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30 *years*
of the
**New York City
Book Awards**

30 Years of the New York City Book Awards

Evolution of the Awards

In 1995, New York Society Library's Head Librarian, Mark Piel, pitched an idea to architectural writer, social historian, and Library member Christopher Gray: an annual book award presented for the year's best book (or books) on a New York theme, books that exhibit excellent literary quality and show the city in a new light.

Gray greeted the idea with enthusiasm and, at Piel's suggestion, wrote up a proposal which they presented to the Library's board. The board members gave the project the green light, and thus the New York City Book Awards were born.

In 2011, the Library added another prize—the Hornblower Award—in recognition of an outstanding book by a first-time author that fulfills the award criteria.

The Library has recognized over 120 books in the 30-year history of the awards. Winning genres cover many subjects, and the authors reflect the endless creativity of our diverse and ever-changing city.

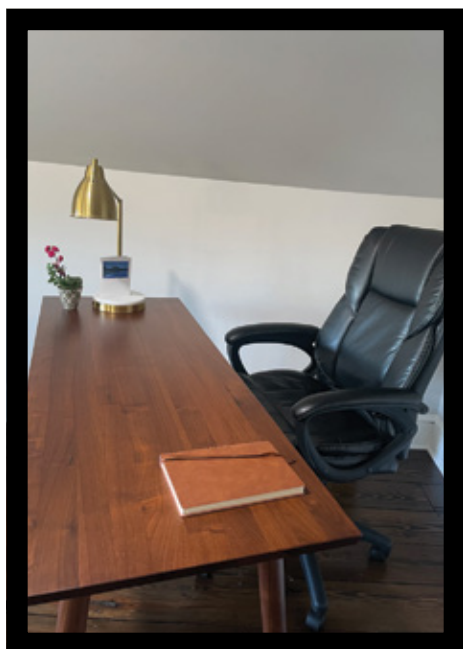
We invited some of our honorees to share their thoughts on their process, motivation, and inspirations.



Aisha Abdel Gawad
Between Two Moons:
A Novel

2023 Hornblower Award Winner

I wrote *Between Two Moons* at a time in my life when I couldn't shake a few questions that felt both confusing and urgent: What is it like for Muslims and Arabs to grow up under state surveillance? How does the reality and the sensation of being surveilled impact who you will become? In particular, I wanted to explore the impact on Muslim and Arab girls, who, as young women in America, are already surveilled just because of their gender.



I am a mother to two young children and a teacher, so I like to write in the very early hours of the morning when it feels like the whole world is still sleeping and no one needs me yet. I move a lot when I write—I get up from my desk and walk around in strange loops as I try to feel my way through a sentence.

I thought a lot about Arabic-to-English translation as I worked on this book, especially the way the Qur'an is translated into English. I consulted many different translations as I considered how we use language to approximate complex experiences, beliefs, and sensations. My characters pray in Arabic but mostly speak and think in English, so their spirituality, their relationships to God, are constantly undergoing translation from one language to the other.

There is a section of my book where I consider various ways that Chapter 94 of the Qur'an has been translated into English. I annotated different translations and tried to imagine how my characters would wrestle with the language as they simultaneously wrestle with faith.

Maybe it *was* really a metaphor for deportation? ... movie was deep?

Baba made a casserole of potatoes and meat in a tomato sauce. It was delicious. We ate in silence, watching the end of a movie that was suddenly profound.

There's a chapter of the Qur'an called "Comfort," sometimes translated as "Consolation" or "Solace." And in it, a verse: "With every hardship there is ease. With every hardship there is ease." The same line repeated twice, in case we have trouble believing it the first time. In case we have a hard time recognizing ease even when it is offered to us, even when it is served to us on a white plate. In case we are drowning in our hardship and cannot see those tiny life rafts of ease—soft potatoes, meat slow-roasted to velvet, your mother's laugh trilling gently in your ear.



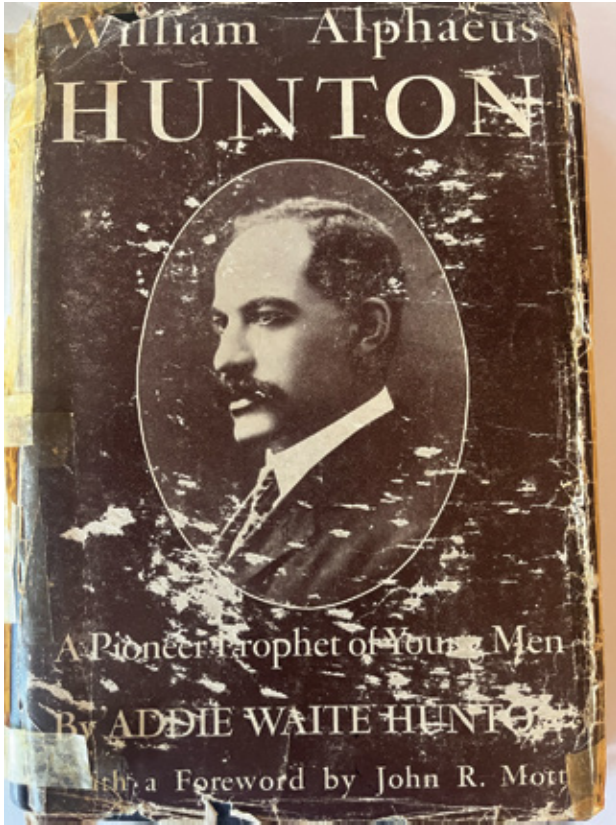
Stephen L. Carter
**Invisible: The Forgotten
Story of the Black
Woman Lawyer Who
Took Down America's
Most Powerful Mobster**

2017 Winner

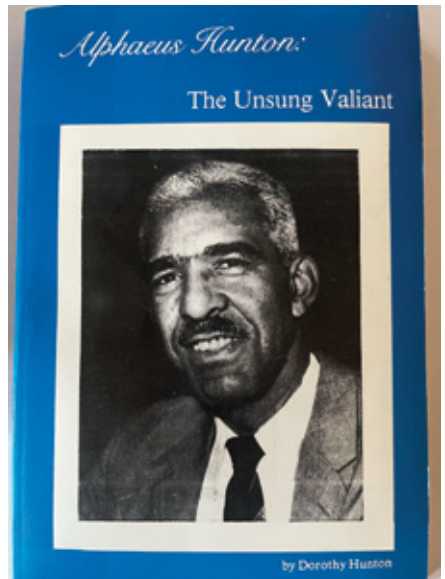
I wanted to tell my grandmother's remarkable story for some time before I wrote *Invisible*.

