



# [DOC] Unpacking My Library: Architects And Their Books

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**Unpacking My Library**-Marcel Proust 2017-01-01 A captivating tour of the bookshelves of ten leading artists, exploring the intricate connections between reading, artistic practice, and identity Taking its inspiration from Walter Benjamin's seminal 1931 essay, the Unpacking My Library series charts a spirited exploration of the reading and book collecting practices of today's leading thinkers. Artists and Their Books showcases the personal libraries of ten important contemporary artists based in the United States (Mark Dion, Theaster Gates, Wangechi Mutu, Ed Ruscha, and Carrie Mae Weems), Canada (Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller), and the United Kingdom (Billy Childish, Tracey Emin, and Martin Parr). Through engaging interviews, the artists discuss the necessity of reading and the meaning of books in their lives and careers. This is a book about books, but it even more importantly highlights the role of literature in shaping an artist's self-presentation and persona. Photographs of each artist's bookshelves present an evocative glimpse of personal taste, of well-loved and rare volumes, and of the individual touches that make a bookshelf one's own. The interviews are accompanied by "top ten" reading lists assembled by each artist, an introduction by Jo Steffens, and Marcel Proust's seminal essay "On Reading."

**Unpacking My Library**-Leah Price 2011-11-29 As words and stories are increasingly disseminated through digital means, the significance of the book as object—whether pristine collectible or battered relic—is growing as well. Unpacking My Library: Writers and Their Books spotlights the personal libraries of thirteen favorite novelists who share their collections with readers. Stunning photographs provide full views of the libraries and close-ups of individual volumes: first editions, worn textbooks, pristine hardcovers, and childhood companions. In her introduction, Leah Price muses on the history and future of the bookshelf, asking what books can tell us about their owners and what readers can tell us about their collections. Supplementing the photographs are Price's interviews with each author, which probe the relation of writing to reading, collecting, and arranging books. Each writer provides a list of top ten favorite titles, offering unique personal histories along with suggestions for every bibliophile. Unpacking My Library: Writers and Their Books features the personal libraries of Alison Bechdel, Stephen Carter, Junot Díaz, Rebecca Goldstein and Steven Pinker, Lev Grossman and Sophie Gee, Jonathan Lethem, Claire Messud and James Wood, Philip Pullman, Gary Shteyngart, and Edmund White.

**Aldo Rossi**-Aldo Rossi 1993 Admired as much for his artistic ability as for his architectural skill, Rossi has exhibited at galleries around the world.

**Packing My Library**-Alberto Manguel 2018-03-20 A best-selling author and world-renowned bibliophile meditates on his vast personal library and champions the vital role of all libraries In June 2015 Alberto Manguel prepared to leave his centuries-old village home in France's Loire Valley and reestablish himself in a one-bedroom apartment on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Packing up his enormous, 35,000+ volume personal library, choosing which books to keep, store, or cast out, Manguel found himself in deep reverie on the nature of relationships between books and readers, books and collectors, order and disorder, memory and reading. In this poignant and personal reevaluation of his life as a reader, the author illuminates the highly personal art of reading and affirms the vital role of public libraries. Manguel's musings range widely, from delightful reflections on the idiosyncrasies of book lovers to deeper analyses of historic and catastrophic book events, including the burning of ancient Alexandria's library and contemporary library lootings at the hands of ISIS. With insight and passion, the author underscores the universal centrality of books and their unique importance to a democratic, civilized, and engaged society.

**Challengers, Competition, and Reelection**-Jonathan S. Krasno 1997-02-01 Why do US Senators have a harder time winning re-election than members of the House of Representatives? This text argues that Senate challengers are more likely to be experienced politicians who wage intense, costly media campaigns than are those who take on House incumbents.

**Architecture in Austria : a Survey of the 20th Century**-Otto Kapfinger 1999

**The Discipline of Architecture**- 2001

**Frank Lloyd Wright**-Barry Bergdoll 2017 Published in conjunction with a major exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, this catalogue reveals new perspectives on the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, a designer so prolific and familiar as to nearly preclude critical reexamination. Structured as a series of inquiries into the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Archives, the book is a collection of scholarly explorations rather than an attempt to construct a master narrative. Each chapter centers on a key object from the archive that an invited author has "unpacked"-interpreting and contextualizing it, tracing its meanings and connections, and juxtaposing it with other works from the archive, from MoMA, or from outside collections. The publication aims to open up Wright's work to questions, interrogations, and debates, and to highlight interpretations by contemporary scholars, both established Wright experts and others considering this iconic figure from new and illuminating perspectives.

