# Varamo Cesar Aira

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The Year of the Flood Europa Editions

A middle-class, directionless ox of a young man who helps the trash pickers of Buenos Aires's shantytown attracts the attention of a corrupt policeman who would use anyone including innocent kids to break a drug ring he believes is operating in the slum. By the author of An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter. The Musical Brain: And Other Stories New Directions Publishing At the intersection of translation studies and Latin American literary studies, The Translator's Visibility examines contemporary novels by a cohort of writers - including prominent figures such as Cristina Rivera Garza, César Aira, Mario Bellatin, Valeria Luiselli, and Luis Fernando Verissimo - who foreground translation in their narratives. Drawing on Latin America's long tradition of critical and creative engagement of translation, these novels explicitly, visibly, use major tropes of translation theory - such as gendered and spatialized metaphors for the practice, and the concept of untranslatability - to challenge the strictures of intellectual property and propriety while shifting asymmetries of discursive authority, above all between the original as a privileged repository of meaning and translation as its hollow emulation. In this way, The Translator's Visibility show that translation not only serves to renew national literatures through an exchange of ideas and forms; when rendered visible, it can help us reimagine the terms according to which those exchanges take place. Ultimately, it is a book about language and power: not only the ways in which power and language, and the curious, perplexing reality of human nature.

wields language, but also the ways in which language can be used to unseat power.

#### **Coach Fitz** New Directions Publishing

"A good story and first-rate social science."—New York Times Book Review. A sinisterly funny modern-day Through the Looking Glass that begins with cyanide poisoning and ends in strawberry ice cream. The idea of the Native American living in perfect harmony with nature is one of the most cherished contemporary myths. But how truthful is this larger-than-life image? According to anthropologist Shepard Krech, the first humans in North America demonstrated all of the intelligence, self-interest, flexibility, and ability to make mistakes of human beings anywhere. As Nicholas Lemann put it in The New Yorker, "Krech is more than just a conventionalwisdom overturner; he has a serious larger point to make. . . . Concepts like ecology, waste, preservation, and even the natural (as distinct from human) world are entirely anachronistic when applied to Indians in the days before the European settlement of North America." "Offers a more complex portrait of Native American peoples, one that rejects mythologies, even those that both European and Native Americans might wish to embrace."—Washington Post "My story, the story of 'how I became a nun,' began very early in my life; I had just turned six. The beginning is marked by a vivid memory, which I can reconstruct down to the last detail. Before, there is nothing, and after, everything is an extension of the same vivid memory, continuous and unbroken, including the intervals of sleep, up to the point where I took the veil." So starts Cesar Aira's astounding "autobiographical" novel. Intense and perfect, this invented narrative of childhood experience bristles with dramatic humor at each stage of growing up: a first ice cream, school, reading, games, friendship. The novel begins in Aira's hometown, Coronel Pringles. As self-awareness grows, the story rushes forward in a torrent of anecdotes which transform a world of uneventful happiness into something else: the anecdote becomes adventure, and adventure, fable, and then legend. Between memory and oblivion, reality and fiction, Cesar Aira's How I Became a Nun retains childhood's main treasures: the reality of fable and the delirium of invention. A few days after his fiftieth birthday, Aira noticed the thin rim of the moon, visible despite the rising sun. When his wife explained the phenomenon to him he was shocked that for fifty years he had known nothing about "something so obvious, so visible." This epiphany led him to write How I Became a Nun. With a subtle and melancholic sense of humor he reflects on his failures, on the meaning of life and the importance of literature.

