

# The New Criterion

## Features

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### Beach reading with Max

by [Max Watman](#)

On four novels that offer more than raised gold lettering.

By August, the summer sun has worn the sharpest minds dull. If summer were a weekend, August would be Sunday morning. Wake up late, and start drinking early, it's time for brunch.

Sleepy intoxication should infect one's reading habits as well. Esoteric tomes have no place in the tote bag. Leave them behind. You won't be able to understand what you read anyway—the sun will have cooked your brain—and those dense pages will clash with the soft zing of your mimosa.

What should you do? Consult the NY Times summer-reading book review? No, there you'll find nothing but the same old bosh they've been peddling throughout the year.

Go to the airport and grab the first book you see with raised gold lettering? Would that it were so.

These books should be excellent. In the abstract, they satisfy. They are without pretension, written to entertain, and they rela ...

**Max Watman** is the author of *Race Day: A Spot on the Rail with Max Watman* (Ivan. R. Dee).

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