

**TRANSIT  
BOOKS**

**FALL  
WINTER  
2024**

A large rectangular frame with a black border contains a repeating pattern of blue, hand-drawn cloud outlines. The clouds are arranged in a grid, with some overlapping. The text "TRANSIT BOOKS" is centered at the top, and "FALL WINTER 2024" is centered at the bottom, both in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# SPEAK / STOP

Noémi Lefebvre

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

Sophie Lewis

An irreverent semiotic fever dream that weighs meaning and meaning-making against idea and ideology.

*Speak/Stop* comprises two interrelated texts: a chorus of unidentified voices followed by a work of literary criticism that only Noémi Lefebvre could write—a semiotic fever dream that weighs meaning and meaning-making against idea and ideology.

Abstracted, irreverent, and full of biting satire, *Speak/Stop* picks apart hypocrisies in our lives and the language of our lives, skewering our literary pieties before delving headfirst into the paradox of self-criticism. Working against conventional notions of genre and form, Lefebvre produces “a madhouse of earthworm sentences” interrogating the concerns of class and taste, ease, and inclusion/exclusion that are the foundations of her work.

“Brilliant, witty, utterly contemporary.”—*Times Literary Supplement*

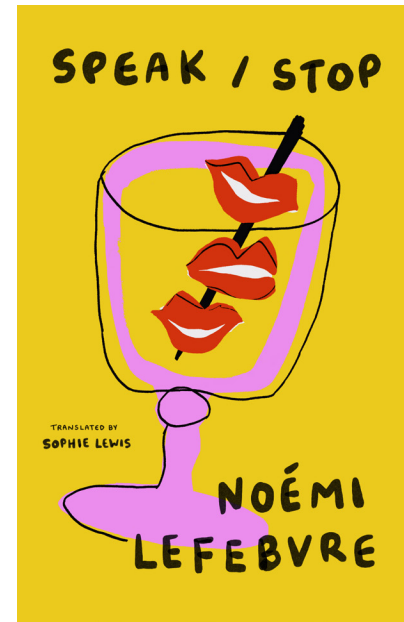
“Were we to note the musical expression with which *Blue Self-Portrait* is performed, it would be con bravura, or even scatenato: unchained, wildly.”

—*BOMB Magazine*



**NOÉMI LEFEBVRE** was born in 1964 in Caen, and now lives in Lyon, France. She is the author of four novels, all of which have garnered intense critical success: her debut novel, *Blue Self-Portrait* (2009); *L'état des sentiments à l'âge adulte* (2012); *L'enfance politique* (2015); *Poetics of Work* (2018); and *Speak/Stop* (2023).

**SOPHIE LEWIS** has translated works from French and Portuguese by Stendhal, Jules Verne, Marcel Aymé, Violette Leduc, Leïla Slimani, Mona Chollet, Annie Ernaux, and others.



September 17, 2024

Fiction

Paperback Original

5.25 x 8, 120 pp., \$18.95

978-1-945492-99-0 (pb)

from  
**SPEAK / STOP**

- May I begin?
- Yes. But do remember we are delicate
- That's why you can't address us in just any tone
- You have to choose the right tone
- Your tone isn't always the toniest
- Nor in the best taste, either
- We're quite familiar with the customs in wealthy circles where they take a fine line in good taste
- For we like the arts and we do have taste
- At least a kind of taste
- We have taste but aren't so sure of it
- We aren't at that level of ease that allows easy circulation among easier circles
- But we aspire to be
- We hold on, despite ourselves, to a dream of advancement
- Although this dream looks far from dreamy
- It's a dream prescribed
- In other words, an ideology
- Ideologies make lousy dreams
- But we can't snap out of it, even so
- Because we too need to dream
- Although we haven't the means
- We're like the Verdurins, only associating with the finer old farts
- Though with less lofty airs
- We compare ourselves to the Verdurins, which is ridiculous
- What right have we, indeed
- Few are they who can invoke the Verdurins without being ridiculous
- In any case, we can't
- The Verdurins are not our friends
- They're references
- For we do have those . . .

# GIFTED

Suzumi Suzuki

TRANSLATED FROM THE JAPANESE BY  
Allison Markin Powell

A subtle and intimate accounting of a daughter's final days with her mother, set amid the rush of Tokyo's red-light district.

Drawing on her own experiences as a hostess and adult film actor, *Gifted*—Suzumi Suzuki's first novel to be translated into English—offers a nuanced, frank, and intimate portrayal of the lives of a mother and daughter getting by (or not) in an industry rarely depicted authentically in literary fiction.