### Argentina, the Great Estancias Archipelago

Ema The Captive, C é sar Aira 's second novel, is perhaps closest in style to his popular An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter and The Hare In nineteenth-century Argentina, Ema, a delicate woman of indeterminate origins, is captured by soldiers and taken, along with with her newborn babe, to live as a concubine in a crude fort on the very edges of civilization. The trip is appalling (deprivations and rapes prevail along the way), yet the real story commences once Ema arrives at the fort, where she takes on a succession of lovers among the soldiers and Indians, leading to a brave and grand entrepreneurial experiment. As is usual with Aira's work, the wonder of the book is in the details of customs, beauty,

## **Teguila Blue** New Directions Publishing

Birthday is among the very best of Aira—it will surprise readers new to his work, and will refugees to Australia was at its height. The novella gives a compelling insight into the deeply satisfy his many fans Before you know it you are no longer young, and by the way, while you were thinking about other things, the world was changing—and then, just communities, and lead isolated lives haunted by suspicion and fear. At the same time as suddenly you realize that you are fifty years old. Aira had anticipated his fiftieth—a time when he would not so much recall years past as look forward to what lies ahead—but the birthday came and went without much ado. It was only months later, while having a somewhat banal conversation with his wife about the phases of the moon, that he realized how little he really knows about his life. In Birthday Aira searches for the events that were significant to him during his first fifty years. Between anecdotes and memories, the author ponders the origins of his personal truths, and meditates on literature meant as much for the writer as for the reader, on ignorance, knowledge, and death. Finally, Birthday is a little sad, in a serene, crystal-clear kind of way, which makes it even more irresistible.

#### **Traveler of the Century** Yale University Press

"Both a scathing and picaresque comedy, a biting and spicy concoction. Just like tequila."—Le Monde It's not easy being a cop in Mexico City. Meet Carlito, a police detective with a complicated life. A wife, a mistress, children by both. He resorts to money laundering and arms dealing to finance his police activity. The money for justice must be found somewhere. The corpse in the hotel room is that of a gringo with a weakness for blue movies. Carlito's maverick investigation leads him into a labyrinth of gang wars and corrupt politicians. Rolo Diez, born in Argentina, was imprisoned for two years during the military dictatorship. He now lives in Mexico City, where he works as a novelist and screenwriter.

## Severina Graywolf Press

A new translation of the Guatemalan author whom Roberto Bolaño called "the most rigorous writer of my generation, the most transparent...the most luminous of all." "Right from the start I picked her for a thief, although that day she didn't take anything. . . . I knew she'd be back," the narrator/bookseller of Severina recalls in this novel's opening pages. Imagine a darkhaired book thief as alluring as she is dangerous. Imagine the mesmerized bookseller secretly tracking the volumes she steals, hoping for insight into her character, her motives, her love life. In Rodrigo Rey Rosa's hands, this tale of obsessive love is told with almost breathless precision and economy. The bookstore owner is soon entangled in Severina's mystery: seductive and peripatetic, of uncertain nationality, she steals books to actually read them and to share with her purported grandfather, Señor Blanco. In this unsettling exploration of the alienating and simultaneously liberating power of love, the bookseller's monotonous existence is rocked by the enigmatic Severina. As in a dream, the disoriented man finds that the thin border between rational and irrational is no longer reliable. Severina confirms Rey Rosa's privileged place in contemporary world literature.

Journey by Moonlight New Directions Publishing

From the winner of the 2015 Man Booker International Prize

Shantytown Giramondo Publishing

Chi Vu takes the central figure in a traditional Buddhist folktale, a deranged killer who wears his victims' fingers in a garland around his neck, and turns him into a menacing abbatoir worker who carries bloody chunks of meat home to his lodgings in plastic bags,

in this suburban Gothic tale set in 1980s Melbourne, when the flight of Vietnamese relations formed between refugees who have been displaced from their families or their the novella's macabre humour and surreal effects point to redemptive possibilities, in demonstrating how these old fears are played out and resolved in their new settings. The Apothecary's Secret Dalkey Archive Press

"Traveler of the Century" is a deeply philosophical novel, chock-full of discussions about philosophy, history, and literature with pillow talk about love and translation. It is a book that looks to the past in order to have us reconsider our present.