In 2008, I published a novel titled *Palace Council*, set in elite circles of Harlem society in the 1950s and 1960s. Immersing myself in that world evoked memories of my grandmother, a brilliant lawyer whose legacy has been eroded by time. Shortly after completing *Palace Council*, I began to think about telling her story.

I started work on the book in earnest not long after. In 2016, my daughter Leah joined the effort as the principal researcher, helping to bring the story of Eunice and her family to the page.



Two primary sources I used. My grandmother's brother Alphaeus was imprisoned as a suspected Communist during the McCarthy era. Their father, William Alphaeus Hunton, was General Secretary of the Black section of the YMCA.





Roz Chast

**Going Into Town: A
Love Letter to New York**

2017 Winner

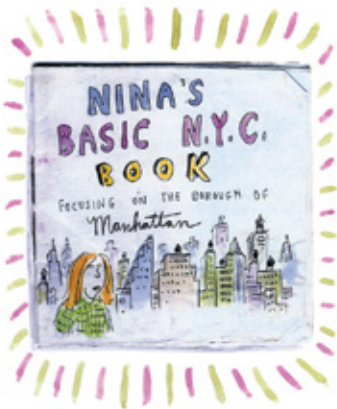
For Roz Chast, adjusting to life in the suburbs was surreal. But she recognized that for her kids, the reverse was true. On trips into town, they would marvel at the strange world of Manhattan. Their wonder inspired *Going Into Town*.





I wrote *Going Into Town* as a sort of love letter to New York City. I grew up in Brooklyn—it's my "hometown." We moved to suburbia when we had our second child. I took frequent trips into the city with them. But when my younger kid decided to go to college in NYC, I realized that I needed to make a little "how to" booklet for them.

It had stuff in it that you don't generally find in guidebooks, which describe tourist attractions but don't tell you things like "Fifth Avenue divides the East Side from the West Side," what a cross street is, how to hail a cab, stuff about changing trains, and how to jaywalk safely. After four years, my kid returned the booklet and said it had been very helpful. That was the seed around which the rest of the book grew.





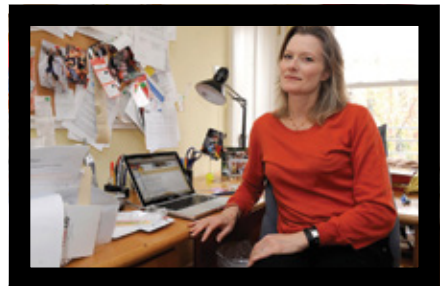
Jennifer Egan ***Manhattan Beach***

2017 Winner

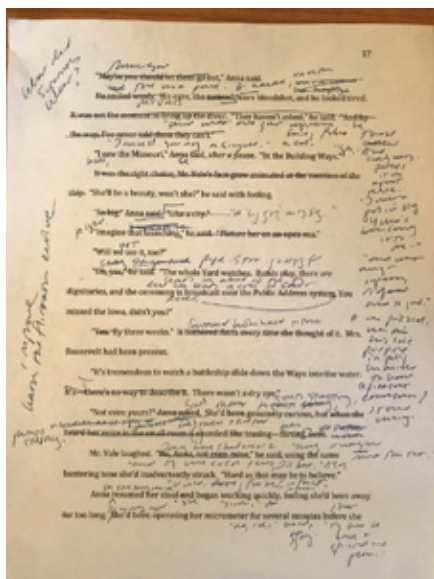
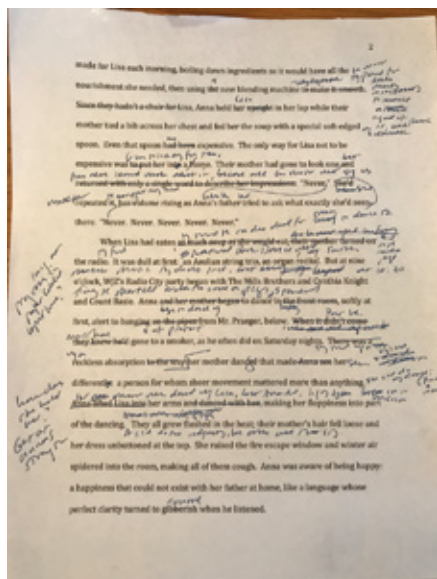
Manhattan Beach tells the intertwined stories of heroine Anna Kerrigan, the Brooklyn Navy Yard’s only female diver, her father Eddie Kerrigan, who works for both the union and the mob, and nightclub owner Dexter Styles, Eddie’s complex and charismatic boss.

I was inspired to write *Manhattan Beach* out of curiosity about what New York was like during World War II—a curiosity that may have arisen during 9/11, and the shock of seeing the city become a war zone in the course of a day. From the beginning, I imagined using a *noir*-ish approach to wartime New York. The most important elements

of the story—organized crime, shipbuilding, merchant sailing, deep-sea diving—arose organically in the course of my research, which began with the waterfront and proceeded naturally from there. I tend to write first drafts with no idea of what my story will be, so there was an ongoing dialectic between writing and research as I got a clearer sense of where the story was taking me and what I needed to know. The whole process took seven years!



I write fiction almost entirely by hand. When I'm writing original material, I try to write five to seven pages each day. In the first page of draft one (right), I was clearly excited that I wrote six pages. Morning is best for first-draft writing, but once I'm in the editing phase (below), I can work all day long and into the night, and virtually anywhere—one benefit of not composing on a machine.

