

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter

rl: ridgefield library
Enriching Minds.
Enhancing Community.

May 2016

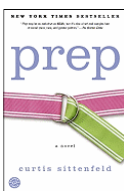
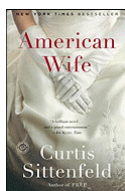
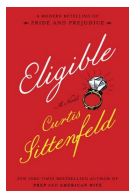
AUTHOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Curtis Sittenfeld

Curtis Sittenfeld writes literary novels of women's lives that chronicle young girls and women as they come of age. Sittenfeld mostly concerns herself with situations of privilege, and her work tends to be loosely based on her own experiences or, as with *American Wife*, on the life of a public figure. Sittenfeld's novels are focused on an

exploration of character with the plot relegated to secondary status. Sittenfeld's prose is sparse, her wit biting, and her tone emotionally charged.



Eligible (2016)

A modern retelling of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. A bold literary experiment, *Eligible* is a brilliant, playful, and delicious saga for the twenty-first century. This version of the Bennet family and Mr. Darcy is one that you have and haven't met before: Liz is a magazine writer in her late thirties who, like her yoga instructor older sister, Jane, lives in New York City. When their father has a health scare, they return to their crumbling childhood home in Cincinnati and find the family in disarray.

Sisterland (2013)

When the strongest earthquake in U.S. history occurs just north of their St. Louis home, Kate and Jeremy find the disaster further complicated by Kate's self-proclaimed-medium twin's prediction about a more powerful earthquake, a situation that places Kate under public scrutiny and reveals her own psychic abilities.

American Wife (2008)

When her husband is elected president of the United States, Alice Blackwell finds her new life as first lady increasingly tumultuous.

The Man of My Dreams (2006)

Hannah Gavener's fantasies about family, romance, and love collide headlong with the challenges, complexities, and realities of adult life and relationships.

Prep (2005)

During the late 1980s, fourteen-year-old Lee Fiora leaves behind her close-knit, middle-class Indiana family to enroll in an elite coed boarding school in Massachusetts, becoming a shrewd observer of, and eventually a participant in, their rituals and customs.

THE EDGAR AWARDS

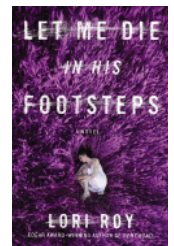


The Edgar Awards are given annually by the Mystery Writers of America to honor the best in mystery writing. Here are this year's winners and nominees for best novel:

Best Novel

Let Me Die in His Footsteps by Lori Roy

When a 15-year-old girl from a small mid-20th-century Kentucky town sneaks onto a rival family's property and discovers a dead body, she is forced to confront dangerous events from the past in order to protect the town.



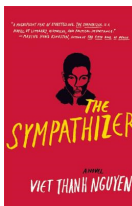
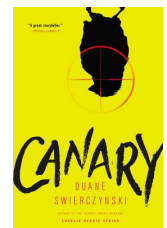
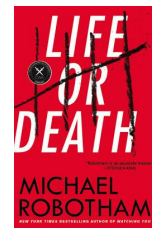
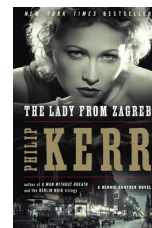
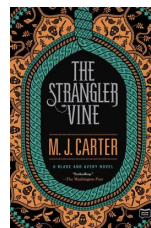
Other finalists:

The Strangler Vine by M. J. Carter

The Lady from Zagreb by Philip Kerr

Life or Death by Mark Robotham

Canary by Duane Swierczynski



Best First Novel

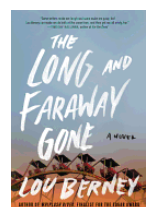
The Sympathizer by Viet Thanh Nguyen.

Follows a Viet Cong agent as he spies on a South Vietnamese army general and his compatriots as they start a new life in 1975 Los Angeles.

Best Paperback Original

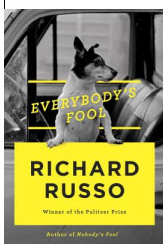
The Long and Faraway Gone by Lou Berney

A lone survivor of a robbery shooting and the grieving sister of a missing girl forge a passionate relationship and obsessively search for answers when a suspect resurfaces 25 years later.



NEW FICTION

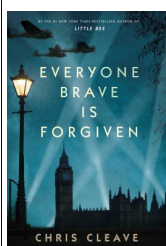
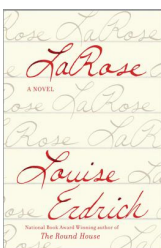
(Annotations from BookLetters)



Everybody's Fool by Richard Russo. Richard Russo, at the very top of his game, now returns to North Bath, in upstate New York, and revisits the characters of *Nobody's Fool*. *Everybody's Fool* is filled with humor, heart, hard times and people you can't help but love, possibly because their various faults make them so stridently human.

LaRose by Louise Erdrich.

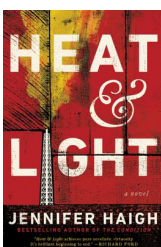
Louise Erdrich wields her breathtaking narrative magic in an emotionally haunting contemporary tale of a tragic accident, a demand for justice, and a profound act of atonement with ancient roots in Native American culture. *LaRose* is a powerful exploration of loss, justice, and the reparation of the human heart.



