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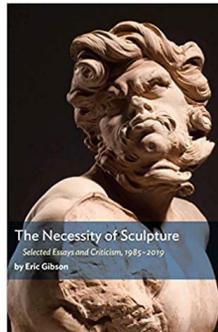
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The Necessity of Sculpture

Selected Essays and Criticism, 1985-2019

by Eric Gibson
Criterion Books
(paperback, 256 pages)



The Necessity of Sculpture brings together a selection of articles on sculpture and sculptors from Eric Gibson's nearly four-decade career as an art critic. It covers subjects as diverse as Mesopotamian cylinder seals, war memorials, and the art of the American West; stylistic periods such as the Hellenistic in Ancient Greece and Kamakura in medieval Japan; Michelangelo, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and other historical figures; modernists like Auguste Rodin, Pablo Picasso, and Alberto Giacometti; and contemporary artists including Richard Serra, Rachel Whiteread, and Jeff Koons. Organized chronologically by artist and period, this collection is as much a synoptic history of sculpture as it is an art chronicle. At the same time, it is an illuminating introduction to the subject for anyone coming to it for the first time.

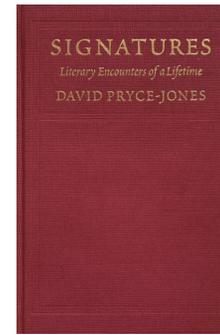
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Signatures

Literary Encounters of a Lifetime

by David Pryce-Jones
Encounter Books
(hardcover, 266 pages)

David Pryce-Jones weaves a vivid life story through vignettes of the many famous authors—friends, acquaintances, interview subjects—who gave him personally inscribed books. In *Signatures* he offers a window onto the lives and work of these extraordinary people.



As a child, Pryce-Jones spent time at Isaiah Berlin's house. As a teenager, lunching with Bernard Berenson at I Tatti, he prompted an outburst about Parisian anti-Semitism. W. H. Auden found him at Oxford to praise his competition poem, and he later visited Auden in his loft studio in Austria. Svetlana Alliluyeva reminisced about her father, Joseph Stalin, while staying at the Pryce-Jones house in Wales.

A highbrow salon gathered in the home of Arthur Koestler, who strove to be an English gentleman and who was with Pryce-Jones in Reykjavik covering the Fischer-Spassky chess match. Saul Bellow spoke of an old friend, now a *capofamiglia*, promising to deal with student rioters in 1968 Chicago. After swapping houses with Pryce-Jones one summer, Jessica Mitford insisted that he would have been a Communist in the 1930s. Robert Graves challenged a quotation from Virgil, and told the Queen that she was a descendant of Muhammad.

We meet V. S. Naipaul, a free spirit who understood that “the world is what it is.” Muriel Spark would come round for lunch with the Pryce-Joneses in Florence, enjoying conspiratorial stories about Italian politics. At his sepulchral home in Heidelberg, Albert Speer demonstrated his way of “admitting a little to deny a great deal.” In Isaac Singer we see generosity, candor, and mischievous humor.

This is only a small sampling of the remarkable personalities who have left their signatures on a fascinating life.

Value: \$20

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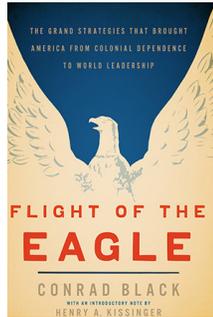
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Flight of the Eagle

The Grand Strategies That Brought America From Colonial Dependence To World Leadership

by Conrad Black
Encounter Books
(paperback, 760 pages)



Like an eagle, American colonists ascended from the gully of British dependence to the position of sovereign world power in a period of merely two centuries. Seizing territory in Canada and representation in Britain; expelling the French, and even their British forefathers, American leaders George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson paved their nation's way to independence. With the first buds of public relation techniques—of communication, dramatization, and propaganda—America flourished into a vision of freedom, of enterprise, and of unalienable human rights.

In *Flight of the Eagle*, Conrad Black provides a perspective on American history that is unprecedented. Through his analysis of the strategic development of the United States from 1754–1992, Black describes nine “phases” of the strategic rise of the nation, in which it progressed through grave challenges, civil and foreign wars, and secured a place for itself under the title of “Superpower.” Black discredits prevailing notions that our unrivaled status is the product of good geography, demographics, and good luck. Instead, he reveals and analyzes the specific strategic decisions of great statesmen through the ages that transformed the world as we know it and established America's place in it.

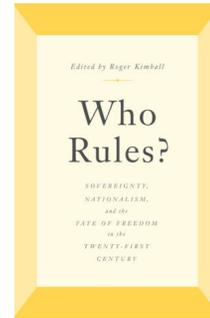
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Who Rules?

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Sovereignty, Nationalism, and the Fate of Freedom in the Twenty-First Century

edited by Roger Kimball
Encounter Books
(hardcover, 136 pages)



The populist phenomenon is often identified with the election of Donald Trump in November 2016. But the political, moral, and social realities for which Trump was a symbol both predated his candidacy and achieved independent fulfillment in countries as disparate as the United Kingdom, Hungary, and Brazil.

At the center of the populist challenge, this volume proposes, are two questions. The first revolves around the question of sovereignty: who governs a country? This question is at the center of all contemporary populist initiatives and has been posed with increasing urgency as the bureaucratic burden of what has come to be called the administrative state has intruded more and more forcefully upon the political and social life of Western democracies.

The second key question, one related to the issue of sovereignty, concerns what Lincoln called “public sentiment”: the widespread, almost taken-for-granted yet nonetheless palpable affirmation by a people of their national identity. The erosion of national sovereignty to which populism is a response has been accompanied by an erosion of that shared national consensus. Increasingly, the traditional pillars of this consensus—the binding forces of family, religion, civic duty, and patriotic filiation—have faltered before the blandishments of transnational progressivism.

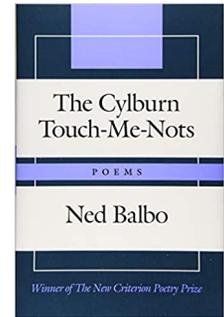
The debate sparked by these problems has turned on a number of high-profile issues which this volume seeks to address, including immigration, free trade, foreign policy, religious freedom, and the question of citizenship.

Value: \$22

The Cylburn Touch-Me-Nots

Winner of the nineteenth annual
New Criterion Poetry Prize.

by Ned Balbo
Criterion Books
(hardcover, 88 pages)



The Cylburn Touch-Me-Nots, Ned Balbo's sixth book of poems, inhabits that twilight, “the hour of dark and not-dark,” when the rising of the moon traces the arc of memory, and we ask ourselves, “What else are we given?” From a crow's orbit and a hawk's descent to desire, love, and heartbreak, these poems range widely in their search for the sacred, whether visible to the eye or buried, waiting to be discovered, like all that “the dark still holds.” The trove unearthed includes a sister lost to the author by adoption, speaking from a parallel life that could have been his own; an abandoned daughter who, in an earlier decade, dreams of distant Pluto; and the compass that once belonged to the poet's birth father, the mute artifact of lost connections. A conspiracy theorist casts doubt on the moon landing; Saint Joseph grieves at the loss of his son to the suffering God has planned; and a figure in Bosch's triptych, despite an afterlife of torment, fondly recalls the earthly delights he savored.

Through brief lyrics and longer narratives in a variety of forms, we see that time is “unforgiving/ yet not merciless,” and that even when we draw back like the touch-me-not plants whose leaves withdraw “like seawater parted by the wind” our need to touch and to be touched is universal.

Value: \$16