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Sidik Fofana

Stories from the Tenants Downstairs

2022 Hornblower Award Winner

I wrote *Stories from the Tenants Downstairs* because I was bored. Just kidding! I don't know why I wrote it. I do. I was interested in the Black urban voice, how people could cohabitate and have wildly different experiences. I was interested in the dream deferred. I also wanted to pay homage to Harlem. It was the very first place I hung out in New York City. I wanted to pay homage to the people in my neighborhood in Boston and the people in my high-rise on 139th Street. The fruit of their voice. When certain people talk, it's like poetry. I wanted to make art of that, and for other people to see it as poetry too.



I've converted my unfinished basement into a bit of a study. That's where I get the majority of my summer writing done. I write for a couple of months, get depressed, and then switch to the next project. My whole process is toggling between stories and revising each from scratch. I can never tell when I'm done so I just keep going until somebody tells me I'm done and yanks whatever I'm working on out my hands.

I'm a proud New York City public school teacher. I've learned to multitask. I'm not able to write so much per day because I'm busy with a gazillion things, but I have learned how to safeguard the precious little time I do have. My routine is nothing sexy. I carpool from the Bronx to Brooklyn and get to school at 7 am. My first class starts at 9, so between 7 and 9, I'm decompressing and then writing for an hour in the school cafeteria. Some people try to find nooks and or little spaces of solitude to do their work. I like to hide in plain sight.

Sidik Fofana

Here's the first page of "Federation for the Like-Minded" edited by the beloved Kathy Belden.

Federation for the Like-Minded

I knew that restaurant across the street ~~that you favor~~ was set to be a bane at my side from day one. ~~Even as the neighborhood boys went on about the sofas, the pillows, and the girafes against the walls. Even as I pulled them aside and said, Look here, don't be shocked at what restoration can do.~~

It wasn't more than a week ~~after the restoration was complete before~~, one of the waiters comes right out to where it's me and the pigeons and says, Sorry, I'm ~~gonna~~ have to ask you to leave. I don't understand ~~what he's saying~~ until I catch him ~~lookin~~ at my ~~chess~~ board and crate, and for the first time since I ever been ~~on~~ that square I realize~~dd~~ that I was on private property. ~~The~~ second I came to this, I pack everything up and says, Sir, I apologize duly, all the while ~~wonderin~~ how a ~~wholesome game~~ could be a sore sight for anyone.

You see me here. I don't bother nobody. I'm not ~~runnin~~ up on you and ~~askin~~ for ~~your~~ ~~lifanythin~~g. I'm here ~~with my board right from~~ when sun wakes ~~and until at night when it's just~~ me and the sanitation trucks. ~~I drag my paraphernalia and set up my board and~~ I play anyone whether knucklehead or salesman. All in the name of brain exercise and good conversation.

~~Same thing when it wasn't any different when~~ I was in front of that restaurant, and before ~~that~~ when the spot was a bodega ~~with the deli meat the bees loved so much~~. I greeted the patrons ~~comin~~ out, asked them for a go, and enough of them said why not.

It |

KB Kathryn Belden ...  
Unclear to what you're referring here? Square?

Reply

KB Kathryn Belden ...  
Game of what? Additional of chess above okay?

Reply

KB Kathryn Belden ...  
Where is he now? Across the street? On the same square?

Reply

KB Kathryn Belden ...  
I thought he was still in front of the restaurant.

Reply

Here's how it ended up appearing in the book.

I knew that restaurant across the street was set to be a bane at my side from day one.

It wasn't more than a week after they did it up one of the waiters comes right out to where it's me and the pigeons and says, Sorry, I'm gonna have to ask you to leave. I don't understand what he's sayin until I catch him lookin at my chessboard and crate and for the first time since I ever been on that block I realized that I was on private property. The second I came to this, I pack everything up and says, Sir, I apologize duly, all the while wonderin how a wholesome game could be a sore sight for anyone.

You see me here. I don't bother nobody. I'm not runnin up on you and askin for your life. I'm here with my board from right when the sun wakes until it's just me and the sanitation trucks. I play anyone whether knucklehead or salesman, all in the name of brain exercise and good conversation. Wasn't any different when I was in front of that restaurant, and before that when the spot was a bodega with the deli meat the flies loved so much. I greeted the patrons comin out, asked them for a go, and enough of them said why not.

You crossed the street here yourself, and what did I tell you? That all I was out here for was fresh air and recreation? When

Xochitl Gonzalez

Olga Dies Dreaming: **A Novel**

2022 Winner

Set in 2017 against the backdrop of New York City in the months surrounding the most devastating hurricane in Puerto Rico's history, Xochitl Gonzalez's *Olga Dies Dreaming* is a story that examines political corruption, familial strife, and the very notion of the American dream—all while asking what it really means to weather a storm.

I wrote *Olga Dies Dreaming* because I wanted more people to care about the colonial situation in Puerto Rico. I thought I could create a smart, fun, emotional romantic comedy that sort of “Trojan horses” some of this country’s difficult and widely unknown history. With that, I wanted to bring Latinidad into a working girl struggling with her happiness and her economics in New York City, that speaks to a more contemporary situation for many next-generation Latinx. Most of all, I wanted to write a novel that could be read on the subway, schlepped up and down the city!