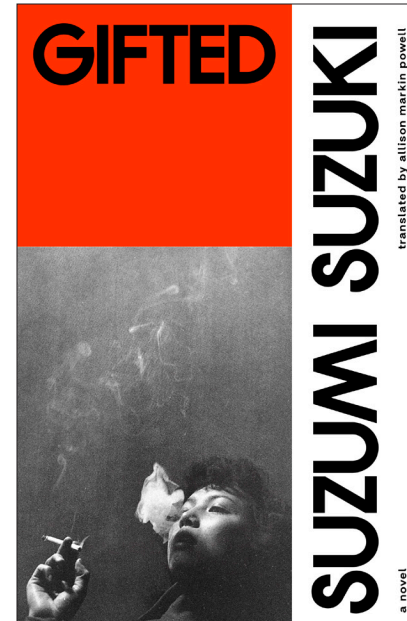
In the last days of her mother's life, a young woman living in Tokyo's red-light district is thrust into a split existence. By day, she negotiates her new role as caregiver of an abusive parent. By night, she drifts home from the hospital, goes out with other sex-workers, thinks about quitting smoking, and numbly remembers Eri, a friend who died the summer before. Her sensitivity to the details of her surroundings grounds an otherwise unstable world, one where each interaction requires a subtle negotiation of economic and sexual power, and proximity rarely means intimacy or connection.

“Demonstrates that death is the only way forward. Oozes with maternal cruelty.”  
—YŌKO OGAWA



**SUZUMI SUZUKI** is a Japanese writer. Since the release of her first book, a sociological study of actresses working in pornographic films, she has published works of both nonfiction and fiction. Suzuki's autobiographical book *If You Sell Your Body, Then Goodbye!* was adapted into a 2017 Eiji Uchida film. *Gifted* was nominated for the 167th Akutagawa Prize, and her novel *Graceless* was nominated for the 168th Akutagawa Prize.

**ALLISON MARKIN POWELL** is a literary translator, editor, and publishing consultant based in New York City.



October 1, 2024

Fiction

Paperback

5.25 x 8, 120 pp., \$18.95

979-8-893389-00-5 (pb)

from  
**GIFTED**

I go around the back of the building that faces the road separating Koreatown and the entertainment district, push open the heavy door at the rear of the car park, and ascend the interior staircase directly beside the door. On the third floor, I heave my weight onto another heavy door that leads to a hallway, and once it opens wide enough there is always a metallic creak. While that door slowly closes, I put the key in the lock for the door to my own apartment, turn it to the left, and hear a click as the latch releases. These are the two sounds I hear every night when I come home. If the interval between the creaking of the hinges and the turning of the pins in the old lock cylinder is too long or too short, there will be no sense of security. If I'm carrying something heavy and have to set it on the floor or if I carelessly drop my keys, the rhythm breaks.

Perhaps because there had been too much loss over the summer, in the days before autumn fully set in, I readily agreed to my mother's request to move into my apartment. The illness dwelling within her stomach had finally progressed to the stage where her basic survival was untenable, and it seemed she was looking for a place to die. Just one more poem, I want to finish writing just one more, my mother said over the phone.

“I can't do it from a hospital bed. You understand, don't you?”

Though I detected a sense of entitlement embedded in that “You understand, don't you?” it no longer angered or irritated me . . .

# THE WILDERNESS

Ayşegül Savaş

A deeply felt chronicle into the wilderness of the first forty days of new motherhood.

In the final weeks of her pregnancy, Ayşegül Savaş becomes fascinated by the mythology around the first forty days after giving birth, and the invisible beings that are said to surround the mother. “In Turkish, we speak of extracting the forty days, like a sort of exorcism. My grandmothers assure me that it will all get better after forty days are out.” A friend lends a book that suggests forty days of rest and fortifying broths and avoiding wind and cold.

In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, forty days are seen as a period of trial and transformation. They are often journeys into the wilderness and “its vast and unruly territories.” When the baby arrives, Savaş charts her own path into the wilderness of new motherhood—a space of contradiction, of chaos and care, mothering and being mothered. “What is the trial of the postpartum crossing?” writes Savaş. “Where will mother and child emerge once they have left the wild?”