**A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time**-John Brinckerhoff Jackson 1994-01-01 J.B. Jackson, a pioneer in the field of landscape studies, here takes us on a tour of American landscapes past and present, showing how our surroundings reflect important changes in our culture. Because we live in urban and industrial environments that are constantly evolving, says Jackson, time and movement are increasingly important to us and place and permanence are less so. We no longer gain a feeling of community from where we live or where we assemble but from common work hours, habits, and customs. Jackson examines the new vernacular landscape of trailers, parking lots, trucks, loading docks, and suburban garages, which all reflect this emphasis on mobility and transience; he redefines roads as scenes of work and leisure and social intercourse--as places, rather than as means of getting to places; he argues that public parks are now primarily for children, older people, and nature lovers, while more mobile or gregarious people seek recreation in shopping malls, in the street, and in sports arenas; he traces the development of dwellings in New Mexico from prehistoric Pueblo villages to mobile homes; and he criticizes the tendency of some environmentalists to venerate nature instead of interacting with it and learning to share it with others in temporary ways. Written with his customary lucidity and elegance, this book reveals Jackson's passion for vernacular culture, his insights into a style of life that blurs the boundaries between work and leisure, between middle and working classes, and between public and private spaces.

**Unpacking the Boxes**-Donald Hall 2009-09-11 Donald Hall's remarkable life in poetry — a career capped by his appointment as U.S. poet laureate in 2006 — comes alive in this richly detailed, self-revealing memoir. Hall's invaluable record of the making of a poet begins with his childhood in Depression-era suburban Connecticut, where he first realized poetry was “secret, dangerous, wicked, and delicious,” and ends with what he calls “the planet of antiquity,” a time of life dramatically punctuated by his appointment as poet laureate of the United States. Hall writes eloquently of the poetry and books that moved and formed him as a child and young man, and of adolescent efforts at poetry writing — an endeavor he wryly describes as more hormonal than artistic. His painful formative days at Exeter, where he was sent like a naive lamb to a high WASP academic slaughter, are followed by a poetic self-liberation of sorts at Harvard. Here he rubs elbows with Frank O'Hara, John Ashbery, and Edward Gorey, and begins lifelong friendships with Robert Bly, Adrienne Rich, and George Plimpton. After Harvard, Hall is off to Oxford, where the high spirits and rampant poetry careerism of the postwar university scene are brilliantly captured. At eighty, Hall is as painstakingly honest about his failures and low points as a poet, writer, lover, and father as he is about his successes, making Unpacking the Boxes — his first book since being named poet laureate — both revelatory and tremendously poignant.

**Tastemaker**-Monica Penick 2017-01-01 Cover -- Half Title -- Title -- Copyright -- Contents -- Preface -- Prologue -- 1 Beginnings -- 2 Good Taste and Better Living -- 3 The Postwar House -- 4 The Pace Setter House -- 5 Climate Control -- 6 A New Look -- 7 The American Style -- 8 The Threat to the Next America -- 9 A New Alliance -- 10 The

Next American House -- 11 A New Regionalism -- 12 Which Way, America? -- 13 American Shibui -- 14 Catalyst -- Epilogue -- Abbreviations -- Notes -- Acknowledgments -- Index -- A -- B -- C -- D -- E -- F -- G -- H -- I -- J -- K -- L -- M -- N -- O -- P -- Q -- R -- S -- T -- U -- V -- W -- Y -- Z -- Illustration Credits

**The Meaning of Home**-Edwin Heathcote 2012-09-18 We are so familiar with the features of our homes, the myriad little decorative details, that we have forgotten how to see them. We might look at a church, read a book or watch a film and attempt to understand its symbolism and its references, but we rarely look at our homes in the same light. Yet from the most ordinary apartment to the most extravagant mansion, every home is a deep well of echoes. Windows to wardrobes, fireplaces to door knockers, Edwin Heathcote attempts to fathom the elements of our everyday domestic lives. The Meaning of Home explores how we build our houses on the souls of our ancestors: how ritual and symbolic elements transmute over time into practical features, and how often this symbolic charge ensures that those features last long after their practical uses are forgotten. After reading this scintillating book, home will never look quite the same again.

