

The Open Door Newsletter

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The Open Door

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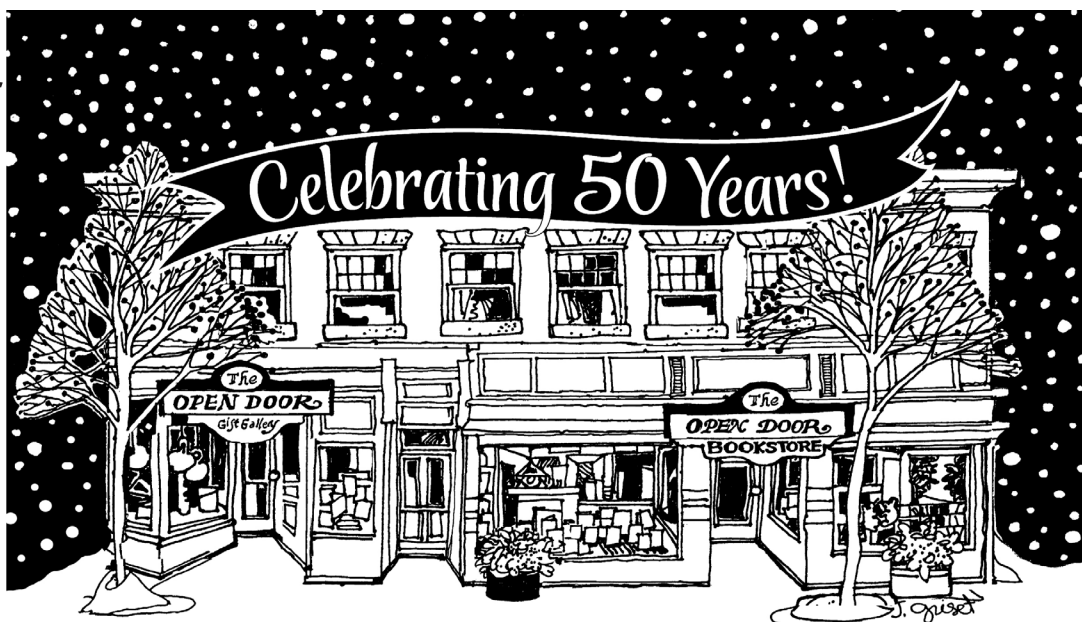
128 Jay Street

Schenectady, N. Y. 12305

Winter 2023

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Editor: Lynn Blankman



Congratulations!

Thanks to all the children who designed book jackets for their favorite books in our annual Children's Art Contest. Their beautiful artwork decorated our shop windows in November.

Congratulations to first prize winners Pepper Waldon, Cameron Triolo, James Marino, Cole Puleo, and Rosemary Ottati.

The Open Door

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independent
bookseller
since 1971

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Books for a winter night

Brew yourself a mug of your favorite tea and settle into your coziest chair with one or two or three of these:

* The fates of two unforgettable women intertwine in Kai Thomas's *In the Upper Country*, a powerful novel set in the 1800s in Dunmore, a Canadian town settled by people fleeing American slavery. One night, a neighboring farmer summons young journalist Lensinda Martin after a slave hunter is shot dead on his land by an old woman recently arrived via the Underground Railroad who refuses to flee before the authorities arrive. The farmer urges Lensinda to gather testimony from the woman before she can be condemned for the crime. Instead, the woman proposes a barter: a story for a story. What ensues is an extraordinary exchange of tales that reveal an interwoven history of Black and Indigenous peoples in a wide swath of what is called North America. Gorgeous fiction, alive with history. \$28

* Greg Melville's *Over My Dead Body* offers readers a lively and wide-ranging history of American cemeteries that not only mirror passing eras but have also shaped them, giving birth to landscape architecture and famous parks; influencing architectural styles; inspiring great writers like Emerson, Dickinson, and Whitman; and being used as political tools to shift the country's discourse. With each chapter devoted to a different cemetery across the country, this fascinating book, filled with astonishing facts, will change how you think about the past, lending it a more complete and honest telling. \$27

* Deepti Kapoor's searing novel, *Age of Vice*, is binge-worthy reading at its best: an addictive, action-

packed epic page-turner about the machinations of the dizzyingly wealthy Wadia family in contemporary India, and the outsiders who are drawn into their treacherous web. Kapoor paints a mesmerizing picture of violence and decadence, struggle and hope, corruption and redemption, as this spellbinder of massive scope accelerates to its explosive end. \$30

* New York City comes alive in *The Intimate City: Walking New York*, a scintillating collection of conversations between *The New York Times* architecture critic Michael Kimmelman and historians, artists, architects, and others who know the city best, as they go on walking tours of 19 neighborhoods, covering four of the five boroughs and some 540 (!) million years of history. These intimate, funny, richly detailed conversations between Kimmelman and his companions became anchors for millions of *Times* readers during the pandemic, as they explored the essence of urban life, its social fabric, and the everyday realities that comprise the greatest city in the world. \$30

