

## Evening book discussion group 2020

6:30pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month at Camden Library

Quick Look:

**16<sup>th</sup> January:** *The Van Apfel Girls are Gone* by Felicity McLean

**20<sup>th</sup> February:** *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier

**19<sup>th</sup> March:** *The Erratics* by Vicki Laveau-Harvie

**16<sup>th</sup> April:** *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernadine Evaristo

**21<sup>st</sup> May:** *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

**18<sup>th</sup> June:** *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton

**16<sup>th</sup> July:** *Silver* by Chris Hammer

**20<sup>th</sup> August:** *The Dutch house* by Ann Patchett

**17<sup>th</sup> September:** *The Weekend* by Charlotte Wood

**15<sup>th</sup> October:** *We the Living* by Ayn Rand

**19<sup>th</sup> November:** *Boy Swallows Universe* by Trent Dalton

**17<sup>th</sup> December:** *Park Avenue Summer* by Renee Rosen

Date	Book	Genre	Summary
16 <sup>th</sup> January	<i>The Van Apfel Girls are Gone</i>  By Felicity McLean	Australian  Contemporary/ Mystery	Part mystery, part coming of age story, <i>The Van Apfel Girls are Gone</i> is set in a distant suburb on the encroaching bushland, over the long hot summer of 1992. It's the summer of the school's Showstopper concert. The summer Tikka never forgot. The summer the Van Apfel sisters disappeared. Blackly comic, sharply observed and wonderfully endearing.
20 <sup>th</sup> February	<i>Rebecca</i>  By Daphne du Maurier	Classic	The novel begins in Monte Carlo, where our heroine is swept off her feet by the dashing widower Maxim de Winter and his sudden proposal of marriage. Orphaned and working as a lady's maid, she can barely believe her luck. It is only when they arrive at his massive country estate that she realizes how large a shadow his late wife will cast over their lives--presenting her with a lingering evil that threatens to destroy their marriage from beyond the grave.
19 <sup>th</sup> March	<i>The Erratics</i>  By Vicki Laveau - Harvie	Memoir  <b>Winner of the Stella Prize 2019</b>	When her elderly mother is hospitalised unexpectedly, Vicki travels to her parents' isolated ranch home in Alberta, Canada, to help her father. She has been estranged from her parents for many years and is horrified by what she discovers on her arrival. Her mother has always been mentally unstable, but for years camouflaged her delusions and unpredictability. Over the decades she has managed to shut herself and her husband away from the outside world. Vicki's father, who has been systematically starved and kept a prisoner in his own home, begins to realise what has happened to him and embarks upon plans of his own to combat his wife. Vicki quickly realises how dangerous, and potentially life-threatening, her mother's behaviour is. She fears for her father's life and her own safety is her mother returns home. The power play between her parents takes a dramatic turn and leaves Vicki embroiled in situations that are ludicrous, heart-breaking and frightening.

16 <sup>th</sup> April	<p>Girl, Woman, Other</p> <p>By Bernadine Evaristo</p>	<p>Contemporary</p> <p><b>Winner of the Booker Prize 2019</b></p>	<p><i>Girl, Woman, Other</i> follows the lives and struggles of twelve very different characters. Mostly women, black and British, they tell the stories of their families, friends and lovers, across the country and through the years. Joyfully polyphonic and vibrantly contemporary, this is a gloriously new kind of history, a novel of our times: celebratory, ever dynamic and utterly irresistible.</p>
21 <sup>st</sup> May	<p>A Gentleman in Moscow</p> <p>By Amor Towles</p>	<p>Historical Fiction</p> <p>Award Winner</p>	<p>In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors.</p> <p>Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him entry into a much larger world of emotional discovery. Brimming with humour, a glittering cast of characters, and one beautifully rendered scene after another, this singular novel casts a spell as it relates the count's endeavor to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.</p>
18 <sup>th</sup> June	<p>The Age of Innocence</p> <p>By Edith Wharton</p>	<p>Classic</p>	<p>Winner of the 1921 Pulitzer Prize, <i>The Age of Innocence</i> is Edith Wharton's masterful portrait of desire and betrayal during the sumptuous Golden Age of Old New York, a time when society people "dreaded scandal more than disease."</p> <p>This is Newland Archer's world as he prepares to marry the beautiful but conventional May Welland. But when the mysterious Countess Ellen Olenska returns to New York after a disastrous marriage, Archer falls deeply in love with her. Torn between duty and passion, Archer struggles to make a decision that will either courageously define his life—or mercilessly destroy it.</p>
16 <sup>th</sup> July	<p>Silver</p> <p>By Chris Hammer</p>	<p>Mystery/Thriller/Crime Fiction</p>	<p>For half a lifetime, journalist Martin Scarsden has run from his past. But now there is no escaping. He'd vowed never to return to his hometown, Port Silver, and its traumatic memories. But now his new partner, Mandy Blonde, has inherited an old house in the seaside town and Martin knows their chance of a new life together won't come again. Martin arrives to find his best friend from school days brutally murdered, and Mandy the chief suspect. With the police curiously reluctant to pursue other suspects, Martin goes searching for the killer. And finds the past waiting for him.</p> <p>He's making little progress when a terrible new crime starts to reveal the truth. The media descend on Port Silver, attracted by a story that has it all: sex, drugs, celebrity and religion. Once again, Martin finds himself in the front line of reporting. Yet the demands of deadlines and his desire to clear Mandy are not enough: the past is ever present.</p> <p>An enthralling and propulsive thriller from the acclaimed and bestselling author of <i>Scrublands</i>.</p>
20 <sup>th</sup> August	<p>The Dutch house</p> <p>By Ann Patchett</p>	<p>2019 Release</p>	<p>At the end of the Second World War, Cyril Conroy combines luck and a single canny investment to begin an enormous real estate empire, propelling his family from poverty to enormous wealth. His first order of business is to buy the Dutch House, a lavish estate in the suburbs outside of Philadelphia. Meant as a surprise for his wife, the house sets in motion the undoing of everyone he loves.</p>