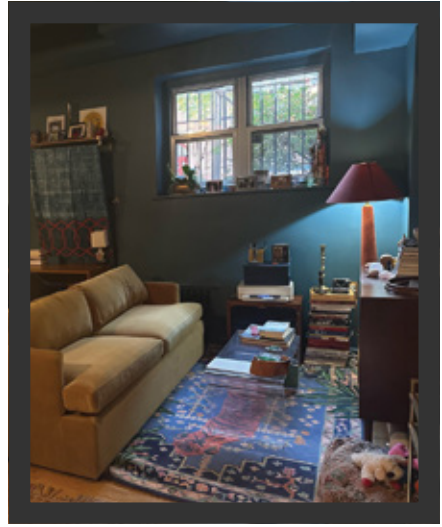
Photo credit: Mayra Castillo



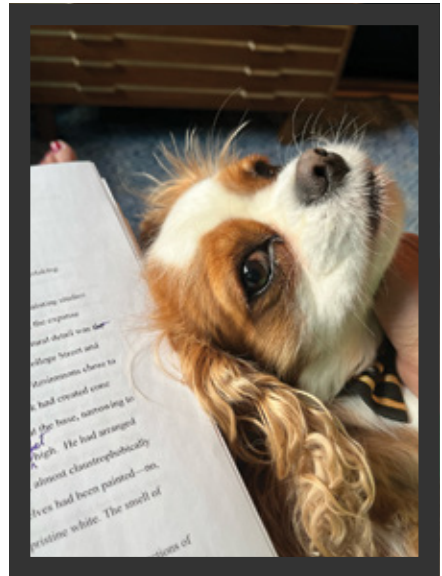
I usually wake up at the crack of dawn and go. When I'm really in the midst of writing a novel—after researching via reading other books, newspapers, and magazines of the time, etc.—I won't work on anything else but the novel for as extended amounts of time as I can.

I'll hole up for a month and write for 10 or 12 hours a day, then go about the rest of life until I can get away from things for another month. I can't do it with distraction because I need to be in the world of the character. Then, I tend to reread my drafts a few times, including out loud for rhythm and tone, and at some point I share them with peers to get their initial thoughts.

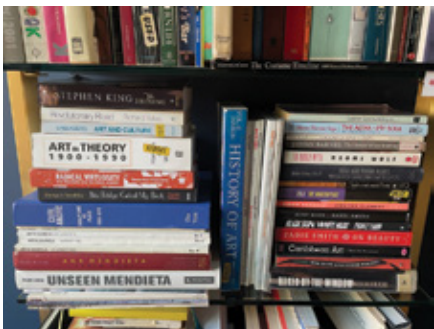
What's really essential for authenticity is that I hone in on my characters' emotional honesty, and figure out how to make readers feel all the rawness and contradictions through each page.



My workspace in Brooklyn.



My faithful companion, Hectah.



Influences and inspiration.



Claire Jiménez
Staten Island Stories

2019 Hornblower Award Winner

As I wrote *Staten Island Stories*, I was inspired by the form of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. Like Chaucer's characters, mine are constantly in motion. I think that's true for many people living in New York City. But for Staten Islanders working in other boroughs, this is especially important. Often our commutes require the boat, the bus, and the train. I spent most of my life living and working in New York, and so much of my experiences have been shaped by that movement. It seemed that any collection exploring Staten Island would have to consider our

connection with the water and the ferry and how that shapes life inside the island.

Chaucer's pilgrims are traveling towards a holy shrine, while mine are just trying to get to work on time. But in this collection, I try to show how the stakes are just as high. I also learned so much about voice on those long commutes, listening to people talk on the boat or the bus and how their thoughts about love, work, race, and class manifested in everyday conversations with friends, bosses, or lovers. Those long trips to the city provided me with some of the best lessons on dialogue.



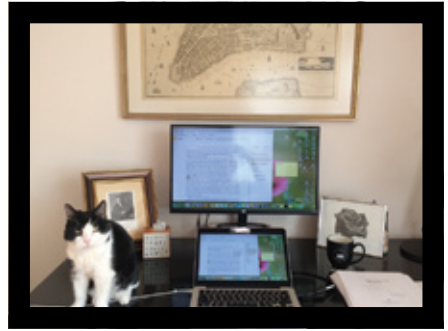
Victoria Johnson
**American Eden: David
Hosack, Botany, and
Medicine in the Garden
of the Early Republic**

2018 Winner

I am in love with New York City and its secret layers of history. While reading a book about the New York Botanical Garden, I stumbled across a surprising fact that captivated me. The first public botanical garden in the United States was founded on Manhattan farmland in 1801, and the site of that garden is now Rockefeller Center. In that moment, I became completely consumed with trying to uncover the story of that first garden and how it ended up becoming home to Rockefeller Center, one of the most iconic urban spaces on the planet.

I had no idea what I was getting into. I ended up working in more than 30 archives (including the New York Society Library!) and writing my first biography—about David Hosack, the doctor and botanist who founded the garden in the Early Republic.

I do up to a year of research when I'm preparing a book proposal, and when that's done and the book is under contract, I loop back to the beginning of the story and go deeper, developing the narrative as I tack back and forth between more research and writing. My best writing happens when it's the first thing I do in the day, before the mental noise of my non-book responsibilities gets going. If I'm lucky and have an entire day to work on my book, I can write happily for hour after hour. It feels as though I've stepped outside the normal flow of time. I especially love writing on weekends, when the hubbub of the high-rise apartment building where I live quiets down. I experience a deep peace that allows me to disappear into the world I'm trying to conjure on the page.



From the copyediting stage of *American Eden*.

My choice is a photograph of two dried specimens of a wild grass that was collected in 1806 on what is now the site of Rockefeller Center. The specimen on the right in the photograph is labeled and dated in David Hosack's handwriting. These specimens are part of the vast holdings of the Steere Herbarium at the New York Botanical Garden. I find it deeply moving that, thanks to the work of generations of botanists and archivists, we can see some of the actual plants that were growing on the island more two hundred years ago.

Maira Kalman

***Fireboat: The Heroic
Adventures of the John
J. Harvey***

2002 Winner

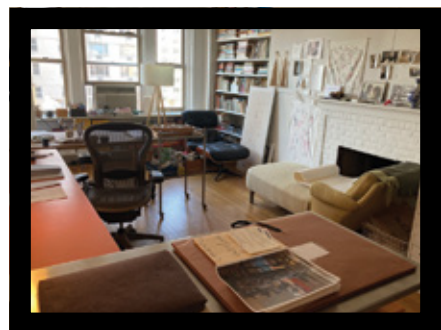
The John J. Harvey fireboat was the largest, fastest, shiniest fireboat of its time, but by 1995, the city didn't need old fireboats anymore. So the Harvey retired, until a group of friends decided to save it from the scrap heap. Then, on September 11, 2001, a call came from the fire department, asking for the Harvey's help.



