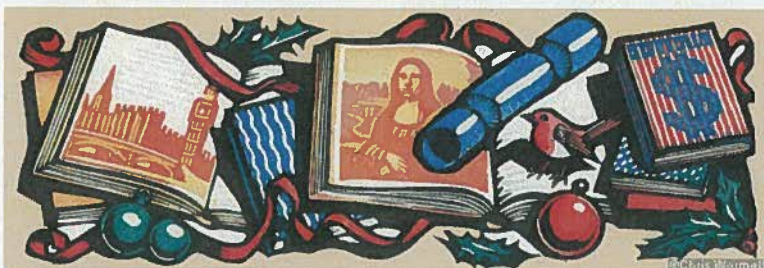


## FINANCIAL TIMES

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### Reader, I loved them

From cybercrime to the art of Willem de Kooning, FT writers and guests pick their non-fiction favourites of 2011



#### **B**usiness and economics

**Poor Economics:** *A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*, by Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, *PublicAffairs*, RRPE15.99

This guide to tackling poverty, based on field research, suggests ways of overcoming the inertia, ideology and ignorance that so often reduce the effectiveness of aid spending. Winner of the 2011 Financial Times and Goldman Sachs Business Book of the Year Award, this was described by the judges as of particular relevance for a world riven by inequality.

**Great by Choice:** *Uncertainty, Chaos, and Luck – Why Some Thrive Despite Them All*, by Jim Collins and Morten T Hansen, *Random House Business Books*, RRPE25

Collins, author of business classics such as *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... and Others Don't*, teams up with Hansen to analyse how some companies prosper even in the most turbulent conditions. Using compelling examples from mountaineering to corporate America, they prove it's not about luck but about meticulous preparation, relentless discipline and creativity based on hard evidence of what works.

**Triumph of the City:** *How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier and Happier*, by Edward Glaeser, *Macmillan*, RRPE9.99

Economist Glaeser places his bet on cities as our best hope, arguing that for all their faults, close-knit metropolitan communities – if properly run – are financially, environmentally and creatively the best mode of human cohabitation. Glaeser's study was a finalist for Business Book of the Year.

**The Shift:** *The Future of Work is Already Here*, by Lynda Gratton, *HarperCollins*, RRPE14.99

What does a fast-changing world hold for workers, confused about the way forward? By mapping out a series of possible futures, management professor Gratton offers clues about how technological and demographic shifts will alter how we go about our daily business in 2025, and how to cope with what's to come.

**Adapt:** *Why Success Always Starts with Failure*, by Tim Harford, *Little, Brown*, RRPE20

The FT columnist and Undercover Economist takes a timely look at failures and what they can teach us about how to solve complex problems, from Iraq to Broadway. It's a manifesto for trial and error versus traditional command-and-control leadership.

**The Fear Index**, by Robert Harris, *Hutchinson*, RRPE18.99

Not a business book in the classical sense, Harris's thriller is set at the sharp end of finance: inside the highly automated trading rooms of a Geneva-based hedge fund and the mind of its founding genius on the eve of the (real life) "flash crash" of May 2010. An enjoyable way to learn about the arcana of Cern, quants and algorithmic trading.

**Wilful Blindness:** *Why We Ignore the Obvious at Our Peril*, by Margaret Heffernan, *Simon & Schuster*, RRPE12.99

Heffernan presents a readable analysis of the way powerful and intelligent people deliberately set aside crucial facts and turn a blind eye to fatal errors and frauds. A polemic against the dangers of docility and “groupthink” in every walk of life, it was another finalist for Business Book of the Year.

**Steve Jobs: The Exclusive Biography**, by Walter Isaacson, *Little, Brown*, RRPE25

Rushed into print only weeks after the death of the Apple founder, Isaacson’s book sets out to be the definitive history of Jobs’s life and work. Richard Waters, reviewing it for the FT, said the exhaustive account “deserves the wide readership it will undoubtedly get”.

**Grand Pursuit: A Story of Economic Genius**, by Sylvia Nasar, *Fourth Estate*, RRPE25

The author of *A Beautiful Mind* repairs some of the post-crisis dents in traditional economics by writing about economic thinkers – from Dickens up to Amartya Sen – whose work has changed lives for the better. She tells some wonderful stories about their extraordinary lives along the way.

**Andrew Hill**, FT management editor

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## History

**The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean**, by David Abulafia, *Allen Lane*, RRPE30

An outstanding study of one of the world’s great centres of civilisation. Abulafia is a Cambridge University professor who specialises in the history of southern Europe in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Here he provides a panoramic survey of the Mediterranean from antiquity to the present day.

**Vanished Kingdoms: The History of Half-Forgotten Europe**, by Norman Davies, *Allen Lane*, RRPE30

Aragon, Burgundy, Galicia – European history is rich with states and regions that either never quite achieved independence or, if they did, failed to preserve it into modern times. Davies, who made his name as a historian of Poland, excels in challenging conventional notions of Europe’s past.