**What a Library Means to a Woman**-Sheila Liming 2020-04-28 Examining the personal library and the making of self When writer Edith Wharton died in 1937, without any children, her library of more than five thousand volumes was divided and subsequently sold. Decades later, it was reassembled and returned to The Mount, her historic Massachusetts estate. What a Library Means to a Woman examines personal libraries as technologies of self-creation in modern America, focusing on Wharton and her remarkable collection of books. Sheila Liming explores the connection between libraries and self-making in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American culture, from the 1860s to the 1930s. She tells the story of Wharton's library in concert with Wharton scholarship and treatises from this era concerning the wider fields of book history, material and print culture, and the histories (and pathologies) of collecting. Liming's study blends literary and historical analysis while engaging with modern discussions about gender, inheritance, and hoarding. It offers a review of the many meanings of a library collection, while reading one specific collection in light of its owner's literary celebrity. What a Library Means to a Woman was born from Liming's ongoing work digitizing the Wharton library collection. It ultimately argues for a multifaceted understanding of authorship by linking Wharton's literary persona to her library, which was, as she saw it, the site of her self-making.

**How Art Can Make You Happy**-Bridget Watson Payne 2017-05-02 Why is art magical? How can it make us happy? How Art Can Make You Happy offers the keys to unlocking a rich and rewarding source of joy in life. This easy, breezy handbook is full of insight that will help regular people begin a more inspiring and less stressful relationship with art. With tips on how to visit museums, how to talk about art at cocktail parties, and how to let art wake you up to the world around you, this little guide makes it possible for anyone to fall in love with art, whether for the first time or all over again.

**Illuminations**-Walter Benjamin 2019 Views from one of the most original cultural critics of the twentieth century, Walter Benjamin

**From Stone to Paper**-Chanchal B. Dadlani 2018-01-01 This groundbreaking volume examines how the Mughal Empire used architecture to refashion its identity and stage authority in the 18th century, as it struggled to maintain political power against both regional challenges and the encroaching British Empire.

**I Didn't Talk**-Beatriz Bracher 2018-07-31 The English-language debut of a master stylist: a compassionate but relentless novel about the long, dark harvest of Brazil's totalitarian rule A professor prepares to retire—Gustavo is set to move from Sao Paulo to the countryside, but it isn't the urban violence he's fleeing: what he fears most is the violence of his memory. But as he sorts out his papers, the ghosts arrive in full force. He was arrested in 1970 with his brother-in-law Armando: both were vicariously tortured. He was eventually released; Armando was killed. No one is certain that he didn't turn traitor: I didn't talk, he tells himself, yet guilt is his lifelong harvest. I Didn't Talk pits everyone against the protagonist—especially his own brother. The torture never ends, despite his bones having healed and his teeth having been replaced. And to make matters worse, certain details from his shattered memory don't quite add up... Beatriz Bracher depicts a life where the temperature is lower, there is no music, and much is out of view. I Didn't Talk's pariah's-eye-view of the forgotten “small” victims powerfully bears witness to their “internal exile.” I didn't talk, Gustavo tells himself; and as Bracher honors his endless pain, what burns this tour de force so indelibly in the reader's mind is her intensely controlled voice.

**The Future of Architecture in 100 Buildings**-Marc Kushner 2015-03-10 The founder of Architizer.com and practicing architect draws on his unique position at the crossroads of architecture and social media to highlight 100 important buildings that embody the future of architecture. We're asking more of architecture than ever before; the response will define our future. A pavilion made from paper. A building that eats smog. An inflatable concert hall. A research lab that can walk through snow. We're entering a new age in architecture—one where we expect our buildings to deliver far more than just shelter. We want buildings that inspire us while helping the environment; buildings that delight our senses while serving the needs of a community; buildings made possible both by new technology and repurposed materials. Like an architectural cabinet of wonders, this book collects the most innovative buildings of today and tomorrow. The buildings hail from all seven continents (to say nothing of other planets), offering a truly global perspective on what lies ahead. Each page captures the soaring confidence, the thoughtful intelligence, the space-age wonder, and at times the sheer whimsy of the world's most inspired buildings—and the questions they provoke: Can a building breathe? Can a skyscraper be built in a day? Can we 3D-print a house? Can we live on the moon? Filled with gorgeous imagery and witty insight, this book is an essential and delightful guide to the future being built around us—a future that matters more, and to more of us, than ever.

**London 3**-Bridget Cherry 2002-01-01 A comprehensive architectural guide encompassing three centuries of metropolitan growth spanning an area from Georgian St Marylebone and the riverside terraces of Chelsea and Chiswick to Heathrow Airport and the outer fringes of Middlesex.