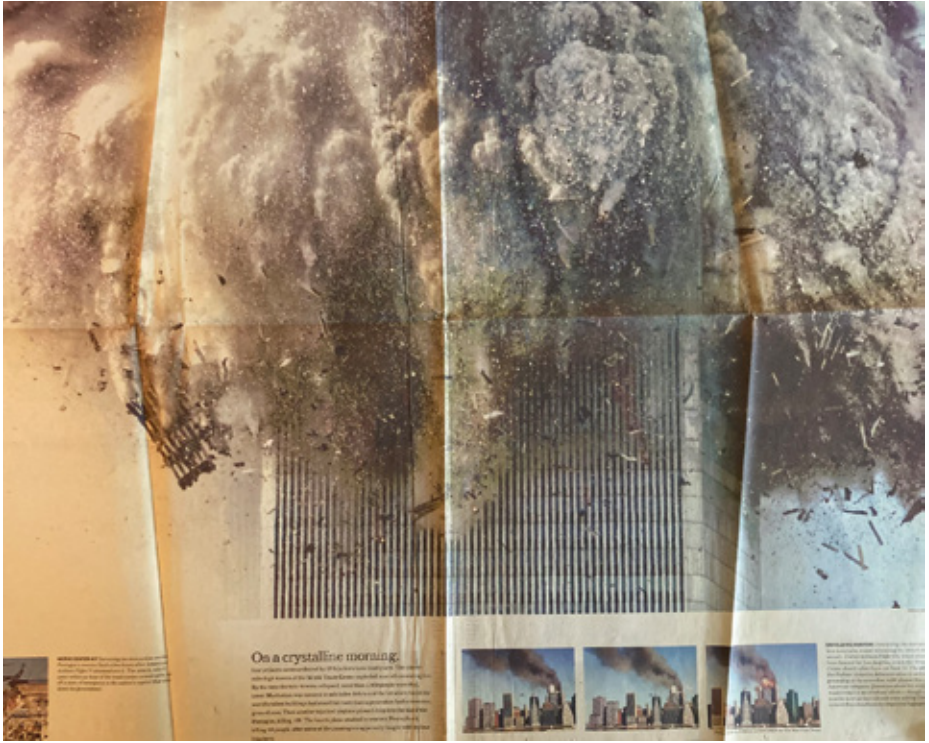
Photo credit: Kimisa H.

I wake up very early. First there is a coffee and reading of the obits in the paper. Then a walk. By the time I am back home, I have many ideas worked out.

Along the way, I could stop in a cafe and write. Or sit on a bench and write. I wrote most of *Fireboat* on the subway.



I can write anywhere. I photograph during the day. And sketch all the time. But my studio is the only place I can paint. It is a quiet space where I can think. And not think, which is even better.



My friend Florent Morellet was one of the boat's owners. He sat me down and told me the story and insisted I should do a book about it.

At first I was reluctant to do it. I was devastated, as everyone was. But Florent did not relent, and I decided it could be a love letter to NYC and to the heroism of the people of the John J. Harvey.

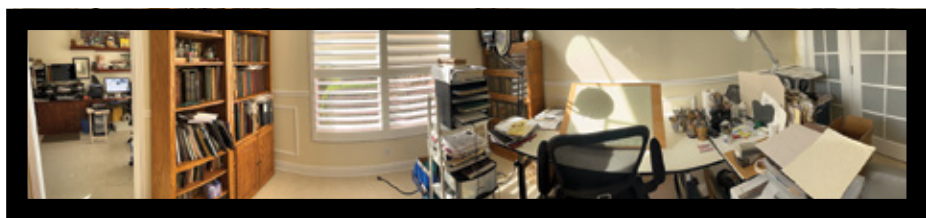
The one image I found in my folder was the essence of sorrow and terror. I cut this photo out of *The New York Times*. I was crying as I painted the image for the book

Martin Lemelman

Two Cents Plain: My Brooklyn Boyhood

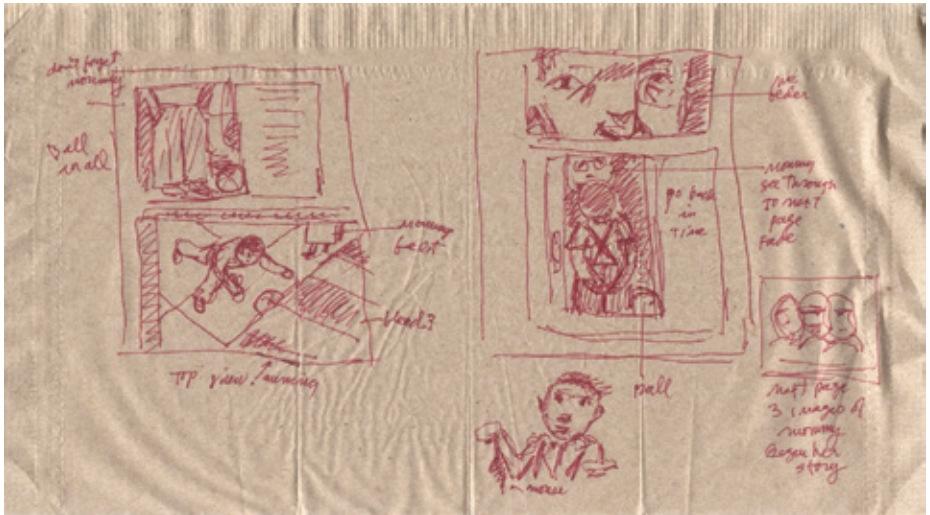
2010 Winner

Two Cents Plain collects the memories and artifacts of Martin Lemelman's childhood in Brooklyn during the 1950s and 60s as the neighborhood and much of the city moved into a period of deep decline. The son of Holocaust survivors, Martin pieces together the fragments of his past in an effort to come to terms with early years marked by struggle both in and outside of the home.