**Algeria: France’s Undeclared War**, by Martin Evans, *Oxford University Press*, RRPE20

Easily the best account of the 1954-1962 war of Algerian independence available in English. Evans, a prolific writer on Algerian history, sets new standards in weaving together the metropolitan French and north African threads of the story. Very timely on account of the Arab spring and – so far – Algeria’s failure to go the way of Egypt, Libya and Tunisia.

**The Pursuit of Italy: A History of a Land, its Regions and their Peoples**, by David Gilmour, *Allen Lane*, RRPE25

Published to coincide with the 150th anniversary of Italy’s creation as a nation state, Gilmour’s book is an elegantly written, reliable and up-to-date guide to Italian history for the general reader. He contends that the vibrancy of Italy’s regional identities makes up for the deficiencies of the Italian state.

**Being Soviet: Identity, Rumour and Everyday Life under Stalin 1939-1953**, by Timothy Johnston, *Oxford University Press*, RRPE55

An ambitious and thought-provoking study of the lives of ordinary Soviet people from the Nazi-Soviet pact to Stalin’s death. Johnston pays particular attention to how Soviet citizens reacted to official propaganda about the US and Britain, wartime allies who were transformed into cold war enemies after 1945.

**Heinrich Himmler: A Life**, by Peter Longerich, translated by Jeremy Noakes and Lesley Sharpe, *Oxford University Press*, RRPE25

Longerich, one of Germany’s leading authorities on the Third Reich and the Holocaust, provides an exhaustive account of the life and career of the mass murderer who was Hitler’s SS and police chief. First published in German in 2008, this is surely the final word on one of the Nazi regime’s most deeply sinister figures.

**Jerusalem: The Biography**, by Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Weidenfeld & Nicolson*, RRPE25

An epic and utterly absorbing study of a city whose modern religious, political and ethnic rivalries can be understood only in the context of its preceding 3,000 years of history. Montefiore writes with tremendous verve, sensitivity to historical controversy and an exceptional eye for the entertaining detail.

**Eisenhower 1956:** *The President's Year of Crisis: Suez and the Brink of War*, by David A Nichols, *Simon & Schuster*, *RRP£17.50*

Eisenhower's 1953-1961 presidency, sandwiched between Roosevelt and Truman before him and Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon afterwards, is at last receiving proper attention from historians. Nichols gives a compelling narrative of the year when Ike, recovering from a heart attack, battled for re-election as the Suez and Hungarian crises unfolded.

**Winter King:** *The Dawn of Tudor England*, by Thomas Penn, *Allen Lane*, *RRP£11.99*

Few historians have succeeded in capturing the personality of Henry VII, the secretive and suspicious king who usurped the English throne in 1485 and founded the Tudor dynasty. Penn pulls off this feat magnificently in a book that concentrates on the increasingly paranoid atmosphere of Henry's final years.

**Leningrad:** *Tragedy of a City under Siege 1941-1944*, by Anna Reid, *Bloomsbury*, *RRP£25*

A superbly researched account of the deadliest siege of the 20th century. The Nazis intended to starve Leningrad into submission, and they very nearly achieved their goal. At the same time the Soviet regime was brutal and incompetent. Reid tells her story with perceptiveness and compassion.

**With Our Backs to the Wall:** *Victory and Defeat in 1918*, by David Stevenson, *Allen Lane*, *RRP£30*

No praise is too high for this compelling study of the first world war's final year. Stevenson displays a masterly grasp of the war's interrelated military, political and economic themes as he explains how Britain, France and the US survived ferocious German onslaughts and marched to victory in November 1918.

**Tony Barber**, *FT Europe editor*



**Lionel Barber**,  
*Editor of the Financial Times*

Yes, it was written more than half a century ago and first published in the 1980s but by far the best book I have read this year is Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate* (Vintage). Set against the backdrop of the battle of Stalingrad, the novel grapples with the great ideological crimes of the 20th century. Time and again, the reader's despair is tempered by Grossman's deep sense of humanity. An extraordinary achievement. As for 2011, try *Poor Economics* by Professors Banerjee and Duflo of MIT, a radical but empirical examination of how to tackle poverty in the world's poorest nations. A worthy FT-Goldman Sachs Business Book of the Year.



**Henry A Kissinger**,  
*Former US Secretary of State*

John Lewis Gaddis's *George F Kennan: An American Life* (Penguin Press) is a profound analysis of the seminal foreign policy professional who developed the concepts on which American cold war policy came to be based but who was also the most substantial critic of the way his maxims were applied. A magisterial study of a complex figure who exemplified the basic American ambivalence over its role in the world.