**Visionary Clients for New Architecture**-Joseph Rykwert 2000 This book sheds light on the tricky balance of power between the architect and the client, focusing on three visionaries who commissioned buildings which later turned into architectural icons of our century.

**Haunted Houses**-Corinne May Botz 2010 A follow-up to Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death profiles 80 public and private buildings the author investigated for possible paranormal activity, in an extensively photographed volume that is complemented by stories of unexplained occurrences.

**The Secret Art of Being a Grown-Up**-Bridget Watson Payne 2017-04-04 Hello, grown-ups of all ages! Eclectic, bite-sized bursts of advice meet quirky illustrations in this playful guide to feeling like the grown-up we all wanted to be as a kid. From thoughts on the best way to open a champagne bottle to a short list of the kitchen tools you actually need, these tips and tricks reveal secrets that are attainable, not intimidating. Anyone can make a life upgrade using these insights alongside the traits they already have—their wits, creativity, and enthusiasm. This engaging guide is the perfect gift for recent grads, first-apartment dwellers, and anyone who's ready to grow up, one step at a time.

**Walter Benjamin Reimagined**-Frances Cannon 2019-05-07 An illuminated tour of Walter Benjamin's ideas; a graphic translation; an encyclopedia of fragments. Walter Benjamin was a man of letters, an art critic, an essayist, a translator, a philosopher, a collector, and an urban flâneur. In his writings, he ambles, samples, and explores. With Walter Benjamin Reimagined, Frances Cannon offers a visual and literary response to Benjamin's work. With

detailed and dreamlike pen-and-ink drawings and hand-lettered text, Cannon gives readers an illuminated tour of Walter Benjamin's thoughts—a graphic translation, an encyclopedia of fragments. Cannon has not created a guide to Benjamin's greatest ideas—this is not an illustrated Walter Benjamin cheat sheet—but rather a beautifully rendered work of graphic literature. Cannon doesn't plod through thickets of minutiae; she strolls—a flâneuse herself—using Benjamin's words and her own drawings to construct a creative topography of Benjamin's writing. Phrases from “Unpacking My Library,” for example, are accompanied by images of flying papers, stray books, stacked books—books “not yet touched by the mild boredom of order”—and a bearded mage. Cannon takes the reader through different periods of Benjamin's writing: “Artifacts of Youth,” nostalgic musings on his childhood; “Fragments of a Critical Eye,” early writings, political observations, and cultural criticism; “Athenaeum of Imagination,” meditations on philosophy and psychology; “A Stroll through the Arcades,” Benjamin's unfinished magnum opus; and “A Collection of Dreams and Stories,” experimental and fantastical writings. With drawings and text, Cannon offers a phantasmagorical tribute to Benjamin's wandering eye.

**Bibliophile-** 2018-09-11 Perfect gift for book lovers, writers and your book club Book lovers rejoice! In this love letter to all things bookish, Jane Mount brings literary people, places, and things to life through her signature and vibrant illustrations. Readers of Jane Mount's Bibliophile will delight in: Touring the world's most beautiful bookstores Testing their knowledge of the written word with quizzes Finding their next great read in lovingly curated stacks of books Sampling the most famous fictional meals Peeking inside the workspaces of their favorite authors A source of endless inspiration, literary facts and recommendations: Bibliophile is pure bookish joy and sure to enchant book clubbers, English majors, poetry devotees, aspiring writers, and any and all who identify as book lovers. If you have read or own: I'd Rather Be Reading: The Delights and Dilemmas of the Reading Life; The Written World: The Power of Stories to Shape People, History, and Civilization; or How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines; then you will want to read and own Jane Mount's Bibliophile.

**Writing in Parts**-Kevin Mclaughlin 1995-01-01 Proposing a new interpretation of literature and mass culture in nineteenth-century Europe, this work focuses on works by Marx, Balzac, Dickens, Adorno, and Benjamin to explore in them a complex "mimetic" disposition toward commodification in the realm of culture. The aim of the book is twofold: to explicate in the work of Balzac and Dickens subtle and profoundly ambivalent attitudes toward the rapidly expanding mass culture of the 1830's in France and England, and to identify through this reading of the novelists a common mimetic element that has eluded a certain dialectical approach to art's overcoming of mass culture - an approach best exemplified in Horkheimer and Adorno's influential essay on the "culture industry."

