchange student and a troubled young boy who's been sent to live with his grandmother join the team, there is hope that they might finally break the 93-game losing streak. An inspiring tale that has already charmed reading groups in its original edition, Stanley Gordon West's novel is fueled by page-turning action, unforgettable characters, and feel-good storytelling at its heartwarming best.

**Rights:           Algonquin**

## Non-Fiction

### 52 LOAVES

#### *One Man's Relentless Pursuit of Truth, Meaning, and a Perfect Crust*

By William Alexander • May 2010 • 352 pages

William Alexander is determined to bake the perfect loaf of bread. He tasted it long ago in a restaurant, and has been trying to reproduce it ever since. Now he's going to bake every week for one year until he gets it right. He'll start from scratch—*really* from scratch—growing, harvesting, and milling his own wheat, apprenticing at an artisan bakery, visiting yeast factories and flour mills, traveling to a French monastery to help revive their bread-baking tradition, and more. *52 Loaves* encompasses the nature of obsession, the meditative quality of ritual, man's connection to the earth, the futility of trying to recreate something perfect, and the universal love for the aroma of baking bread. "Serious, irreverent, funny and informative at the same time, *52 Loaves* reflects precisely the frustrating and infuriating—if not impossible—process of creating the perfect bread" (Jacques Pépin). William Alexander is the author of *The \$64 Tomato*.

**Rights:** Algonquin

### THE SOUND OF A WILD SNAIL EATING

#### *A True Story*

By Elisabeth Tova Bailey • August 2010 • 204 pages

A friend brings the bedridden author a shell found in the woods. The next morning, Bailey discovers that the shell houses a snail, and so begins an unusual story of companionship.

**Rights:** North America – Algonquin

Rest of the world – Ellen Levine / Trident Media Group

### MISSING LUCILE: A Portrait of My Father's Mother

#### *A Biography*

By Suzanne Berne • October 2010 • 320 pages • black & white photographs throughout

With her father dying, award-winning novelist Suzanne Berne began to go through old family photographs and keepsakes in hopes of being able to give him a final gift: a profile of the mother he had never really known. Berne's grandmother Lucile had died at forty-three, leaving behind two young sons who were told that she was gone, but "no one ever said where." Recreating Lucile from historical context, inference, and imagination, Berne offers a beautifully written meditation on biography, on its dependence on the techniques of fiction, and on the true function of family history: "to explain what is essentially inexplicable—how we came to be ourselves." Suzanne Berne is the author of three novels, the first of which, *A Crime in the Neighborhood*, won the Orange Prize.

**Rights:** Algonquin

## **THE BOY WHO LOVED TORNADOES**

### ***A Mother's Story***

**By Randi Davenport • March 2010 • 384 pages**

“An unforgettable memoir of a shattered family, a mother’s abiding love, and the frightening permutations of the human mind” (*Elle Magazine*). From the start, Randi Davenport worked hard to provide her family with a sense of stability and strength, despite the challenges of having a son with autism and a husband whom she lost to schizophrenia. But then her teenage son was gripped by psychosis, becoming ever more tortured and unreachable, unable to recognize even his own mother. Beautifully written and profoundly moving, this is the story of Randi’s fight to save her son, to maintain a sense of normalcy for her daughter, and to confront the invisible demons that assail so many families. Randi Davenport’s stories and essays have appeared in *The Washington Post* and other publications.

**Rights:           Algonquin**

## **TAKE GOOD CARE OF THE GARDEN AND THE DOGS**

### ***Family, Friends, and Faith in Small-Town Alaska***

**By Heather Lende • May 2010 • 304 pages**

The author of the bestselling memoir *If You Lived Here, I'd Know Your Name* again focuses on friends and family in her tiny hometown of Haines, Alaska. An obituary writer described as “part Annie Dillard, part Anne Lamott” by *The Los Angeles Times*, Lende was seriously injured in a car accident. In *Take Good Care of the Garden and the Dogs*, she looks at faith and community—the spiritual and earthly things that can get us all back up on our feet after life throws us a curve. And Sarah Palin notwithstanding, *Booklist* calls this “...the best Alaska memoir of late, maybe the best ever.”

**Rights:           Algonquin**

## **PARIS WAS OURS**

### ***Thirty-Two Writers Reflect on the City of Light***

**Edited by Penelope Rowlands • January 2011 • 288 pages • trade paperback original**

Thirty-two intimate and insightful essays, more than half of them written specifically for this collection, by writers who have been seduced—and changed—by living in Paris. They came to write, to cook, to find love, to study, to raise children, or to escape. They came from the US, Canada, England, Iran, Iraq, Cuba, and even other parts of France, not as tourists but as long-term inhabitants.

**Rights:           World English – Algonquin**

**Translation – Frederick Hill Bonnie Nadell Literary Agency**

## **NOTHING LEFT TO BURN**

*A Memoir*

**By Jay Varner • September 2010 • 304 pages**

A memoir of three generations of men—author Jay Varner, his fire chief father, and his arsonist grandfather.

**Rights:**           **North America – Algonquin**  
                          **Rest of the world – Writers House**

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