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Summer Reading
Recommendations

SUMMER READING RECOMMENDATIONS

Summer is a great time to catch up on reading and if you hate to be seaside or poolside without a book in your hand then this list is perfect for you. The Library has a terrific selection for you to choose from.

Recommended Novels

***American Gods* - Neil Gaiman**

If you are to survive, you must believe. Shadow Moon has served his time. But hours before his release from prison, his beloved wife is killed in a freak accident. Dazed, he boards a plane home where he meets the enigmatic Mr Wednesday, who professes both to know Shadow and to be King of America. Together they embark on a profoundly strange road trip across the USA, encountering a kaleidoscopic cast of characters along the way while all around them a storm threatens to break.

***American Wife* - Curtis Sittenfeld**

In the year 2000, in the closest election in American history, Alice Blackwell's husband becomes president of the United States. Their time in the White House proves to be heady, tumultuous, and controversial. But it is Alice's own story that is itself remarkable. She candidly describes her small-town upbringing and the tragedy that shaped her identity; she recalls her early adulthood as a librarian and her surprising courtship with the man who swept her off her feet; and she confides the privileges and difficulties of being first lady, a role that is uniquely cloistered and public, secretive and exposed. *American Wife* is not a novel about politics. It is a gorgeously written novel that weaves race, class, fate and wealth into a brilliant tapestry.

As the Women Lay Dreaming - Donald S. Murray

In the small hours of January 1st, 1919, the cruellest twist of fate changed at a stroke the lives of an entire community.

Tormod Morrison was there that terrible night. He was on board HMY Iolaire when it smashed into rocks and sank, killing some 200 servicemen on the very last leg of their long journey home from war.

This is a deeply moving novel about passion constrained, coping with loss, a changing world, and explores how a single event can so dramatically impact on communities and individuals.

Bird Box - Josh Malerman

IF YOU'VE SEEN WHAT'S OUT THERE...IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE

Malorie raises the children the only way she can: indoors, with the doors locked, the curtains closed and mattresses nailed over the windows. The children sleep in the bedroom across the hall, but soon she will have to wake them and blindfold them. Today they will risk everything. Today they will leave the house. Josh Malerman's New York Times bestselling *Bird Box* is a terrifying psychological thriller that will haunt you long after reading.

Circe - Madeline Miller

Woman. Witch. Myth. Mortal. Outcast. Lover. Destroyer. Survivor. CIRCE.

In the house of Helios, god of the sun and mightiest of the Titans, a daughter is born. Circe is a strange child - not powerful and terrible like her father, nor gorgeous and mercenary like her mother. Scorned and rejected, Circe grows up in the shadows, at home in neither the world of gods or mortals. But Circe has a dark power of her own: witchcraft. When her gift threatens the gods, she is banished to the island of Aiaia where she hones her occult craft, casting spells, gathering strange herbs and taming wild beasts. Yet a woman who stands alone will never be left in peace for long - and among her island's guests is an unexpected visitor: the mortal Odysseus, for whom Circe will risk everything.

Clash of Empires - Ben Kane

THE MIGHT OF ROME

The great general Hannibal Barca is on the verge of defeat. Victory will crown Rome the most powerful empire in the world. While the ambitious senator Flaminius plots his path to power...

THE GLORY OF GREECE

Only unconquered Greece stands in the way of glory. King Philip V of Macedon's mighty phalanx is an enemy Rome has long feared and one that has never known defeat.

THE HEROES OF HISTORY

Demetrios has dreamed of fighting with the phalanx his whole life, but the young villager will soon learn that, in a clash of empires, you're only ever one swing of the sword away from death - or entering legend.

The Death of the Fronsac - Neal Ascherson

Scotland, 1940: The Fronsac, a French warship, blows up in the Firth of Clyde. The disaster is witnessed by three locals. Jackie, a young girl who thinks she caused the explosion by running away from school. Her mother Helen, a spirited woman married to a dreary young officer; and their lodger, a Polish soldier whose country has just been erased from the map by Hitler and Stalin. All their lives will be changed by the death of the Fronsac.

Good Omens: the Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch - Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman

According to The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter Witch, Judgement Day is almost upon us and the world's going to end in a week...

Now people have been predicting the end of the world almost from its very beginning, so it's only natural to be sceptical when a new date is set for Judgement Day. But what if, for once, the predictions are right, and the apocalypse really is due to arrive next Saturday, just after tea?