**My Ideal Bookshelf**-Thessaly La Force 2012-11-13 The books that we choose to keep -- let alone read -- can say a lot about who we are and how we see ourselves. In My Ideal Bookshelf, dozens of leading cultural figures share the books that matter to them most; books that define their dreams and ambitions and in many cases helped them find their way in the world. Contributors include Malcolm Gladwell, Thomas Keller, Michael Chabon, Alice Waters, James Patterson, Maira Kalman, Judd Apatow, Chuck Klosterman, Miranda July, Alex Ross, Nancy Pearl, David Chang, Patti Smith, Jennifer Egan, and Dave Eggers, among many others. With colorful and endearingly hand-rendered images of book spines by Jane Mount, and first-person commentary from all the contributors, this is a perfect gift for avid readers, writers, and all who have known the influence of a great book.

**London Art Deco**-Arnold Schwartzman 2006 London Art Deco presents a visual catalogue of the capital's Art Deco legacy that was handed down to us from the florid 20s and the streamlined 30s. It features cinemas, theatres, hotels, department stores, Underground stations, factories, civic, corporate and residential buildings and shows the way in which the style influenced architects and designers working on every scale, from entire buildings to the finest decorative detail.

**Sanford Biggers**-Andrea Andersson 2020-04-03 “What I want to do is code-switch. To have there be layers of history and politics, but also this heady, arty stuff—inside jokes, black humor—that you might have to take a while to research if you want to really get it.”—Sanford Biggers Sanford Biggers (b. 1970) is a Harlem-based artist working in various media including painting, sculpture, video, and performance. He describes his practice as “code-switching”—mixing disparate elements to create layers of meaning—to account for his wide-ranging interests. This catalogue focuses on a series of repurposed quilts (many made in the 19th century) that embodies this interest in mixture. Informed by the significance of quilts to the Underground Railroad, Biggers transforms the quilts into new works using materials such as paint, tar, glitter, and charcoal to add his own layers of codes, whether they be historical, political, or purely artistic. Insightful essays survey Biggers’s career, his art in relation to music, and the history upon which the series draws. Also featured is a short yet powerful graphic essay by an award-winning illustrator that introduces the layered meanings inherent in the art and craft of quilting.

**Peter Zumthor, Works**-Peter Zumthor 1999-01-01 Peter Zumthor is possibly the most innovative European architect working today. His projects inspire enthusiasm with their exactitude, their poetry, and their radically independent aesthetics and vocabulary of form.

**Intimate Impressionism from the National Gallery of Art : Educator Resource Guide-** 2015 Educator resource guide for the exhibition. Contains background information, looking questions, and activity suggestions.

**Architecture and Empire in Jamaica**-Louis P. Nelson 2016-01-01 Through Creole houses and merchant stores to sugar fields and boiling houses, Jamaica played a leading role in the formation of both the early modern Atlantic world and the British Empire. Architecture and Empire in Jamaica offers the first scholarly analysis of Jamaican architecture in the long 18th century, spanning roughly from the Port Royal earthquake of 1692 to Emancipation in 1838. In this richly illustrated study, which includes hundreds of the author's own photographs and drawings, Louis P. Nelson examines surviving buildings and archival records to write a social history of architecture. Nelson begins with an overview of the architecture of the West African slave trade then moves to chapters framed around types of buildings and landscapes, including the Jamaican plantation landscape and fortified houses to the architecture of free blacks. He concludes with a consideration of Jamaican architecture in

Britain. By connecting the architecture of the Caribbean first to West Africa and then to Britain, Nelson traces the flow of capital and makes explicit the material, economic, and political networks around the Atlantic.

**La Biennale Di Venezia Short Guide-** 2018

**Framework Houses**-Bernd Becher 2001 A photographic collection, falling somewhere between topographical documentation and conceptual art, catalogs a village of houses built between 1870 and 1914 in the Siegen region of Germany, one of the oldest iron-producing areas of Europe.