Everyone Brave Is Forgiven by Chris Cleave. Set in London during the years of 1939 to 1942, when citizens had slim hope of survival, much less victory; and on the strategic island of Malta, which was daily devastated by the Axis barrage, *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* features little-known history and a perfect wartime love story inspired by the real-life love letters between Chris Cleave's grandparents.

Heat & Light by Jennifer Haigh.

Jennifer Haigh returns to the Pennsylvania town at the center of her iconic novel *Baker Towers* in this ambitious, achingly human story of modern America and the conflicting forces at its heart a bold, moving drama of hope and desperation, greed and power, big business and small-town families.

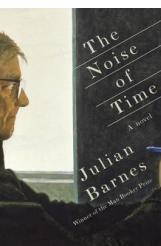


Britt-Marie Was Here by Fredrik Backman. The bestselling author of *A Man Called Ove* returns with an irresistible novel about finding love and second chances in the most unlikely of places.

When Britt-Marie walks out on her cheating husband, she has to fend for herself in the miserable backwater town of Borg. Employed as the caretaker of a soon-to-be demolished recreation center, the fastidious Britt-Marie has to cope with muddy floors, unruly children, and a (literal) rat for a roommate. Can Britt-Marie find a place where she truly belongs?

The Noise of Time by Julian Barnes.

A compact masterpiece dedicated to the Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich: Julian Barnes's first novel since his best-selling, Man Booker Prize-winning *The Sense of an Ending*. Barnes elegantly guides us through the trajectory of Shostakovich's career, at the same time illuminating the tumultuous evolution of the Soviet Union.



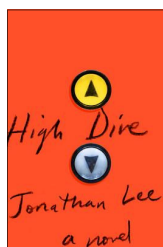
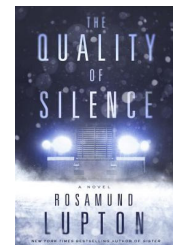
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STAFF PICKS

Elise's Picks

The Quality of Silence by Rosamund Lupton.

Arriving in Alaska with her precocious ten-year-old deaf daughter, astrophysicist Yasmin Alfredson is informed that all the inhabitants of the tiny Inuit village where her husband has been filming a wildlife documentary have perished in a freak fire, and that his wedding ring has been found in the charred remains. Refusing to believe that he is dead, the resourceful Yasmin persuades a long distance trucker to drive them to the remote village. What under the best of conditions would be a harrowing journey takes a sinister turn when Yasmin realizes that they are being stalked by a bigger rig, and that they are driving into a blizzard. Alternately narrated by Ruby and her mother and enriched by the daughter's unique perspective, *The Quality of Silence* is a gripping environmental thriller about resilience, corporate greed and the beauty and menace of the arctic wilderness.



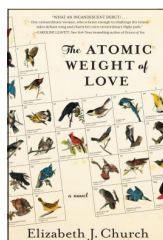
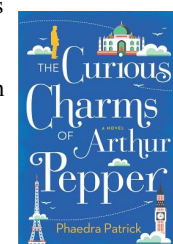
High Dive by Jonathan Lee.

In 1984, in advance of the annual Conservative Party Conference, the IRA planted a long-delay time bomb at the Grand Hotel in Brighton, England. The intended target, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, emerged unscathed, but five people died and dozens more were injured. This suspenseful, compassionate novel focuses on the personal rather than the political fallout of the blast. The Iron Lady and her entourage are barely glimpsed, and instead the author concentrates on the inner lives, hopes and disappointments of three "ordinary" working class people: Moose, the deputy manager of the hotel, a sweet conscientious single parent; Freya, his smart but insecure teenage daughter; and Dan, the IRA recruit who has second thoughts about the mission. Thomas Mallon called *High Dive* "achingly good," devastating in its observations about terrorism, and yet given the subject "one of the gentlest novels in memory."

Dorothy's Picks

The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper by Phaedra Patrick.

Arthur Pepper is a 69 year old widower coming to terms with the loss of his beloved wife of 40 years. He is a creature of habit whose life in York, England has not been the same since his wife's death. When he finds an elaborate charm bracelet among her belongings, he begins a quest to decipher the meaning of each charm and learns that before their marriage, his wife had a series of adventures she never shared. Arthur questions his idyllic view of his marriage and rethinks his own reluctance to explore the world beyond his beloved York. This lovely novel explores how sometimes our lives take a new course when we least expect it. Settle into an easy chair and accompany Arthur Pepper on his journey of discovery.



The Atomic Weight of Love by Elizabeth J. Church.

Meridian Wallace is a brilliant University of Chicago ornithology student when she meets physics professor Alden Whetstone in 1941. Although he is 20 years her senior, she is bowled over by his intellect and marries him after he is sent to work on a secret government project at Los Alamos. After the war, she defers her own academic ambitions so Alden can continue his research in New Mexico. Over the next 60 plus years, Meridian comes to terms with the consequences of her decision to abandon her own career in deference to her husband's as the societal landscape changes and the woman's movement emerges. Told in Meridian's first person narrative, this novel should appeal to fans of Elizabeth Gilbert and Cheryl Strayed.