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WEBLOG

[More Beautiful Books: The Cahiers Series](#)

11 May 10 | Chad W. Post



Daniel Medin—an assistant professor at the American University of Paris—turned me onto [The Cahiers Series](#), which is published jointly by [Slyph Editions](#) and the AUP.

These booklets (or, well, cahiers) are around 36-48 pages, are absolutely gorgeous (see second-rate photo below) and revolve around issues of translation. The first one was published back in 2006, and the 14th is on its way. The [complete list](#) is available on the website, but some highlights include: “Ballade Nocturne” by Gao Xingjian, “Translating Music” by Richard Pevear, “Jozef Czapski: A Life in Translation” by Keith Botsford, “Proust, Blanchot and a Woman in Red” by Lydia Davis, “Notes from the Hall of Uselessness” by Simon Leys, and “Walking on Air” by Muriel Spark. There’s also a forthcoming one by Laszlo Krasznahorkai.

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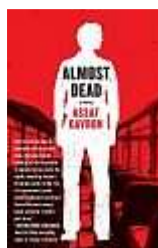


The Misadventures of the New Satan by A. H. Tammsaare

Reviewed by Dan Vitale

A. H. Tammsaare was the pseudonym of Ant Hansen, considered by many to be Estonia’s writer. Born in 1878 (on a farm called Tamms “Oak Island”), Hansen did not graduate from school until age 25, because his. . .

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Almost Dead by Assaf Gavron

Reviewed by Jeff Waxman

Big publishing houses have a lot going for the. They’ve got money and media access and th. bringing a book to the forefront of a very noisy cr. only for a moment. And, like the small presse

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As you can see, translation is at the center of a lot of these books—here's a bit from Sylph Editions publisher Ornan Rotem on the purpose of the series:

The series is an exploration of writing and translation, the latter understood in very broad terms; that is to say, not only as the transition from one natural language to another, but also the shift between media and forms of expression. We refer to this expanded view of translation as “cultural translation” [sidenote—the AUP has an interesting, unique [M.A. program in Cultural Translation](#)] and that is why the series happily endorses and includes, besides obvious subjects such as literature, poetry, and drama, others like architecture, textile, music, and in the future, film. The visual component of the cahiers also forms an essential part of the exploration. I would go so far as to say that each cahier is suspended between the verbal and visual, and is the outcome of the interplay between these two components.

Daniel Medin also had this to say:

There are two main justifications for the Cahiers Series. The first is that we publish material that cannot easily be published anywhere else; we can play with form in a way that commercial publishers cannot. The second justification is to make something where the parts, through their relation to each other, add up to more than just that. (Something especially evident in the Spark, Leys, Gold, and Krasznahorkai.)

One thing I can't emphasize enough is just how beautiful these books are. Not only are the designs simple and eye-catching, the quality of the paper is amazing, the full-color images inside are striking, the



The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction by Suzanne Jill Levine
Reviewed by Jessica LeTourneur

For far too long now, the translator has been to the rear-facing backseat of the literary world—so-smaller “translated by” name towards the title page that few people (save those of us passionate about literature. . .

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The Brige of the Golden Horn by Emine Sevgi Ozdamar
Reviewed by Jessica LeTourneur

“Since their beginning, stories have pretended to place far away. Faraway and once-upon-a-time code words for Here and Now.” When these John Berger’s introduction are applied to this novel by Turkish playwright and actress Emin

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Fado by Andrzej Stasiuk
Reviewed by Dan Vitale

The Polish novelist and essayist Andrzej Stasiuk's century-old travel map of Austro-Hungary. As fragile, he writes, its most notable feature is detail: “[E]very village of half a dozen cottage godforsaken backwater where. . .

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French flaps, the way they feel . . . Daniel called Ornan Rotem—publisher *and* designer—a “genius,” and I have to agree. This is one of those series that I would buy just to display these in my office . . .

Speaking of purchasing: via the [Cahiers Series subscription page](#) you can buy a boxed set of volumes 1-6 (or a boxed set of volumes 7-12) for £51. Which is approximately \$4,000, but like I said, these are really, really beautiful. (Kidding—£51 is only \$75 and these are worth every dime.)



tags: [american university of paris](#), [cahiers series](#), [daniel medin](#), [ornan rotem](#), [sylph editions](#)

Comments

By [Matt](#) on 11 May 10 | <#>

I can vouch for the Lydia Davis one. Great, great stuff.

Commenting is closed for this article.

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Baba Yaga Laid an Egg by Dubravka Ugresic
Reviewed by Chad W. Post
This is an admittedly biased statement (disclosure: the first book Open Letter published was Ugresic's *Nobody's Home*, and I was responsible for Dubravka Ugresic publishing *Thank You for Not Reading a Few* back), but I honestly believe that Dubravka U

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Siamese by Stig Sæterbakken
Reviewed by Larissa Kyzer
Since his literary debut at the age of 18, Norwegian author Stig Sæterbakken has made a name for himself by challenging convention. At times, this challenge has manifested as an interrogation of the Norwegian nation's sense of identity and its . . .

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Hotel Iris by Yoko Ogawa
Reviewed by Will Eells
Reading *Hotel Iris*, the latest Yoko Ogawa book published in English, may be quite a jarring experience for those who have read Ogawa's last novel, *Housekeeper and the Professor*. Although the common theme of unconventional . . .

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2017 by Olga Slavnikova

Reviewed by K.E. Semmel

It's hard not to think of twentieth-century Russian history as you crack open *2017*, Olga Slavnikova's Russian Booker Prize winning novel. The year 2017 will mark, of course, the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, which culminated in the collapse. . .

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Don Juan: His Own Version by Peter Handke

Reviewed by Dan Vitale

Peter Handke's latest novella to be published in English translation is narrated by a chef who operates and lives in an inn in the Île-de-France region outside Paris, near the ruins of the Port-Royal-des-Champs convent. Experiencing a period of solitude. . .

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