**Lucy Kellaway**,  
*FT management columnist*

*At Last* (Picador) is the final book in Edward St Aubyn's brilliant trilogy of the dysfunctional Melrose family. Patrick's impossible mother is dead and her funeral is attended by what is left of the family and a few mad, deluded and bad hangers-on. The writing is as savagely sharp and the comedy as deliciously bleak as in the previous two volumes, but what makes *At Last* the finest of the three is that it is the wisest. After the sadism, paedophilia, drug addiction, lechery, betrayal and loneliness, something in the end has been learnt: there is something worth keeping after all.

## Politics

**Cables from Kabul:** *The Inside Story of the West's Afghanistan Campaign*, by Sherard Cowper-Coles, *Harper Collins*, *RRP£25*

A former UK ambassador in Afghanistan describes his transformation from loyal supporter of the war to hardened sceptic, in lucid and sometimes devastating prose. A primer for a campaign that may finally be coming to an uncertain and dangerous close.

**A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia**, by Aaron L Friedberg, *Norton*, RRPE20

A lucid and readable examination of the emerging power struggle between the US and China. Friedberg, an American academic and former White House official, is a hawk, and his book is particularly strong on the military aspects of the struggle.

**That Used To be Us: What Went Wrong with America – and How It Can Come Back**, by Thomas L Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum, *Little, Brown*, RRPE25

A prominent journalist and an academic argue that America has yet to respond properly to the rise of new, dynamic powers around the world. They lay out a plan for national regeneration that focuses on clean energy, debt reduction, education, IT and political reform.

**George F Kennan: An American Life**, by John Lewis Gaddis, *Penguin Press*, RRPE30

A biography of the man who devised America's strategy of "containment" to deal with the Soviet Union after 1945 also serves as a meditation on US foreign policy and the role of intellectuals in public life.

**DarkMarket: CyberThieves, CyberCops and You**, by Misha Glenny, *Bodley Head*, RRPE18

Cyberwarfare and cybercrime are emerging as the new preoccupations of security agencies around the world. Glenny is a very skilled journalist, who blends lively reportage with an acute analysis of the issues involved.

**The End of the West: The Once and Future Europe**, by David Marquand, *Princeton University Press*, RRPE16.95

Marquand's subject is slightly less sweeping than the title implies – but still vitally important. A veteran supporter of the European Union, his book stands back from the current crisis and argues that Europe suffers from outdated notions of global power and a complacent attitude to Asia – as well as the familiar "democratic deficit".

**Where China Meets India: Burma and the New Crossroads of Asia**, by Thant Myint-U, *Faber*, RRPE20

After many years of isolation and political oppression, Burma seems finally to be changing. Myint-U's book argues that its re-emergence into the modern world will have a transforming effect on the balance of power between Asia's two giants, China and India.

**Can Intervention Work?**, by Rory Stewart and Gerald Knaus, *Norton*, RRPE12.99

Written before the Libyan war, this book examines the case for "liberal interventionism". Stewart and Knaus are both practitioners and scholars – with particular experience in Afghanistan and Bosnia, respectively. The combined effect is pessimistic, without actually ruling out further interventions.

**The Return: Russia's Journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev**, by Daniel Triesman, *Simon & Schuster*, RRPE18.99

A history of post-communist Russia that takes a relatively calm and benign view of the evolution of the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The author argues that Russia, though troubled, remains a major global power. A book that is worth consulting as Vladimir Putin prepares to return to the presidency.

**Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China**, by Ezra F Vogel, *Harvard University Press*, RRPE29.95

A major biography of the man who may turn out to have done more to transform the world than any other leader of the 20th century. Deng's "market Leninism" has massively increased China's wealth, while repressing democracy. Vogel's portrait is sympathetic, although not uncritical.

**The Quest: Energy, Security and the Remaking of the Modern World**, by Daniel Yergin, *Allen Lane*, RRPE30

Yergin is the world's pre-eminent historian of the oil industry. This book is a successor to his much-acclaimed work *The Prize* and covers the past 20 years – including multiple upheavals in the Middle East and the emergence of climate change as a global issue.

**Gideon Rachman**, FT chief international affairs commentator and author of 'Zero-Sum Future' (*Simon & Schuster*)



## Science

**Reinventing Discovery: The New Era of Networked Science**, by Michael Nielsen, *Princeton University Press*, *RRP£16.95*

A powerful plea for scientists to work together in new ways, using the full power of the internet and information technology. Nielsen attacks the possessive attitude to data that still pervades some fields of research and shows how much scientists can gain through more open, collaborative working – which may involve members of the public as well as those inside the academic tent.

**The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence in History and Its Causes**, by Steven Pinker, *Allen Lane*, *RRP£17.99*

A hugely impressive effort to document and explain the increasingly peaceful nature of human civilisation. Pinker, a celebrated Harvard psychologist, shows how every form of violence, from rape and murder to animal cruelty, has been declining for centuries – at least on a per capita basis – and argues convincingly that the 20th century does not deserve its terrible reputation.