Aziraphale, a somewhat fussy angel, and **Crowley**, a fast-living demon have been living amongst Earth's mortals since The Beginning and, truth be told, have grown rather fond of the lifestyle and, in all honesty, are not actually looking forward to the coming Apocalypse. So they try to do something about it...

Macbeth (Hogarth Shakespeare) - Jo Nesbo

When a drug bust turns into a bloodbath it's up to Inspector Macbeth and his team to clean up the mess. He's rewarded for his success. Power. Money. Respect. They're all within reach.

But plagued by hallucinations and paranoia, Macbeth starts to unravel. He's convinced he won't get what is rightfully his. Unless he kills for it.

The Man in the High Castle - Philip K. Dick

Philip K. Dick's acclaimed cult novel gives us a horrifying glimpse of an alternative world - one where the Allies have lost the Second World War. In this nightmare dystopia the Nazis have taken over New York, the Japanese control California and the African continent is virtually wiped out. In a neutral buffer zone in America that divides the world's new rival superpowers, lives the author of an underground bestseller. His book offers a new vision of reality - an alternative theory of world history in which the Axis powers were defeated - giving hope to the disenfranchised. Does 'reality' lie with him, or is his world just one among many others?

The Night Circus - Erin Morgenstern

The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. The black sign, painted in white letters that hangs upon the gates, reads:

Opens at Nightfall

Closes at Dawn

As the sun disappears beyond the horizon, all over the tents small lights begin to flicker, as though the entirety of the circus is covered in particularly bright fireflies. When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears.

Le Cirque des Rêves

The Circus of Dreams.

Now the circus is open.

Now you may enter.

Sal – Mick Kitson

Sal planned it for almost a year before they ran. She nicked an Ordnance Survey map from the school library. She bought a compass, a Bear Grylls knife, waterproofs and a first aid kit from Amazon using stolen credit cards. She read the SAS Survival Handbook and watched loads of YouTube videos.

And now Sal knows a lot of stuff. Like how to build a shelter and start a fire. How to estimate distances, snare rabbits and shoot an airgun. And how to protect her sister, Peppa. Because Peppa is ten, which is how old Sal was when Robert started on her. Told in Sal's distinctive voice and filled with the silent, dizzying beauty of rural Scotland, Sal is a disturbing, uplifting story of survival, of the kindness of strangers and the irrepressible power of sisterly love.

***The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle* – Stuart Turton**

Tonight, Evelyn Hardcastle will be killed... again

It is meant to be a celebration but it ends in tragedy. As fireworks explode overhead, Evelyn Hardcastle, the young and beautiful daughter of the house, is killed. But Evelyn will not die just once. Until Aiden – one of the guests summoned to Blackheath for the party – can solve her murder, the day will repeat itself, over and over again. Every time ending with the fateful pistol shot. The only way to break this cycle is to identify the killer. But each time the day begins again, Aiden wakes in the body of a different guest. And someone is determined to prevent him ever escaping Blackheath...

***The Silence of the Girls* – Pat Barker**

When the Greek Queen Helen is kidnapped by Trojans, the Greeks sail in pursuit, besieging the city of Troy. Trapped in the Greek soldiers' camp is another captured queen, Briseis. Condemned to be bed-slave to Achilles, the man who butchered her family, she becomes a pawn in a menacing game between bored and frustrated warriors. In the centuries after this most famous war, history will write her off, a footnote in a bloody story scripted by vengeful men – but Briseis has a very different tale to tell...

***Slow Horses* – Mick Herron**

You don't stop being a spook just because you're no longer in the game. Banished to Slough House from the ranks of achievers at Regent's Park for various crimes of drugs and drunkenness, lechery and failure, politics and betrayal, Jackson Lamb's misfit crew of highly trained joes don't run ops, they push paper. But not one of them joined the Intelligence Service to be a 'slow horse'. A boy is kidnapped and held hostage. His beheading is scheduled for live broadcast on the net. And whatever the instructions of the Service, the slow horses aren't going to just sit quiet and watch . . .

***Tangerine* – Christine Mangan**

The last person Alice Shipley expected to see since arriving in Tangier with her new husband was Lucy Mason. The two friends – once inseparable roommates – haven't spoken in over a year. But Lucy is standing there, trying to make things right. Alice should be happy. She has not adjusted to life in Morocco, too afraid to venture out into the bustling medinas and oppressive heat. Lucy, always fearless and independent, helps Alice emerge from her flat and explore the country. But soon a familiar feeling starts to overtake Alice – she feels controlled and stifled by Lucy at every turn. Then Alice's husband John goes missing and Alice starts to question everything around her...