#### **Almost Never** New Directions Publishing

"A mongrel dog named Freaky, the corpse of a man with a seemingly endless list of aliases, and a handful of tips from an anonymous woman caller. With these elements hard-nosed Inspector Petra Delicado and her sentimental sidekick, Fermin Garzon, begin an investigation into big-money dog smuggling. Their best leads come from the most unlikely sources: a ruggedly handsome vet; a blond bombshell who trains guard dogs; an eccentric university professor; and a haughty dog groomer. At times, these two world-wise detectives are at a loss, but Delicado and Garzon are not the sort of cops that rely on hunches. They methodically pursue their investigation, drawing the reader into a complex and sordid story in which passions and profits turn men into beasts and animals into victims. Dog Day is set in a Barcelona that few visitors to the city will ever see, a Barcelona that lurks beneath the surface of one of Europe's most dazzling cities. A broken heart, a new monstrosity, and another dead body accompany every step through this demimonde."--BOOK JACKET.

#### The Conversations Macmillan

"Of my generation I most admire Daniel Sada, whose writing project seems to me the most daring." —Roberto Bolaño This Rabelaisian tale of lust and longing in the drier precincts of postwar Mexico introduces one of Latin America's most admired writers to the Englishspeaking world. Demetrio Sordo is an agronomist who passes his days in a dull but remunerative job at a ranch near Oaxaca. It is 1945, World War II has just ended, but those bloody events have had no impact on a country that is only on the cusp of industrializing. One day, more bored than usual, Demetrio visits a bordello in search of a libidinous solution to his malaise. There he begins an all-consuming and, all things considered, perfectly satisfying relationship with a prostitute named Mireya. A letter from his mother interrupts Demetrio's debauched idyll: she asks him to return home to northern Mexico to accompany her to a wedding in a small town on the edge of the desert. Much to his mother's delight, he meets the beautiful and virginal Renata and quickly falls in love—a most proper kind of love. Back in Oaxaca, Demetrio is torn, the poor cad. Naturally he tries to maintain both relationships, continuing to frolic with Mireya and beginning a chaste correspondence with Renata. But Mireya has problems of her own—boredom is not among them—and concocts a story that she hopes will help her escape from the bordello and compel Demetrio to marry her. Almost Never is a brilliant send-up of Latin American machismo that also evokes a Mexico on the verge of dramatic change.

# Carpentaria New Directions Publishing

An early-twentieth-century classic — the turbulent, dreamlike story of a businessman torn

between middle-class respectability and sensational bohemia "No one who has read it has failed to love it." — Nicholas Lezard Mihály and Erzsi are on honeymoon in Italy. Mihály has recently joined the respectable family firm in Budapest, but as his gaze passes over the mysterious back-alleys of Venice, memories of his bohemian past reawaken his old desire to wander. When bride and groom become separated at a provincial train station, Mihály embarks on a chaotic and bizarre journey that leads him finally to Rome, where he must reckon with both his past and his future. In this marriage and shows how adulthood can reverberate endlessly with the ache of youth. **Difficult Light** Rizzoli International Publications

One of the strangest and most appealing novels you will read this year! Tom Lee's first novel is about a young jogger who is in a relationship with an older woman. She is both his coach and his mentor. Coach Fitz, as he calls her, seeks to instil a philosophy of running which combines 'controlled intensity' with a curiosity about places and their histories. A country boy, he is fascinated by the landscapes of the city beaches and parks through which they travel. And he has his own obsessions – with exercise routines, ancestral legacies, outdoor gyms, horse-racing, weather conditions and inner-city eating habits. Then, suddenly, their relationship falls apart, over the issue of sex – and he becomes a coach and mentor in turn, to a young man this time, as he attempts to orchestrate an ideal expression of his emotional, athletic and intellectual urges. Coach Fitz is an exploration of the outdoor mentality that plays such a dominant role in the Australian psyche. It is remarkable for its observations about landscape and physical exercise, embedded in the training routines and dialogues of the runners. But most of all it is about the emotions and aspirations of youth, and the complications these engender.

The Linden Tree Bonnier Publishing Fiction Ltd.