**The Tell-Tale Brain: Unlocking the Mystery of Human Nature**, by VS Ramachandran, *Heinemann*, *RRP£20*

The best of a recent wave of books by leading neuroscientists on the state of contemporary brain research. Ramachandran draws on case histories of people with neural abnormalities to demonstrate the amazing extent to which different areas of the brain interact and even take over each other's functions.

**Rat Island: Predators in Paradise and the World's Greatest Wildlife Rescue**, by William Stolzenburg, *Bloomsbury*, *RRP£12.99*

A gripping natural history book about the mass extinction of island species that followed the introduction of alien predators by human settlers. Stolzenburg focuses on the campaign that has gathered pace over the past 50 years to exterminate the invaders, particularly rats and mice, and give the remaining native animals and birds a chance of recovery.

*Clive Cookson, FT science editor*

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## Sport

**The Football Men: Up Close with the Giants of the Modern Game**, by Simon Kuper, *Simon & Schuster*, *RRP£16.99*

Many of the pieces in this collection have appeared before, in the FT and other publications, but taken together Kuper's insightful portraits of top players, such as Ibrahimovic and Iniesta, and managers, including Mourinho and Wenger, form a gossipy, emphatic gallery of modern masters.

**Racing Through the Dark: The Fall and Rise of David Millar**, by David Millar, *Orion*, *RRP£18.99*

In 2004, the British cyclist David Millar had a €1m annual contract with a leading French team and a playboy lifestyle to match. When he was busted for performance-enhancing drugs and ended up in jail, he knew he would lose it all. In this vivid first-person account Millar not only reveals his personal descent but the jaw-dropping scale on which doping took place.

**A Life Too Short: The Tragedy of Robert Enke**, by Ronald Reng, *Yellow Jersey*, *RRP£16.99*

The German goalkeeper Robert Enke represented his country and was good enough to be signed by Barcelona. So why did he lie down on a railway line in front of the Hamburg-to-Bremen express? Reng, a journalist and novelist who knew Enke, has written a clear-eyed account of the anxieties and depression that blighted a sportsman's existence.

**High Strung: Björn Borg, John McEnroe and the Untold Story of Tennis's Fiercest Rivalry**, by Stephen Tignor, *HarperCollins*, *RRP£14.99*

The baseline-hogging Borg and the attacking American McEnroe had very different styles on court but, as tennis writer Tignor's portrait reveals, the blond Swede was not carved from ice. Nor was his opponent always a crybaby. The contest between the two, however, was undoubtedly the real thing.

*Neil O'Sullivan, FT Life & Arts deputy editor*

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## Art

**The Steins Collect: Matisse, Picasso and the Parisian Avant-Garde**, edited by Janet Bishop, Cecile Debray and Rebecca Rabinow, Yale, RRPE50

No collectors had greater impact on modern art than the passionate, lofty, squabbling trio Leo, Gertrude and Michael Stein. With Michael's wife Sarah they provided pivotal support for Matisse and Picasso, and assembled a stellar array of works. This magnificent, revealing volume accompanies the important exhibition currently in Paris, moving to New York in 2012.

**The History of the Saatchi Gallery**, Booth-Clibborn Editions, RRPE85

A deluxe, updated edition, newly introduced by Edward Booth-Clibborn, of this century's most significant contemporary art book. So influential has Saatchi been as collector-curator that his taste became world taste; the 700 works illustrated, from among thousands he has owned since the 1970s, tell this mesmerising tale, amplified by incisive essays from Norman Rosenthal and scorner-turned-admirer Brian Sewell.

**Snapshot: Painters and Photography, Bonnard to Vuillard**, edited by Elizabeth W Easton, Yale, RRPE35

Photography and painting, that two-centuries-old love-hate relationship, endlessly fascinates and continually changes. This revelatory account of the post-impressionists' use of the Kodak, which is a catalogue to a show now in Amsterdam before touring America in 2012, is an essential contribution to photography's history.

**De Kooning: A Retrospective**, by John Elderfield, Thames & Hudson, RRPE48

My art book of the year: the stunning catalogue to the New York Museum of Modern Art's current Willem de Kooning retrospective is as beautiful and fresh as it is scholarly and comprehensive. The coup is to illustrate not only works in the exhibition but hundreds more, confirming de Kooning without rival as America's most important 20th-century artist.

**To Pieces**, by Henry Parland, translated by Dinah Cannell, Norvik Press, RRPE9.95

Russian-Swedish Henry Parland died of scarlet fever, aged 22. His wonderfully original novella, published in 1932 and now translated into English, is structured around images of photographic fragments, negatives and developing processes, and demonstrates intensely the impact of photography on European modernist culture. An erudite stocking filler.