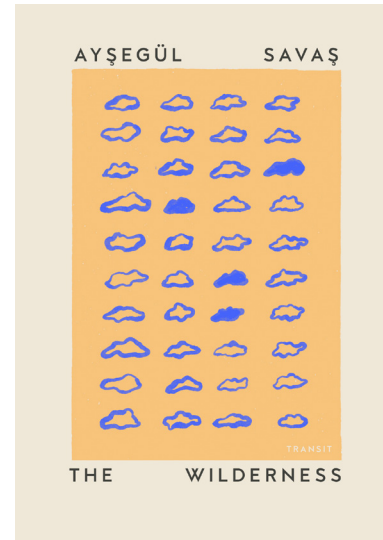
In the first work of nonfiction by the author of *The Anthropologists*, Savaş invites the reader to journey with her into the wild—a place entered after creation, a place you never leave, and a place that, in a sense, never leaves you.

*The Wilderness* is part of the Undelivered Lectures series from Transit Books

“Savaş writes with both sensuality and coolness, as if determined to find a rational explanation for the irrationality of existence.”—**THE NEW YORK TIMES**



**AYŞEGÜL SAVAŞ** is the author of the acclaimed novels *Walking on the Ceiling*, *White on White*, and, most recently, *The Anthropologists*. Her work has been translated into six languages and has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *Granta*, and elsewhere. She lives in Paris.



October 15, 2024

Nonfiction

Paperback

5 x 7, 104 pp., \$17.95

979-8-893389-09-8 (pb)

from

## THE WILDERNESS

Ahead of her arrival, my mother had sent us a package. In it were blankets and wash cloths for the baby, nursing pajamas for me, a sweater for my husband, and an ugly red satin headband with a ribbon. The last, she explained laughing on the phone, was for me to wear during labor.

In the final month of my pregnancy, those weeks of aches, the blurry taking leave from life, lying awake at night, I'd begun to inquire about the mythology surrounding the first forty days after birth, an important period in Turkish culture, considered one of extreme fragility for the mother and baby alike.

My friend Katia, a doula living in the French Belledonne mountains, had sent me a book of recipes for the postpartum period, which my husband read out to me in bed. The book, inspired by traditional Chinese medicine, also advocated for forty days of rest for the new mother, alongside recipes for fortifying broths and stews. In this time, the authors wrote, the cold and wind were to be strictly avoided.

In Turkish mythology, too, the new mother was susceptible to air currents that often brought with them invisible beings. One of these beings was the Scarlet Woman, a demon in human form who attacked the postpartum mother and baby. Going into labor wearing something red was one way to ward her off. It was for this reason that my mother—a pediatrician—had sent me the headband. I asked her on the phone whether she believed in this stuff.



# IMMEMORIAL

Lauren Markham

A speculative essay on language in the face of climate catastrophe: how we memorialize what has been lost and what soon will be, pushing public imagination into generative realms.

“I am in need of a word,” writes Lauren Markham in an email to the Bureau of Linguistical Reality, an organization that coins neologisms. She describes her desire to memorialize something that is in the process of being lost—a landscape, a species, birdsong. How do we mourn the abstracted casualties of what’s to come?

In a dazzling synthesis of reporting, memoir, and essay, Markham reflects on the design and function of memorials, from the traditional to the speculative—the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC, a converted prison in Ljubljana, a “ghost forest” of dead cedar trees in a Manhattan park—in an attempt to reckon with the grief of climate catastrophe. Can memorials look toward the future as they do to the past? How can we create “a psychic space for feeling” while spurring action and agitating for change?

*Immemorial* is part of the Undelivered Lectures series from Transit Books.

“Markham brings people and places to rumbling life; she has that rare ability to re-create elusive, subjective experiences.”—**THE NEW YORK TIMES**

“Brilliant, timely. The threads [Markham] follows weave a tapestry as moving as it is illuminating.”—**REBECCA SOLNIT**



**LAUREN MARKHAM** is the author of the award-winning *The Far Away Brothers: Two Young Migrants and the Making of an American Life* and *A Map of Future Ruins*. Her work has appeared in *VQR*, *Harper's*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Guardian*, *The New York Review of Books*, and other publications. She teaches writing at the University of San Francisco and in the Ashland University MFA in Creative Writing Program.



February 4, 2025

Nonfiction

Paperback

5 x 7, 136 pp., \$17.95

979-8-893389-03-6 (pb)

## from IMMEMORIAL

If grief is the cavernous emotion nearly ubiquitous to human life, and mourning is the ritualized enactment of that feeling, then a memorial was that feeling and enactment made manifest in the physical world.

Inside a well-designed memorial, a person can experience something that feels at once private and communal, alive and co-created with the space itself. One experiences embodied metaphor. And—unlike lesser memorials and their more static cousins, monuments—the most powerful of memorials seem to be those that, like Lin’s, are spacious in their interpretation. As with any encounters with literature or great art, the visitor wants to experience the process of meaning-making, not just the prepackaged message or moral, itself.