The first-ever English translation of the classic Latin American novel—dubbed 'Sisyphus in the Caribbean'—for fans of Paul Theroux's Mosquito Coast and Alex Garland's The Beach. A couple experiences a downward spiral on the Caribbean coast in this "taut, uncompromising study of the fault lines in all of us," hailed as "the best-kept secret of Colombian literature" (The Guardian). The young intellectuals J. and Elena abandon the parties, the drinking, and the money of the city to start a new life on a remote tropical coast. Among mango trees, hot sands, and everlasting sunshine, they plan to live the Good Life—self-sufficient and close to nature. But with each day comes small defeats and imperceptible dramas. Gradually, paradise turns into hell, as brutal weather, mounting debts, the couple's brittle relationship, and the sea itself threaten to destroy them. Based on a true story, In the Beginning Was the Sea is a dramatic and searingly ironic account of the disastrous encounter of the imagined life with reality—a satire of hippyism, ecological fantasies, and of the very idea that man can control fate.

Dog Day Bloomsbury Publishing USA

Short fiction about a doctor who has a gift for making miracles and who is not deterred by his archenemy, Dr. Actyn, who is constantly trying to prove he is a charlatan.

Zahra's Paradise New Directions Publishing

The surprising, magnificent story of a Panamanian government employee who, one day, after a series of troubles, writes the celebrated masterwork of modern Central American poetry. Unmistakably the work of César Aira, Varamo is about the day in the life of a hapless government employee who, after wandering around all night after being paid by

the Ministry in counterfeit money, eventually writes the most celebrated masterwork of modern Central American poetry, The Song of the Virgin Boy. What is odd is that, at fifty years old, Varamo "hadn't previously written one sole verse, nor had it ever occurred to him to write one." Among other things, this novella is an ironic allegory of the poet's vocation and inspiration, the subtlety of artistic genius, and our need to give literature an historic, national, psychological, and aesthetic context. But Aira goes further still converting the ironic allegory into a formidable parody of the expectations that all intoxicating and satirical masterpiece. Szerb takes us deep into the conflicting desires of narrative texts generate — by laying out the pathos of a man who between one night and the following morning is touched by genius. Once again Aira surprises us with his unclassifiable fiction: original and enjoyable, worthy of many a thoughtful chuckle, Varamo invites the reader to become an accomplice in the author's irresistible game. The Translator's Visibility New Directions Publishing

> The Dark Wet is the first collection of short stories by Jess Huon. Rich, lyrical and deeply felt, it explores the struggle towards a sense of self and belonging, expressed in three sequences of stories: that of Jed Harp, his lover Danny Hess, and his poet sister Alexandra; of Bell and Oliver, a couple moving between Melbourne and San Francisco; and of a young woman confronting religion and sex in a Christian community in India. Drawing on a rich range of settings, from the lush Top End of Australia, to the mountains of India, and vibrant urban centres. The Dark Wet is a brutally honest portrayal of lives grasping at fluidity and transgression, and the possibility of redemption and change. The Divorce Bitter Lemon Press

A collection of F. Scott Fitzgerald's best drinking stories makes this the most intoxicating New Directions Pearl yet!

# Last Evenings on Earth New Directions Publishing

A delightful fictional account of the small town Ce'sar Aira grew up in—not so long ago A delightful fictional memoir about César Aira's small hometown. The narrator, born the same year and now living in the same great city (Buenos Aires) as César Aira, could be the author himself. Beginning with his parents—an enigmatic handsome black father who gathered linden flowers for his sleep-inducing tea and an irrational, crippled mother of European descent—the narrator catalogs memories of his childhood: his friends, his peculiar first job, his many gossiping neighbors, and the landscape and architecture of the provinces. The Linden Tree beautifully brings back to life that period in Argentina when the poor, under the guiding hand of Eva Perón, aspired to a newly created middle class. As it moves from anecdote to anecdote, this charming short novella—touching, funny, and sometimes surreal—invites the reader to visit the source of Aira's extraordinary imagination.