**Degas and the Nude**, by George TM Shackelford and Xavier Rey, Thames & Hudson, RRPE42

Sexy, lush but serious: how the great French impressionist developed the nude from classical figure to everyday woman stepping out of the bath. An introductory interview with Lucian Freud is sparky; everything whets the appetite for a show of Degas nudes in Paris next spring.

**Art Nouveau**, by Norbert Wolf, Prestel, RRPE50

Tall, narrow, with an elegant linear design like that of the aesthetic it celebrates, this book is a gorgeous object, with top-quality reproductions. Norbert Wolf's commentary is provocative, broad and deep, illuminating links between artists, architects and designers as diverse as Munch and Mondrian, Gaudí and Gallé.

**The Art Museum**, Phaidon, RRPE125

Does size matter? Memento of our gluttonous age, publishing's answer to internet virtual art, although intellectually insubstantial, this monumental tome (weight: 12kg) astounds and amuses for sheer ambition, chutzpah and range: frescos to videos, Terracotta Army to Aztecs, Tang tombs to Jeff Koons – but no Cézanne "Mont Sainte-Victoire".

*Jackie Wullschlager, FT art critic*

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**Martin Wolf,**  
*FT chief economics commentator*

Over the past four decades, economists came to the view that markets were both rational and efficient. Neither belief is correct. In their thought-provoking *Beyond Mechanical Markets: Asset Price Swings, Risk, and the Role of the State* (Princeton), Roman Frydman and Michael Goldberg explain that our ideas about markets and the economy continually evolve and demonstrate how this can generate huge and destabilising swings in market prices. The book, like our knowledge, is imperfect. But it explores a topic of great importance and makes sensible policy suggestions.



**Esther Duflo,**  
*Professor of economics, MIT*

Aman Sethi's *A Free Man* (Random House India) is a beautiful work of journalism, sympathetic and graceful. The author follows, and progressively befriends, a homeless day labourer in Delhi. What starts as classic ethnography becomes a gripping story, and ends as a homage to a lost friend.



**Mohamed El-Erian,**  
*Chief executive and co-chief investment officer of Pimco*

Over the years, I have found Thomas Friedman's writings to be insightful and influential. In *That Used to be Us: What Went Wrong with America – and How it Can Come Back* (Little, Brown), Friedman and his co-author Michael Mandelbaum demonstrate their ability to deal with complex issues in a highly accessible and relevant manner. Thanks to their skilful linking of economics and politics, I now better understand the challenges America faces and what it will take to restore her dynamism, self-confidence and important global role.



**Chris Patten,**  
*Chairman of the BBC Trust and chancellor of Oxford University*

*Boomerang: The Meltdown Tour* (Allen Lane) by Michael Lewis is a funny if scary description of financial disaster tourism, through Iceland, Ireland, Greece, Germany and California. It would be even more hilarious were it not for the difficulty of thinking of any way out of the ghastly current economic mess.

## Music

**A Singer's Notebook**, by Ian Bostridge, *Faber, RRPE16.99*

A slender but thought-provoking volume of essays by the tenor Ian Bostridge, ranging from his obsessive interest in phlegm – that's as in spit, not stoicism – to a lecture he gave exploring music's links with magic, interpreting Handel's operas through a history of 18th-century witchcraft.

**Fire and Rain: The Beatles, Simon & Garfunkel, James Taylor, CSNY and the Lost History of 1970**, by David Browne, *Da Capo, RRPE14.99*

Browne, an editor on Rolling Stone magazine, opens his account of 1970 with the soon-to-split Beatles working on *Let It Be* in January; the book proceeds to follow the year's events through the interlinked stories of three other acts, Simon & Garfunkel, James Taylor and Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.

**The Man Who Sold the World: David Bowie and the 1970s**, by Peter Doggett, *Bodley Head, RRPE18*

One of the best books about the Beatles is *Revolution in the Head* by Ian MacDonald, which tells their history through a song-by-song analysis of their work. Doggett borrows the template to look at Bowie's chameleonic passage through the 1970s, the arch-negotiator of an era when the conflicts of the 1960s reached their climax.

**Music for Silenced Voices: Shostakovich and His Fifteen Quartets**, by Wendy Lesser, *Yale, RRPE18.99*

Lesser is drawn to Shostakovich's Quartets because she finds in them the free expression of the composer's private self, rather than the public figure who composed larger-scale works for the USSR. Her book elucidates his life through these "pure" pieces of music, as opposed to the compromises of his Soviet-commissioned work.

**The Man Who Recorded the World: A Biography of Alan Lomax**, by John Szwed, *Heinemann, RRPE20*

Lomax, the musicologist who helped awaken America to its vibrant vernacular music, especially the blues, is the subject of Szwed's insightful biography, which chooses to concentrate on the political and cultural context of Lomax's work rather than his turbulent personal life of failed marriages and depressive episodes.