* "Being a woman is a dangerous business," says Mrs. Parks, the keeper of a brothel in 1850s Monterey, Calif., to the young prostitute Eliza, one of whose colleagues has been murdered. But in Jane Smiley's novel *Dangerous Business*, Eliza decides to run toward the danger, hoping to win some measure of safety for all of them. Working with her friend Jean, Eliza follows the process of her favorite fictional character, Edgar Allan Poe's detective Dupin. In this mash-up of a Western, a serial-killer mystery, and a feminist-inflected tale of life in a bordello, Smiley is at the top of her game. \$28

Lily Bartels
Book buyer

Open Door staff favorites

* **Mercury Pictures Presents**, Anthony Marra. Written with intelligence and wit, this is an epic tale of a brilliant young woman who must reinvent herself to survive emigrating from Mussolini's Italy to 1940s Los Angeles. Marra has done it again! Karen \$28.99

* **Finding Dorothy**, Elizabeth Letts. This historical fiction tells the story of L. Frank Baum and his family and how he came to write *The Wizard of Oz*. It's a great read with connections to Judy Garland, local New York State towns, and 1939 Old Hollywood. Vicki \$17

* **Legends & Lattes**, Travis Baldree. In this cozy fantasy, Viv is an orc with a lifelong dream to start her own coffee shop in a world where coffee is not well known. This

heartwarming novel shows the day-to-day life of opening a new business and offers loveable characters you root for. Perfect for longtime fantasy readers and for people who are looking to get into the fantasy genre. Zoe \$17.99

* **The Half Life of Valery K**, Natasha Pulley. Another amazing book from Pulley (*The Kingdoms*, *The Watchmaker of Filigree Street*). Valery is a nuclear scientist rescued from a 1960s Siberian prison camp to work on a secret Russian project in a mysterious, off-the-grid city. Detailed and compelling historical fiction, with just a hint of romance and the requisite octopus – it's perfect Pulley. Tara \$28

* **One Hundred Saturdays: Stella Levi and the Search for a Lost World**, Michael Frank. Writer Frank's conversations with Stella Levi, now in her 90s, bring to life the vibrant world of Jewish Rhodes, the deportation to Auschwitz, and the resilience and wisdom of the woman who lived to tell the story. Reading these conversations, we travel back in time to an island with a Greek and Turkish heritage that was conquered by the Italians

in 1912 and then seized by the Germans in 1943. Stella describes what it was like to grow up in an extraordinary place at an extraordinary time and how she was able to reconstruct a life after her world vanishes. I was captivated by Stella's stories and Frank's sensitivity and shared friendship. Janet \$28

* **World of Curiosities**, Louise Penny. Once again, Louise Penny hits it out of the park! Her latest installment of the Armand Gamache *Three Pines* series is full of twists and turns, surprises and clues. As usual, Penny weaves some historical components into her story, and the writing continues to be exquisite. I loved it and am ready to read it all over again! Ellen \$29.99

* **The Butcher and the Wren**, Alaina Urquhart. A debut novel from the host of the true-crime podcast, *Morbid*, and an autopsy technician. Told from the alternating perspectives of a serial killer and a medical examiner working the case, this book is filled with suspense and has a great twist (no spoilers). Tara \$27

Dear friends,

As we welcome in a New Year, we want to thank you for your continued support and loyalty. We appreciate every purchase you make at The Open Door and every purchase you make at other small businesses.

Once again your generosity buying books for our Giving Tree with Northern Rivers (formerly Northeast Parent & Child Society) was wonderful. You have helped us give the gift of reading to so many deserving children.

We are very excited to present our QR Code (see the back page of this newsletter). With one easy scan you will be able to find our website to order books and sign up to receive emails with news about events, new books and gift items. You can also follow us on social media to stay up to date.

All of us at The Open Door wish you a very happy and healthy 2023. We hope to see you soon!

Janet Hutchison
Owner



You make a big difference

Where you choose to shop does make a difference! By supporting The Open Door, you have also contributed to the many local organizations, to name a few:

Albany Barn
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
Bethesda House Addiction Awareness
Capital Roots
Caring Together
CREATE Community Studio
DSIC
ECOS
Hamilton Hill Arts Center
Hudson Valley Consortium
Kids Arts Festival
Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy
MVLA Foundation
NY Folklore
Pioneer Charitable Foundation

Proctors Theatre
Saratoga Voices
Schenectady County Public Library
Schenectady Historical Society
Schenectady ARC
Schenectady Civic Players
Schenectady Symphony
SLOC
Sunnyview
Thursday Musical Club
To Life
Whiskers
Woofstock
And many area schools and faith-based groups