**The Emperor's Children**-Claire Messud 2006-08-29 A bestselling, masterful novel about the intersections in the lives of three friends, now on the cusp of their thirties, making their way—and not—in New York City. There is beautiful, sophisticated Marina Thwaite—an “It” girl finishing her first book; the daughter of Murray Thwaite, celebrated intellectual and journalist—and her two closest friends from Brown, Danielle, a quietly appealing television producer, and Julius, a cash-strapped freelance critic. The delicious complications that arise among them become dangerous when Murray’s nephew, Frederick “Bootie” Tubb, an idealistic college dropout determined to make his mark, comes to town. As the skies darken, it is Bootie’s unexpected decisions—and their stunning, heartbreaking outcome—that will change each of their lives forever. A richly drawn, brilliantly observed novel of fate and fortune—of innocence and experience, seduction and self-invention; of ambition, including literary ambition; of glamour, disaster, and promise—The Emperor’s Children is a tour de force that brings to life a city, a generation, and the way we live in this moment. A New York Times Book Review Best Book of the Year

**Book Lust**-Nancy Pearl 2009-09-29 What to read next is every book lover's greatest dilemma. Nancy Pearl comes to the rescue with this wide-ranging and fun guide to the best reading new and old. Pearl, who inspired legions of litterateurs with "What If All (name the city) Read the Same Book," has devised reading lists that cater to every mood, occasion, and personality. These annotated lists cover such topics as mother-daughter relationships, science for nonscientists, mysteries of all stripes, African-American fiction from a female point of view, must-reads for kids, books on bicycling, "chick-lit," and many more. Pearl's enthusiasm and taste shine throughout.

**Architecture in Uniform**-Jean-Louis Cohen 2011 This fascinating book offers a new perspective on the architectural history of the Second World War, which in previous accounts has most often been viewed as a hiatus between peaceful periods of production. Jean-Louis Cohen contends instead that during the years between the bombings of Guernica in 1937 and of Hiroshima in 1945, specific advances were fundamental to the process of modernization and led to the definitive supremacy of modernism in architecture. Centering the discussion on ten main themes, the author investigates various aspects of architecture's mobilization in the war years, as well as the trajectories of individual architects. He analyzes architectural developments worldwide and takes into account each of the major participants in the war, including the United States, Japan, Great Britain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, and the Soviet Union. The book not only focuses on plans, buildings, and technological inventions but also examines the many types of visual representation used for war purposes, enhanced by a rich array of more than 300 illustrations.

**Biscuit in the Garden**-Alyssa Satin Capucilli 2013-02-19 For fans of Clifford and Spot, welcome everybody's favorite little yellow puppy, Biscuit, in an I Can Read adventure! Biscuit is excited to explore the garden. From the prettiest flowers to the smallest bugs, there's so much to see. And the little puppy even finds his own special way to add to the garden's bounty! Biscuit in the Garden, a My First I Can Read book, is carefully crafted using basic language, word repetition, sight words, and sweet illustrations—which means it's perfect for shared reading with emergent readers. Books at this level feature basic language, word repetition, and whimsical illustrations, ideal for sharing with emergent readers. The active, engaging stories have appealing plots and lovable characters, encouraging children to continue their reading journey.

**Domestic Architecture of H.T. Lindeberg**-Harrie Thomas Lindeberg 1940

**Babel No More**-Michael Erard 2012-01-10 A “fascinating” (The Economist) dive into the world of linguistics that is “part travelogue, part science lesson, part intellectual investigation...an entertaining, informative survey of some of the most fascinating polyglots of our time” (The New York Times Book Review). In Babel No More, Michael Erard, “a monolingual with benefits,” sets out on a quest to meet language superlearners and make sense of their mental powers. On the way he uncovers the secrets of historical figures like the nineteenth-century Italian cardinal Joseph Mezzofanti, who was said to speak seventy-two languages, as well as those of living language-superlearners such as Alexander Arguelles, a modern-day polyglot who knows dozens of languages and shows Erard the tricks of the trade to give him a dark glimpse into the life of obsessive language acquisition. With his ambitious examination of what language is, where it lives in the brain, and the cultural implications of polyglots’ pursuits, Erard explores the upper limits of our ability to learn and use languages and illuminates the intellectual potential in everyone. How do some people escape the curse of Babel—and what might the gods have demanded of them in return?

**Reflections**-Walter Benjamin 2019-02-19 “This book is just that: reflections of a highly polished mind that uncannily approximate the century’s fragments of shattered traditions.” — Time A companion volume to Illuminations, the first collection of Walter Benjamin's writings, Reflections presents a further sampling of his wide-ranging work. Here Benjamin evolves a theory of language as the medium of all creation, discusses theater and surrealism, reminisces about Berlin in the 1920s, recalls conversations with Bertolt Brecht, and provides travelogues of various cities, including Moscow under Stalin. Benjamin moves seamlessly from literary criticism to autobiography to philosophical-theological speculations, cementing his reputation as one of the greatest and most versatile writers of the twentieth century.