**Ludovic Hunter-Tilney**, *FT pop critic*

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## Architecture

**Adjaye, Africa, Architecture: A Photographic Survey of Metropolitan Architecture**, 7 Volumes, by David Adjaye, *Thames & Hudson*, *RRP£65*

The opposite of most architecture books. Rather than sumptuous, meticulously composed shots of buildings, this is a ramshackle collection of snaps by Tanzanian-born, UK-based architect David Adjaye of his 10-year odyssey around Africa's cities. These seven volumes, collected in a slipcase, form a unique record of a country in which compelling architecture is appearing in extraordinary circumstances.

**Five Cities**, by Rem Koolhaas, *Amuti Editions*, *RRP£20*

Released as loose leaflets in a box, inspired by BS Johnson's *The Unfortunates* (1969), these essays can be read in any order. Rem Koolhaas is still the sharpest writer on cities in a generation, ruthlessly forward-looking and counter-intuitive; this collection encompasses some of his best writing. The simple Bauhaus-geometrical covers are designed by the always reliable graphic designers FUEL.

**Apple Design**, by Ed Sabine Schultz and Ina Grätz, *HatjeCantz*, *RRP£30*

Steve Jobs' death prompted endless eulogising. The role of Apple's British designer Jonathan Ive has been barely mentioned yet, arguably more than anyone else, Ive produced the look and utility that has made Apple so desirable. If anyone has ever doubted the value of design, this is the ideal Christmas present – even if it is ironic that the book's own design is so clinically dull.

**The Phaidon Atlas of 21st-Century World Architecture: Travel Edition**, *Phaidon*, *RRP£14.95*

This more conveniently sized edition of Phaidon's ridiculously oversized doorstopper of the same name is an elegant universal travel guide. Well-illustrated, meticulously researched and genuinely international, it is small enough to take away with you.

**The City of London: Architectural Tradition and Innovation in the Square Mile**, edited by Nicholas Kenyon, *Thames & Hudson*, *RRP£40*

The City, once conservative and staid, is now the most architecturally vibrant part of London, if not always in a good way. Brash commercial architecture is being squeezed into the City's complex web of Roman roads and medieval alleys, producing some of contemporary architecture's most arresting juxtapositions and images. The City is rapidly becoming a museum of modern architecture, boasting works by superstars from across the globe.

**Edwin Heathcote**, *FT architecture critic*

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## Film

**Cinema: The Whole Story**, edited by Philip Kemp, *Thames & Hudson*, *RRP£19.95*

Another one-volume history of cinema, in an over-supplied corner of the market. Trust Thames & Hudson, though, to deliver gleaming graphics, pithy text and a cine-historical narrative that brings us right up to today: post-9/11 cinema, *The Hurt Locker* and brave new waves in Europe, Asia and elsewhere.

**Nightmare Movies: Horror on Screen Since the 1960s**, by Kim Newman, *Bloomsbury*, *RRP£30*

The perfect road map for modern horror cinema fans. Updating his 1988 book, Newman includes *The Silence of the Lambs*, *The Blair Witch Project* and other, newer terror landmarks, discussing and contextualising them with wit, depth and mischievous erudition.

**Boris Karloff: More Than a Monster**, by Stephen Jacobs, *Tomahawk*, *RRP£25*

The movie star best known for lumbering and grunting – *Frankenstein, The Mummy* – was, in reality, an Anglo-Indian gent who adored cricket. This Karloff boasts other surprises including campaigning leftwing sympathies and a non-stop love life. Biographer Jacobs portrays him warmly, readably and in rich detail.

**Then Again:** A Memoir, by Diane Keaton *Fourth Estate, RRPE18.99*

Just what we wanted from the *Annie Hall* star, an autobiography as quirky, funny and mannered as her best-known roles. Keaton intersperses her own remembrances with excerpts from her mother's diary – the book is a family memoir too – as well as tantalising sketches of the cinema greats she dated (Woody Allen, Warren Beatty).

**Nigel Andrews, FT film critic**



## Travel

**One Man and His Bike,** by Mike Carter, *Ebury Press, RRPE11.99*

Compared to the ever-more contrived quests that have become a mainstay of recent travel writing, Carter's mission is admirably simple. One morning while commuting into central London by bike, he decides he will keep going, right around the entire British coast. He turns out to be a likeable and self-deprecating guide, the gentle comedy of his endeavours concealing a vivid portrait of a Britain rarely seen by many city dwellers.