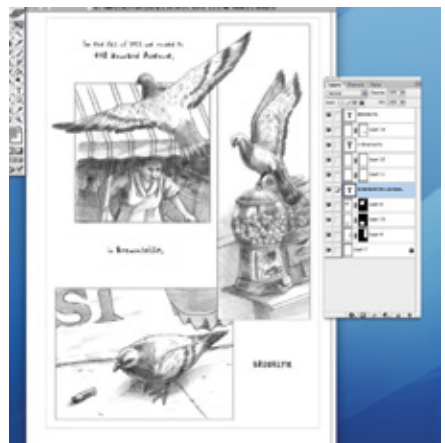
Most days, I'm at my drawing table or computer from 9 am until 12.30 pm. I usually begin and end each day in my garden. Being outside and active in nature is where the ideas marinate. The truth is, I'm writing and drawing even when I'm not physically writing and drawing.

I always keep a notebook to jot down dialogue or scenes that come to me while I'm out. I even have a notebook on my night table just in case I get an idea in the middle of the night. This happens more than you'd think!



My graphic memoir *Two Cents Plain: My Brooklyn Boyhood* is the story of growing up in back of Teddy's Candy Store, in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. My parents, Teddy and Goldie, were Holocaust survivors living in a neighborhood of survivors.

I have fewer than 20 photographs of my family and the store in the 50s and 60s. In fact, my mother saved more photographs of her life before World War II than I have of my childhood. The book—the sketches and the final art—is my attempt to re-create this lost world of Brownsville.



Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph

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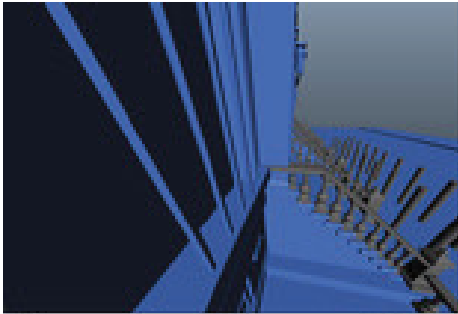
A black and white photograph of a large group of people, likely students and faculty, posing on the steps of a grand building. The group is arranged in many rows, with some people standing on the building's facade. The building has large windows and a central entrance. The caption below the photo reads: "© 1958 Art K..."

Jazz Day started with the famous photograph “Harlem 1958.” I loved the story of Art Kane, an inexperienced photographer, getting an assignment from a national magazine to take a big jazz photograph; the daunting task of rounding up jazz musicians (night people) for a shoot at 10 am; and the nervous anticipation over who would show up, if anyone, and if they did, how to fit them all into a picture. What was the scene like? How did those children end up being in the foreground?

I started writing poems about the events of the day and the personalities of a few of the musicians. I listened to a lot of

music—recordings made by many of the 57 musicians in the photo—so that I had the sounds they created in my head. At this point, I had no idea how the poems could become a book.

I like to use 5-by-8-inch Moleskin notebooks, the ones covered in brown kraft paper, because they are portable and don’t feel precious. My process was to start a poem in bits, in pencil in the notebooks, then create a Word document on the laptop, revise and revise, print and paste the almost-poem into the book, revise, go back to the laptop, and so on, back and forth.



Willie Perdomo

The Crazy Bunch

2019 Winner

In *The Crazy Bunch*, Willie Perdomo returns to East Harlem with a kaleidoscopic portrait of a “crew” coming of age at the beginning of the 1990s. His vivid poetry re-creates a weekend in which surviving members recall a series of tragic events when “we all tried to fly, but only one of us succeeded.”

I think the poems in *The Crazy Bunch* wrote me, which is to say that I was just a medium for a collective memory. Writing *The Crazy Bunch* was like trying to write a letter from a burning building, attending a baptism, and being sanctified at a breakdancing battle for saints.



My study in Exeter, New Hampshire, November 2024.



I teach full-time, so I have to carve out specific times to write. After my wellness routine, I start my morning with a cup of Bustelo and a 30-minute notebook entry before I head to work. Because I have ventured into writing plays, I record my dreams (if I can remember them), play with dialogue, and listen for what the scratching might reveal. During the day, I take a walk after lunch to think about what I wrote that morning and associate where

necessary. On a Friday or Saturday night, I might have a Roku gin martini or Hibiki on the rocks, and transcribe my notes while listening to music. Every book should have a soundtrack, and I like to dance while I write. I have no set times to write until summer break, when I try to approach writing like a full-time job.



Prudence Pfeiffer
***The Slip: The New York
Street That Changed
American Art Forever***

2023 Winner

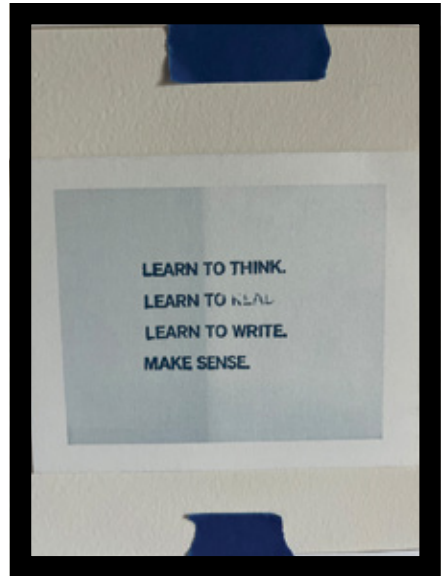
One of the joys of being an art historian writing a book about how a three-block street shaped a group of artists, and how those artists in turn shape a place forever, is learning about things far outside your wheelhouse.