***The Tattooist of Auschwitz* – Heather Morris**

In 1942, Lale Sokolov arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau. He was given the job of tattooing the prisoners marked for survival – scratching numbers into his fellow victims' arms in indelible ink to create what would become one of the most potent symbols of the Holocaust. Waiting in line to be tattooed, terrified and shaking, was a young girl. For Lale – a dandy, a jack-the-lad, a bit of a chancer – it was love at first sight. And he was determined not only to survive himself, but to ensure this woman, Gita, did, too. So begins one of the most life-affirming, courageous, unforgettable and human stories of the Holocaust: the love story of the tattooist of Auschwitz.

Warlight - Michael Ondaatje

London, 1945. The capital is still reeling from the war. 14-year-old Nathaniel and his older sister Rachel are abandoned by their parents who leave the country on business and are left in the dubious care of a mysterious figure named The Moth. Nathaniel is introduced to The Moth's band of criminal misfits and is caught up in a series of teenage misadventures, from smuggling greyhounds for illegal dog racing to lovers' trysts in abandoned buildings at night. But is this eccentric crew really what and who they claim to be? Years later Nathaniel, now an adult, begins to slowly piece together using the files of intelligence agencies – and through reality, recollection and imagination – the startling truths of puzzles formed decades earlier.

The Western Wind - Samantha Harvey

15th century Oakham, in Somerset; a tiny village cut off by a big river with no bridge. When a man is swept away by the river in the early hours of Shrove Saturday, an explanation has to be found: accident, suicide or murder? The village priest, John Reve, is privy to many secrets in his role as confessor. But will he be able to unravel what happened to the victim, Thomas Newman, the wealthiest, most capable and industrious man in the village? Moving back in time towards the moment of Thomas Newman's death, the story is related by Reve – a patient shepherd to his wayward flock and a man with secrets of his own to keep.

Women of the Dunes - Sarah Maine

Libby Snow spent her childhood hearing stories and legends from long ago. Now an archaeologist, her job is to dig deeper into the past, but her excavation at Ullaness, on Scotland's West Coast has a very personal resonance. When human remains are discovered in the dunes, it becomes clear that time and intention, have distorted accounts of what happened there. Is it too late to uncover the truth? Or is Libby herself in danger of being caught up in this tangled web of fable and deceit?

A FEW NON-FICTION TITLES...

***All That Remains: A Life in Death* - Sue Black**

Sue Black confronts death every day. As a Professor of Anatomy and Forensic Anthropology, she focuses on mortal remains in her lab, at burial sites, at scenes of violence, murder and criminal dismemberment and when investigating mass fatalities due to war, accident or natural disaster. In *All That Remains* she reveals the many faces of death she has come to know, using key cases to explore how forensic science has developed and examining what her life and work has taught her.

Do we expect a book about death to be sad? Macabre? Sue's book is neither. There is tragedy, but there is also humour in stories as gripping as the best crime novel.

***Becoming* - Michelle Obama**

In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her - from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world's most famous address. *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations - and whose story inspires us to do the same.

***Mythos* - Stephen Fry**

In Stephen Fry's vivid retelling we gaze in wonder as wise Athena is born from the cracking open of the great head of Zeus and follow doomed Persephone into the dark and lonely realm of the Underworld. We shiver when Pandora opens her jar of evil torments and watch with joy as the legendary love affair between Eros and Psyche unfolds. *Mythos* captures these extraordinary myths for our modern age - in all their dazzling and deeply human relevance.

Not My Father's Son: A Memoir - Alan Cumming

A beloved star of stage and screen, Alan Cumming's life and career have been shaped by a complex and dark family past - full of troubled memories, kept buried away. But then an unexpected phone call from his long-estranged father brought the pain of the past hurtling back into the present and unravelled everything he thought he knew about himself. *Not My Father's Son* is the story of his journey of discovery, both a memoir of his childhood in Scotland and an investigation into his family history which would change him forever.

Quines: Poems in Tribute to Women of Scotland - Gerda Stevenson

Poems giving voices to 67 remarkable women of Scotland from thousands of years BC to 21st century women. A diverse range of women are represented through poetic monologues in Scots and English. This powerful, unique, well-researched collection is a new landmark in the fine tradition of Scottish women's writing from a renowned poet and performer.

Note: All promotional descriptions have been taken from the publisher's marketing materials.