**Into the Silence:** The Great War, Mallory and the Conquest of Everest, by Wade Davis, *Bodley Head, RRP £25*

You would be forgiven for wondering if there was anything left to say about George Mallory and Sandy Irvine's ill-fated 1924 attempt to be the first men to climb Everest. But Davis has managed to produce a fascinating book, studying not just the Himalayan expeditions of the early 1920s but also the climbers' wartime experiences, which, he argues, played a crucial part in their motivation.

**Wild Coast:** Travels on South America's Untamed Edge, by John Gimlette, *Profile Books, RRPE15*

This is classic armchair escapism – a journey through the jungles of Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana, the domain of "head-crushing jaguars, strangling snakes, rivers of stingrays and electric eels". Gimlette, who divides his time between being a barrister in London and an explorer, is a keen-eyed narrator.

**The Tao of Travel,** by Paul Theroux, *Hamish Hamilton, RRPE9.99*

It attracted some stinging reviews, perhaps from those who had been hoping for something profound and weighty from one of travel writing's biggest beasts. Instead, this anthology, selected by Theroux and including his own work and that of many others, is pure entertainment. Perfect for dipping into after Boxing Day lunch.

**Great British Pubs,** by Adrian Tierney-Jones, *Campaign for Real Ale, RRPE14.99*

On second thoughts, perhaps this is an even better Boxing Day book. Readers in the UK can use this newly published guide to find their nearest cosy, historic hostelry for a festive pint. Those in other countries will have to make do with enjoying the book, a fascinating celebration of the British pub.

**Tom Robbins, FT travel editor**

## Food

**Blood, Bones & Butter:** The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef, by Gabrielle Hamilton, *Chatto & Windus, RRPE12.99*

My favourite food book of the past few years, a thrilling and visceral personal memoir of the New York chef.

**Secrets of Scandinavian Cooking ... Scandilicious**, by Signe Johansen, *Saltyard Books*, *RRP£20*

If you thought Scandinavian food was all about herring, think again. It is, as they say in the fashion world, so hot right now; as is Johansen, a food anthropologist with a winning style and a great way with a recipe.

**Bocca**, by Jacob Kenedy, *Bloomsbury*, *RRP£30*

Bocca di Lupo has been one of the more exciting restaurant openings in the past few years with its updated pan-Italian menu, but with his cookbook Kenedy digs deep into all his influences. This deserves to be up there with the River Café, Moro and Ottolenghi cookbooks as a culinary game-changer.

**In at the Deep End: Cooking Fish from Venice to Tokyo**, by Jake Tilson, *Quadrille Publishing*, *RRP£20*

Tilson, designer and food obsessive, documents his personal quest to learn to like fish. A beautiful, lovingly constructed piece of work that draws you in.

**Testicles: Balls in Cooking and Culture**, by Blandine Vie and Giles MacDonogh, *Prospect Books*, *RRP£20*

Truly devoted food geeks regularly thank God that Prospect Books still survives to service their needs. A wonderful compilation of recipes, aperçus, historical fact and literary fancy on a single fascinating theme.

**Food Britannia**, by Andrew Webb, *Random House Books*, *RRP£25*

Like a gluttonous contemporary William Cobbett, Webb has toured the country talking to food producers old and new. More than a good read, this may well turn out to be an important historical snapshot of the British food scene at the end of a significant decade

**Tim Hayward**, editor of *'Fire and Knives'*

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**Simon Schama**,  
*FT contributing editor*

How do lobsters mate? Aside from ingeniously? If this has been nagging at you all year, then the book for you is Trevor Corson's *The Secret Life of Lobsters* (Harper Perennial), which is at once brilliant local history and the most peculiar zoological story you'll ever have read. Once you've learnt that highly motivated females turn the males on by issuing clouds of, erm, substances from their heads, you're going to turn into an arthropod cocktail party bore. Likewise, although Paul Greenberg's vividly written *Four Fish* (Allen Lane) is proof that books that make you rethink what you put into your stomach don't have to be preachy, you're unlikely ever to think about "Mediterranean Sea Bass" in the same way again.

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**Gardening****Private Paradise: Contemporary American Gardens**, by Charlotte M Frieze, *Monacelli Press*, *RRP\$65*

This is a handy treasure chest of ideas and a useful crib for anyone thinking of hiring a landscaper. The text is concise and the photographs, some taken by American landscape architect Martha Swartz, instructive. Topher Delaney's fire garden is good, as is her San Francisco garden, where a magnificent limestone boulder appears to be eating a stone sink. Raymond Jungles, tutored by the great Roberto Burle Marx, deserves a mention for his name as much as for his rooftop garden in Florida.

**Futurescapes**, by Tim Richardson, *Thames & Hudson*, *RRP£24.95*

Richardson's latest look at the landscape and garden world gives a thoughtful overview of contemporary designers from Kim Mikyong to Charles Jencks to N-Tree. Good pictures and a useful directory.