My experience at Lin’s memorial had ignited a lifelong fascination with public memory, and the art and politics of cementing this memory in physical form. Since that blisteringly cold day in DC, I have visited dozens of memorials: a half-built genocide memorial museum in Kigali, Rwanda, where the building crew was hurriedly stacking coffins in advance of the ten-year anniversary of the genocide. A former Nazi prison in an old rice mill in Trieste, Italy, so quiet it felt like a tomb. The Cambodian killing fields where a tape-recorded voice guides you through the grounds with soft murmurs, past execution trees and stacks of skulls. A memorial to the Norwegian massacre and bombing, built into the half-blown-up building, never repaired . . .



Transit Children's Editions







## A SLEEPLESS NIGHT

Micaela Chirif,  
illus. Joaquín Camp

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY  
Jordan Landsman

\$19.95 • 979-8-893389-05-0  
7.48 x 10.63 • 40 pp. • HC  
Ages 3+

**Little Elisa can't stop crying and no one knows why. After a sleepless night, it takes a grandmother's touch—and an explosive fart—to bring much-needed relief.**

One night, little Elisa begins to cry. At first her crying resembles a cat's meow. But it soon grows so loud that the flowers wilt and the birds fly out the window. We move her bed so she can see the moon, we wrap her up warm, cool her down, and tie a red ribbon to her wrist. But nothing works. We all wonder: Why is she crying?

After a long sleepless night, it takes a grandmother's touch to finally find out. Elisa lets out a fart that sounds like a plane taking off in the middle of the living room, nine blenders whirring at full power, twenty-seven moaning hair dryers . . .

An irreverent story about the wind that passes through us all, *A Sleepless Night* shows that seemingly complicated problems can have simpler solutions than we think.

• **Micaela Chirif is an award-winning Peruvian author of children's books and poetry. Her books have been translated into Korean, Japanese, English, Portuguese, and French.**

SEPTEMBER 2024







## A DAY WITH MOUSSE

Claire Lebourg

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY  
Sophie Lewis

\$18.95 • 979-8-893389-06-7  
4.88 x 7.48 • 88 pp. • HC  
Ages 4-10

**In a new series for early readers, Mousse receives an unexpected visit—and forms an unlikely friendship.**

Mousse loves his solitary life by the sea. Every morning, he strolls by the shore, drinks his freshly brewed coffee, and takes a long, serene bath. But when an uninvited walrus named J. P. Barnacle appears in his armchair one day, Mousse's scrupulous routine is ruined. It isn't long before the walrus has made himself comfortable in just about every part of Mousse's home: his bed, his dining room, his bathtub . . . What's Mousse to do?

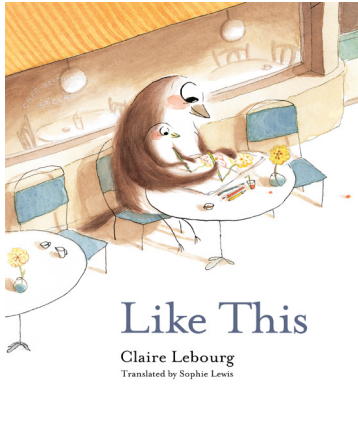
In this delightfully illustrated picture book for early readers, Claire Lebourg depicts the unexpected pleasures in helping others and accommodating needs beyond our own.

• With this follow-up to her English-language debut *How Dreadful!*, described as “[possessing] allure and verve by turns” (*Kirkus*) and “an unmitigated delight” (*The New York Times*), Claire Lebourg again shows that she is one of France's most talented young illustrators.



OCTOBER 2024





## LIKE THIS

Claire Lebourg

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY  
Sophie Lewis

**\$19.95 • 979-8-893389-02-9**  
**6.57 x 8.19 • 32 pp. • HC**  
**Ages 3+**

**In this charmingly illustrated book by one of France's rising stars, a mother bird recalls the arrival of her new baby and the months that follow.**

*The day you were born was a sunny day . . . like this.  
I hugged you in my arms and our life together began . . . like this.*

A mother bird recalls the arrival of her new baby and the months that follow. She is an artist, and sits before a blank sketchbook, brushes at the ready. What was it like the first time she held her baby in her arms? What did it feel like when they were apart? And when they flew off together in her dreams? It was like this . . . and like this . . . and like this . . . With warmth and tenderness, across a minimal palette of watercolor and ink, Claire Lebourg depicts the joys, worries, and wonders of the early days of parenthood.