I looked at a lot of art inspired by and made from the wreckage of the city's many former lives, but I also read nineteenth-century police blotters and elevated train accident reports and treatises on sailmaking lofts converted into tent production during the Civil War. I read journals and sketchbooks and letters and maps and hardware store receipts and lists of supplies, and of course books by legends who've come before me in describing a particular corner of New York, including Robert Caro, Lucy Sante, and Patti Smith.

My three children in a photo taken the day my book came out. I was pregnant with my oldest daughter when I started working on the book, so their lives measure both the challenges to, and reasons for, writing. Because I had three kids during *The Slip*'s own gestation, I think about that life just off the page that isn't visible in the book but of course is a part of it (and a quiet theme of the book too, in terms of everyday life intersecting with one's creative life): kids playing or having meltdowns at my feet; nursing breaks; paragraphs interrupted by bouts of sickness.



With three young children and a demanding full-time job, I write whenever and wherever I can. But my happy place is very early in the morning before anyone else is awake, when the light is just starting to break. I have a desk in a tiny room that used to be my grandmother's sewing room and is basically a closet. She too was juggling lots of kids and a career outside of writing, and I try to channel her spirit. Next to my desk is a bookshelf my father built, a lot of index cards, and blue painter's tape. This John Baldessari artwork is taped to the wall as a reminder while writing.



Hugh Ryan

When Brooklyn Was Queer

2019 Winner

I wrote *When Brooklyn Was Queer* for purely selfish reasons—because I knew nothing about the queer history of the borough I lived in and loved, and despite pestering people around me for years, I couldn't find any easy answers.

The more I stared my own ignorance in the face, the more aware I became that I shared this ignorance with a lot of other people, and the more I wanted to do something about it. In 2012, I imagined curating a small exhibit at the Navy Yard, but even after that fell apart, the idea kept growing and growing. *When Brooklyn Was Queer* became an excuse to ask and answer the hundreds of questions I'd been privately ruminating for years.

I'm a morning writer. I do my best work before I read or listen to anyone else, and get their rhythms stuck in my head. For a longer project—like *When Brooklyn Was Queer*—I usually spend three or four years researching before I ever put pen to paper. I have to be able to see the whole thing before I know where to begin.



My workspace is a very messy tiny room in my apartment!



Page mock-up.

Benjamin Swett **New York City of Trees**

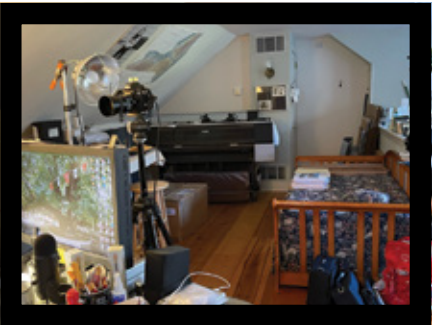
2013 Winner

New York City, once a lush and verdant group of forested islands, is still home to a rich diversity of tree species, each with a story to tell about the city's past. Through stunning color photographs, personal narratives, and historical observations, Benjamin Swett introduces readers to a select few of the thousands of trees that thrive in the five boroughs.

By looking closely at 55 trees growing around the five boroughs of New York City, trying to capture both the physical presence of the trees in the local landscape and some of the history of the trees in relation to the places where they grew, I tried to provide a different kind of picture of New York as an ecosystem of diverse trees growing among buildings and streets, on an island where people have lived for millennia.



Contact sheet with different photos.



The book argues for a different image of New York City than that embodied in Alfred Stieglitz’s famous “City of Ambition” photograph—one that sees New York as a place to live, not just to “make it.” The book is organized in the form of a forest in which the reader is meant to get lost and wander around.



Ly Tran

House of Sticks

2021 Hornblower Award Winner

I was an avid reader when I was a little girl. I read to stave off the loneliness I often felt given my circumstances as an immigrant: impoverished, disabled, othered. But as much as I scoured the pages for characters who looked like me, who had similar struggles, I could never find her. So when I wrote *House of Sticks*, I thought of a little girl out there in this vast world, looking for herself in the pages of literature, and I hoped that she might find herself in mine.

I'm a total night owl when it comes to my creative process. Or rather, I can only work when it seems the world around me is asleep. Like a lunatic, I work best between the hours of 1 am and 6 am. There's a neat little chart in a book called *Daily Rituals* that compiles the daily routines of renowned artists such as Milton, Tchaikovsky, Murakami, Angelou. Naturally, I wanted to see whose schedule aligned most with mine, and to my surprise, of the 25 or so artists listed, Kafka was the only true night owl, beginning his creative work from 11 pm and ending at 5 am!



A few photos of the spaces I occupied in two residencies: a beautiful wood cabin at the MacDowell Residency in Peterborough, NH and a little glass house on a pond at Art Omi in Ghent, NY. Thank goodness for the generosity of artist fellowships!



**WINNERS OF THE
NEW YORK CITY
BOOK AWARD**

1995

Kenneth T. Jackson | *The Encyclopedia of New York City*

1996

Ellen M. Snyder-Grenier | *Brooklyn! An Illustrated History*

1997

Paul E. Cohen and Robert T. Augustyn | *Manhattan in Maps: 1527-1995*
Susan Tunick and Peter Mauss | *Terra-Cotta Skyline*

1998

Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace | *Gotham*
Maureen E. Montgomery | *Displaying Women*
Allon Schoener | *New York: An Illustrated History of the People*
Phillip Lopate | *Writing New York*

1999

Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman | *New York 1880*
Jean Strouse | *Morgan: American Financier*
Byron Falk Jr. and Valerie Falk | *Personal Name Index to the New York Times*
David Weisner | *Sector 7*
Frank McCourt | *'Tis: A Memoir*

2000

Norval White and Elliot Willensky | *AIA Guide to New York City*
Michael Chabon | *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*
Lloyd Ultan and Barbara Unger | *Bronx Accent*

2001

Tyler Anbinder | *Five Points*
Robert Burleigh and Marek Los | *Lookin' for Bird in the Big City*
Diana DiZerega Wall and Anne-Marie E. Cantwell | *Unearthing Gotham*