**The Chinese Garden**, by Bianca Maria Rinaldi, *Birkhauser Verlag*, *RRP\$69.95*

China's economic clout, and its increasing engagement with the world beyond its borders, makes it one of the most powerful influences in garden design. This is reflected in Rinaldi's historical and geographical tour of Chinese landscapes and gardens. The text is somewhat turgid but the content is illuminating.

**Our Plot**, by Cleve West, *Frances Lincoln*, *RRP£20*

West, overall winner of the Chelsea Flower Show 2011, designs subtle, sophisticated gardens around the world. Here he retreats to his allotment to reveal his earthy side.

*Jane Owen, FT House & Home editor*

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## Fashion

**Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty**, by Andrew Bolton, with contributions by Susannah Frankel and Tim Blanks, *Yale, RRPE30*

An authoritative and moving insight into the legacy of the British designer, this book accompanied the exhibition of the same name at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Sensitive and intelligent introductions explore his career, working methods and the complex psyche behind his dramatic creations, while quotes from the late designer accompany photographs of his clothes.

**Delicious Jewels**, by Hemmerle, with contributions by Tamasin Day Lewis and Nazanin Lankarani, *Prestel, RRPE50*

Knobbly pumpkins and curly cabbages don't usually appear in fashion books but this is a particularly unusual volume. It pairs images of jewellery house Hemmerle's new vegetable-inspired brooches – think radishes rendered in pink diamonds – with relevant recipes by chef and food writer Tamasin Day Lewis. Refreshingly quirky.

**The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to The Catwalk**, by Thierry-Maxime Lorient and Suzy Menkes, *Abrams, RRPE125*

Gaultier has successfully fused the worlds of pop culture and Parisian haute couture, and this monograph is long overdue. It features images from an impressive roll call of the fashion world's coolest photographers, along with 50 interviews about Gaultier's work and influence from collaborators and muses such as Catherine Deneuve, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy and, of course, Madonna, who wore Gaultier's groundbreaking under-as-outerwear outfits.

**Manolo Blahnik and the Tale of the Elves and the Shoemaker: A Fashion Fairytale Memoir**, by Camilla Morton, illustrated by Manolo Blahnik, *It Books, RRPE12.99*

Morton's sweet, whimsical book is the second in a series mixing fashion fact and fairy tale. This time she takes shoe designer Blahnik's colourful life story – he was born on a banana plantation and designed shoes for Ossie Clark in the 1960s – and blends it with the narrative of "The Elves and the Shoemaker". With illustrations by Blahnik in his signature lavish, lively style, this is pure escapism.

*Carola Long, FT deputy fashion editor*

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## Literary

**The Fetish Room: The Education of a Naturalist**, by Redmond O'Hanlon and Rudi Rotthier, *Profile, RRPE12.99*

Flemish journalist Rotthier undertook an eccentric road trip around Oxfordshire, Dorset and Kent with travel writer Redmond O'Hanlon, visiting the latter's childhood haunts in this full-tilt Boswellian biography. The result is a fittingly idiosyncratic book – part travelogue, part biography – that gets to the heart of what drives the great naturalist.

**Arguably**, by Christopher Hitchens, *Atlantic, RRPE30*

This collection of the great contrarian's essays, reviews and columns, written largely over the past decade, offers a brilliant introduction to Hitchens' provocative polemics – and his zealous championing of the war on terror. The Hitch's "sardonic wit, polymathic range, good literary style and his fearlessness", as the FT's reviewer put it, makes this both a challenging and engaging read.

**You Talkin' To Me? Rhetoric from Aristotle to Obama**, by Sam Leith, *Profile, RRPE14.99*

In his entertainingly brisk survey of rhetoric, Leith glories in the modern atomisation of the language and its use "by one human being to influence another in words". Leith's book follows a classical five-part structure but mixes high cultural examples with more modern ones – at one point comparing Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* with AC/DC's single "Back in Black" – to singular effect.

**Lives of the Novelists**, by John Sutherland, *Profile, RRPE30*

The fruit of decades of reading and research, Sutherland's quirky compendium offers selective mini-biographies of 294 English novelists including Jeffrey Archer but not, oddly, Lewis Carroll or PG Wodehouse. A witty and enjoyably wide-ranging work.

**Charles Dickens: A Life**, by Claire Tomalin, *Viking*, *RRP£30*

Dickens has a place in the heart of the nation. In this masterful biography, Tomalin brings both Dickens the man and the writer winningly to life, revealing him through unrivalled research and evocative prose. A biography worthy of its subject.

**Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?**, by Jeanette Winterson, *Jonathan Cape*, *RRP£14.99*

In this unconventional and ambitious memoir, Winterson, author of *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, explores how telling stories can bring you closer to the truth. Addressing her childhood adoption, personality traits and sexuality with a vigorous honesty, Winterson's book is a search for meaning in life.

**Carl Wilkinson**

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