

STAFF PICKS

Find out what your local library staff are reading and listening to!
To find out if the library's copies of these titles are currently checked in, please check our online catalog.

***The Man in the Picture* by Susan Hill**

Staff Review:

"A small fiction book and scary...gets you to thinking twice about accepting paintings as gifts! A bit like *The Picture of Dorian Gray*."

From *Publishers Weekly*:

"Hill (*The Woman in Black*) crafts an old-school spooker in this atmospheric tale of a sinister painting imbued with the vengeful spirit of a former owner...Hill manipulates the gothic darkness of her story with great dexterity and subtlety, faltering only at its awkwardly executed finish. Regardless, her tale is a commendable exercise in the tradition of the antiquarian ghost story."

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***A Broom of One's Own: Words on Writing, Housecleaning and Life* by Nancy Peacock**

Staff Review:

"A biography by the author of *Home Across the Road* (I read and liked this a lot too). It reminds me a bit of Erma Bombeck, but with more depth."

From *Publishers Weekly*:

"Peacock offers an honest and refreshing look at what life is like for most writers, few of whom can expect to crack the bestseller lists or make it to Oprah's Book Club. She also offers an insider's look at housecleaning that may lead readers to start cleaning their own houses or, at least, be more careful about the messes they leave for their cleaning people."

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***Esther's Inheritance* by Sandor Marai**

Staff Review:

"Beautifully written and subtle in the style of Gabriel Garcia-Marquez."

From *Publishers Weekly*:

Starred Review. "In this spellbinding fourth novel to be published posthumously in English, Márai weaves a passionate tale about a woman whose chance at love is very nearly stolen from her. Harbored peaceably at her family home in middle age with a cousin as her only companion

after a lifelong disappointment in love, Esther receives a telegram from her former flame, Lajos, a masterful con artist who had declared his love for Esther, but then married her younger sister...The deceptions woven around these characters introduce a sharp sliver of danger into the narrative, especially as Esther's reliability is called into question."

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The Hell Screen and Rashomon Gate by I. J. Parker

Staff Review:

"I just listened to a string of wonderful mysteries set in medieval Japan, the Sugawara Okitada series by I.J. Parker. We have 2 of them, *The Hell Screen* and *Rashomon Gate*, but all are available through some OverDrive collections. These were originally published out of order, but all 5 in the series are currently in print, and were just recorded this past year. The central character is a minor nobleman making his way through the Japanese bureaucracy, beginning as a law clerk and serving for a while as a provincial governor."

From *Publishers Weekly*:

"Parker's remarkable command of 11th-century Japanese history—from the rituals of the royal court to the minutia of daily life within Japan's often rigid caste system—makes for an excellent whodunit. Readers will be enchanted by Akitada, an honorable sleuth who proves more progressive than his time."

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The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Stieg Larsson

Staff Review:

"I very much enjoyed this Swedish novel. Sadly, it was published posthumously. It had great characters and an unpredictable plot. Again, I chose the audio version."

From *Publishers Weekly*:

Starred Review. "Cases rarely come much colder than the decades-old disappearance of teen heiress Harriet Vanger from her family's remote island retreat north of Stockholm, nor do fiction debuts hotter than this European bestseller by muckraking Swedish journalist Larsson. At once a strikingly original thriller and a vivisection of Sweden's dirty not-so-little secrets."

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Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout

Staff Review:

"This is essentially a collection of short stories, each one highlighting a quirky character from the same small town in Maine. Olive Kitteridge is the bitter yet somehow likable woman who is the

common element in most of the stories. I enjoyed this even more than Strout's novel, *Amy and Isabelle*."

From *Publishers Weekly*:

Starred Review. "Thirteen linked tales present a heart-wrenching, penetrating portrait of ordinary coastal Mainers living lives of quiet grief intermingled with flashes of human connection...the collection is easy to read and impossible to forget."

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Quick Picks:

***The Surgeon* by Tess Gerritsen**

***Killing Orders* by Sara Paretsky**

***The Honk and Holler Opening Soon* by Billie Letts**

***The Lucky One* by Nicholas Sparks**

***The Good Guy* by Dean Koontz**