2002

Charles Denson | *Coney Island: Lost and Found*
William Langewiesche | *American Ground*
Maira Kalman | *Fireboat: The Heroic Adventures of the John J. Harvey*
Michael Henry Adams and Paul Rocheleau | *Harlem Lost and Found*
Susan L. Klaus | *A Modern Arcadia*
ProQuest Company | *ProQuest—New York Times*

2003

David Von Drehle | *Triangle: The Fire That Changed America*
Jon Boorstin | *The Newsboys' Lodging-House*
Christopher Gray and Suzanne Braley | *New York Streetscapes*
Stanley Greenberg | *Waterworks*

2004

Edward Conlon | *Blue Blood*
David W. Dunlap | *From Abyssinian to Zion*
Russell Shorto | *The Island at the Center of the World*
Miriam Cohen and Thomas F. Yezerski | *Mimmy and Sophie: All Around the Town*
The New York Transit Museum | *Subway Style*
Phillip Lopate | *Waterfront: A Journey around Manhattan*
Arcadia Publishers | *The Images of America Series*

2005

Jill Lepore | *New York Burning*
Donald Albrecht | *The Mythic City*
Steven G. Kellman | *Redemption: The Life of Henry Roth*

2006

Andrew Scott Dolkart | *Biography of a Tenement House in New York City*
Jewel Stern and John A. Stuart | *Ely Jacques Kahn, Architect*
Rebecca Zurier | *Picturing the City*

2007

Michael Lorenzini and Kevin Moore | *New York Rises*
D. Graham Burnett | *Trying Leviathan*

2008

Gail Fenske | *The Skyscraper and the City*

2009

Constance Rosenblum | *Boulevard of Dreams*
Kathleen Eagen Johnson | *The Hudson-Fulton Celebration*
Black Dog Publishing | *Mapping New York*
Ayala Fader | *Mitzvah Girls*
Andrew Scott Dolkart | *The Row House Reborn*

2010

Thelma Golden | *Harlem: A Century in Images*
Martin Lemelman | *Two Cents Plain: My Brooklyn Boyhood*
Peter Eisenstadt | *Rochdale Village*

2011

Carla L. Peterson | *Black Gotham*
Teju Cole | *Open City: A Novel*
* Suleiman Osman | *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn*

2012

James T. Murray and Karla L. Murray | *New York Nights*
Joe McKendry | *One Times Square*
* Alex Gilvarry | *From the Memoirs of a Non-Enemy Combatant*

2013

Phyllis Lambert | *Building Seagram*
Paul Collins | *Duel with the Devil*
Benjamin Swett | *New York City of Trees*
* Matt Apuzzo and Adam Goldman | *Enemies Within*

2014

Ted Steinberg | *Gotham Unbound*
Thomas Beller | *J.D. Salinger: The Escape Artist*
Atticus Lish | *Preparation for the Next Life*
* Catherine McNeur | *Taming Manhattan*
Peter Pennoyer, Anne Walker, and Jonathan Wallen | *New York architecture series*

2015

Robin Jaffee Frank | *Coney Island*
Shane White | *Prince of Darkness*
Gerard Koeppel | *City on a Grid*
Arthur Browne | *One Righteous Man*
* Tom Glynn | *Reading Publics*
Vivian Gornick | *Special Citation of Merit*
Roger Angell | *Special Citation of Merit*

2016

Tyler Anbinder | *City of Dreams:*
David Oshinsky | *Bellevue:*
Roxane Orgill and Francis Vallejo | *Jazz Day*
* Corey Pegues | *Once a Cop*

2017

Mike Wallace | *Greater Gotham*

Roz Chast | *Going Into Town*
Francis Spufford | *Golden Hill*
Anthony W. Robins | *New York Art Deco*
Jennifer Egan | *Manhattan Beach*
* Lisa Ko | *The Leavers*

2018

Victoria Johnson | *American Eden*
Stephen L. Carter | *Invisible*
Philip Ashforth Coppola, Ezra Bookman,
and Jeremy Workman | *One-Track
Mind*
Elizabeth Acevedo | *The Poet X*
Karina Yan Glaser | *The Vanderbeekers
and the Hidden Garden*
* Albert Samaha | *Never Ran, Never Will*

2019

Cynthia Brenwall | *The Central Park*
Matthew Goodman | *The City Game*
Willie Perdomo | *The Crazy Bunch*
Hugh Ryan | *When Brooklyn was Queer*
* Claire Jimenez | *Staten Island Stories*

2020

Johanna Fernández | *The Young Lords*
Bill Hayes | *How We Live Now*
N.K. Jemisin | *The City We Became*
James McBride | *Deacon King Kong*
Jonathan Daniel Wells | *The Kidnapping
Club*
* Stephen Haff | *Kid Quixotes*
* Sarah Sierra and Stephen Haff |
Becoming Kid Quixote

2021

Debby Applegate | *Madam: The
Biography of Polly Adler*
Colson Whitehead | *Harlem Shuffle*
C.G. Esperanza | *Boogie Boogie Y'all*
Brian Merlis and Clarence Taylor |
Historic Black Brooklyn
* Ly Tran | *House of Sticks*

2022

* Sidik Fofana | *Stories from the
Tenants Downstairs*
Jarrod Shanahan | *Captives: How Rikers
Island Took New York City Hostage*
Shanté Paradigm Smalls | *Hip Hop
Heresies: Queer Aesthetics in New
York City*
John Wood Sweet | *The Sewing Girl's
Tale*
Xochitl Gonzalez | *Olga Dies Dreaming*

2023

* Aisha Abdel Gawad | *Between Two
Moons: A Novel*
Jonathan Lethem | *Brooklyn Crime
Novel*
Prudence Peiffer | *The Slip: The New
York City Street That Changed
American Art Forever*
Jesse Rifkin | *This Must Be the Place:
Music, Community, and Vanished
Spaces in New York City*
Alexander Stille | *The Sullivans: Sex,
Psychotherapy, and the Wild Life of
an American Commune*

* Hornblower Award