- **This completely charming depiction of the early months with a young child makes a perfect gift for new parents.**
- **Great for starting conversations about parental love, when families are together or apart.**



NOVEMBER 2024





## ASTRO

Manuel Marsol

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY  
Lizzie Davis

\$21.95 • 979-8-893389-04-3  
12.83 x 9.49 • 64 pp. • HC  
Ages 4+

An astronaut grapples with the absence of his otherworldly friend in this poignant tale of loss and acceptance from an award-winning Spanish illustrator.

When Astro arrives on a faraway planet, everyone wants to meet him. Who's this strange person, and why is he here? But one kind creature in particular is especially drawn to him.

Together, they form an unlikely bond and navigate the world's curious terrains—mountains, caves, oceans. When the creature is taken from him, Astro must confront the difficult questions that underlie our existence: Why are we here? What is our life for?

Using a mix of collage, pencil and ink, and thickly layered acrylic, award-winning Manuel Marsol's illustrations teem with the vastness and wonder of life near and far.

• **Manuel Marsol is an illustrator and children's book author. He has received the 2017 International Award for Illustration at the Bologna Children's Book Fair and the 2014 Edelvives International Prize for Picture Books.**



FEBRUARY 2025



## LECTURE

Mary Cappello



- *Firecracker Award Finalist*

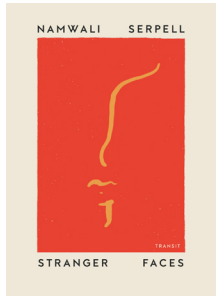
Brimming with energy and erudition, *Lecture* is an attempt to restore the lecture's capacity to wander, question, and excite. Cappello draws on examples from **Virginia Woolf** to **Mary Ruefle**, **Ralph Waldo Emerson** to **James Baldwin**, blending rigorous cultural criticism with personal history to give new life to knowledge's dramatic form.

"[Cappello] at once defends the lecture and calls for holistic and creative improvements to the form."  
—*The Atlantic*

September 2020 | Nonfiction | 136 pp. | World | 978-1-945492-42-6

## STRANGER FACES

Namwali Serpell



- *National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist*

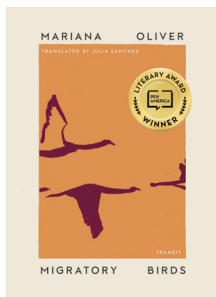
Serpell probes our contemporary mythology of the face in a collection of speculative essays on faces that resist legibility—the disabled face, the racially ambiguous face, the digital face, the face of the dead—imagining a new ethics based on the perverse pleasures we take in the very mutability of faces.

"Wise, warm, witty, and dizzyingly wide-ranging."—*The New York Times*

October 2020 | Nonfiction | 192 pp. | World | 978-1-945492-43-3

## MIGRATORY BIRDS

Mariana Oliver



- *PEN Translation Prize Winner*

Mexican essayist Mariana Oliver trains her gaze on migration in its many forms, moving between real cities and other more inaccessible territories: language, memory, pain, desire, and the body. With an abiding curiosity and poetic ease, Oliver presents a brilliant collection of essays that asks us what it means to leave the familiar behind and make the unfamiliar our own.

June 2021 | Nonfiction | 136 pp. | World | 978-1-945492-52-5

## AFTERMATH

Preti Taneja



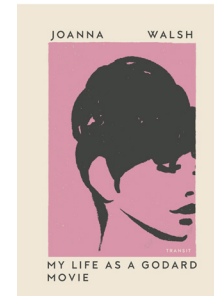
Taneja interrogates the language of terror, trauma, and grief, the fictions we believe and the voices we exclude. Contending with the pain of unspeakable loss set against public tragedy, she draws on history, memory, and powerful poetic predecessors to reckon with the systemic nature of atrocity.

"Stunning . . . Turns a critical lens toward the way language shapes violence . . . Poetic, urgent, and self-reflective."—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

November 2021 | Nonfiction | 260 pp. | World | 978-1-945492-54-9

## MY LIFE AS A GODARD MOVIE

Joanna Walsh



As Joanna Walsh watches the films of Jean-Luc Godard, she considers beauty and desire in life and art. She is captivated by the Paris of his films and the often porous border between the city presented on screen and the one she inhabited herself.

With cool precision, and in language that shines with aphoristic wit, Walsh has crafted an exquisitely intimate portrait of the way attention to works of art becomes attention to changes in ourselves.

September 2022 | Nonfiction | 104 pp. | NA | 978-1-945492-64-8

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MARÍA SONIA CRISTOFF ..... FALSE CALM  
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CLAIRE LÉBOURG ..... A DAY WITH MOUSSE  
CLAIRE LÉBOURG ..... LIKE THIS  
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