Snowy day books for boys and girls



✱ ***An American Story***, Kwame Alexander, Dare Coulter. From the fireside tales of an African village, through the terrible passage across the Atlantic, to the backbreaking work in the fields of the South, this is a story of a people's struggle and strength, horror and hope. Honest and beautifully illustrated, it offers a thoughtful introduction to an important topic. 4-8 \$18.99

✱ ***Feathers Together***, Caron Levis, Charles Santoso. From the award-winning team behind *Ida*, *Always*, and *This Way, Charlie* comes an uplifting story of animal friendship, inspired by a real-life pair of storks whose bond overcame great distance. 4-8 \$18.99

✱ ***Nell Plants a Tree***, Anne Wynter, Daniel Miyares. This lovely poetic picture book shows how one little girl's careful tending of a pecan tree creates the living center of a loving, intergenerational Black family. 4-8 \$17.99

✱ ***The Lost Galumpus***, Joseph Helgeron, Udayano Lugo. When a furry, four-legged creature from the distant past appears in the park, Gilly the possum must figure out where the galumpus came from and how to get him home again. And with a blizzard bearing down on the town, there is no time to lose. A laugh-out-loud illustrated adventure story. 8-12 \$16.99

✱ ***What Happened to Rachel Riley?*** Claire Swinarski. Anna Hunt may be the new girl at East Middle School, but she knows right away there's something off about her eighth-grade class. Why has Rachel Riley, formerly most popular girl, suddenly become an outcast, and why will no one,

including Rachel Riley, tell Anna why? Anna decides to create her own podcast to answer the question. But as she gathers clue after clue and the mystery widens, one thing becomes clear: if you ask a complicated question, you'd better be prepared for the fallout that comes with the answer. 8-12 \$16.99

✱ ***Nick and Charlie: A Heartstopper Novella***, Alice Oseman. Everyone knows that Nick and Charlie are inseparable. But soon Nick will be leaving for university, and Charlie, a year younger, will be left behind, and everyone wonders whether they'll stay together. Charlie's sure he's holding Nick back, and Nick can't tell what Charlie is thinking. Everyone knows first loves rarely last forever. What will it take for Nick and Charlie to survive the odds? 14+ \$16.99

Kathleen Kemp
Children's book buyer

Writing contest for girls and boys

Calling all writers in grades one through eight! The Open Door is accepting submissions for our annual children's writing contest.

All entries are due before March 3. Winners will receive store gift certificates at a celebration party in the spring. Call the store (518/346-2719) or go to www.opendoor-bookstore.com for more info.

Calendar

Saturday, Jan. 21, 1-2:30 pm: Paul O'Brien will sign *Knowing the Place*.

The Open Door 2022 bestsellers

Our bestselling books may not be the same as those you see on national best-seller lists, because they reflect the unique tastes of The Open Door's customers.

Adult fiction

The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo, Reid

Neil Gaiman Reader, Gaiman

It Ends with Us, Hoover

Chasing Rome, Gray

I'm Glad My Mom Died, McCurdy

The Shadows of the Gods, Gwynne

Letting Go, Barcomb

Verity, Hoover

Horse, Brooks

The Woman in the Library, Gentill

Adult non-fiction

Easy Moroccan Cookbook, Waheed

Empty Shoes by the Door, Merriam

Back to Earth, Stott

Justice in the Jungle, Zonderman

Braiding Sweetgrass, Kimmerer

The Body Keeps the Score, Van der Kolk

Taste, Tucci

The 1619 Project, Hannah-Jones

All About Love, bell hooks

Children's older readers/YA

Cress Watercress, Maguire

Heartstopper Series, Osman

Hell Followed with Us, White

Shuna's Journey, Miyazaki

Mr. Popper Penguins, Atwater

Housecat Trouble, Dickerson

Phantom Tollbooth, Juster

The Ogress and the Orphans, Barnhill

The Awakening Storm, Yogis

Last Night at the Telegraph Club, Lo

Children's picture books

Twinkle Twinkle Winter Night, Litwin

The Day the Crayons Quit, Daywalt

The Hug (mini edition), McLaughlin

Finding Fire, Kline

King Kong's Cousin, Teague

On a Rainy Day, Perkins

Knight Owl, Denise

Little Loon Finds His Voice, Pearson

Build-a-Bug, Ball

A Trip to the Farmer's Market, Paige

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**Special orders
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Ways to save at The Open Door

We offer many ways to save on purchases at The Open Door—and many special services, including fast book orders (usually 2-3 days) and website book ordering (www.opendoor-bookstore.com). Here are some of the many ways you can save:

- * Sign up for our Rewards Program and earn a Rewards Certificate to use on any store merchandise!
- * Reading groups, save 15%.
- * Teachers, save 20%.
- * Seniors, save 15% on Tuesdays.
- * Save 20% with our newsletter coupon.
- * Substantial savings on our Bargain Books!

Complete details available in the store.



Remember your Valentine!

Shop The Open Door to find a unique, lovely selection of gifts and cards for your special someone.