			<p>The story is told by Cyril's son Danny, as he and his older sister, the brilliantly acerbic and self-assured Maeve, are exiled from the house where they grew up by their stepmother. The two wealthy siblings are thrown back into the poverty their parents had escaped from and find that all they have to count on is one another. It is this unshakable bond between them that both saves their lives and thwarts their futures.</p> <p>Set over the course of five decades, <i>The Dutch House</i> is a dark fairy tale about two smart people who cannot overcome their past. Despite every outward sign of success, Danny and Maeve are only truly comfortable when they're together. Throughout their lives, they return to the well-worn story of what they've lost with humour and rage. But when at last they're forced to confront the people who left them behind, the relationship between an indulged brother and his ever-protective sister is finally tested.</p>
17 <sup>th</sup> September	<p>The Weekend</p> <p>By Charlotte Wood</p>	Contemporary Australian Author	<p>Four older women have a lifelong friendship of the best kind: loving, practical, frank and steadfast. But when Sylvie dies, the ground shifts dangerously for the remaining three. Can they survive together without her? They are Jude, a once-famous restaurateur, Wendy, an acclaimed public intellectual, and Adele, a renowned actress now mostly out of work. Struggling to recall exactly why they've remained close all these years, the grieving women gather for Christmas at Sylvie's old beach house - not for festivities, but to clean the place out before it is sold.</p> <p>Without Sylvie to maintain the group's delicate equilibrium, frustrations build and painful memories press in. Fraying tempers, an elderly dog, unwelcome guests and too much wine collide in a storm that brings long-buried hurts to the surface - and threatens to sweep away their friendship for good.</p> <p><i>The Weekend</i> explores growing old and growing up, and what happens when we're forced to uncover the lies we tell ourselves. Sharply observed and excruciatingly funny, this is a jewel of a book: a celebration of tenderness and friendship that is nothing short of a masterpiece.</p>
15 <sup>th</sup> October	<p>We the Living</p> <p>By Ayn Rand</p>	Classic Historical Fiction	<p>First published in 1936, <i>We the Living</i> portrays the impact of the Russian Revolution on three human beings who demand the right to live their own lives and pursue their own happiness. It tells of a young woman's passionate love, held like a fortress against the corrupting evil of a totalitarian state.</p> <p><i>We the Living</i> is not a story of politics, but of the men and women who have to struggle for existence behind the Red banners and slogans. It is a picture of what those slogans do to human beings. What happens to the defiant ones? What happens to those who succumb? Against a vivid panorama of political revolution and personal revolt, Ayn Rand shows what the theory of socialism means in practice.</p>
19 <sup>th</sup> November	<p>Boy Swallows Universe</p> <p>By Trent Dalton</p>	Contemporary Australian Award Winner	<p>Brisbane, 1983: A lost father, a mute brother, a mum in jail, a heroin dealer for a stepfather and a notorious crime for a babysitter. It's not as if Eli's life isn't complicated enough already. He's just trying to follow his heart, learning what it takes to be a good man, but life just keeps throwing obstacles in the way - not least of which is Tytus Broz, legendary Brisbane drug dealer.</p> <p>But if Eli's life is about to get a whole lot more serious. He's about to fall in love. And, oh yeah, he has to break into Boggo Road Gaol on Christmas Day, to save his mum.</p> <p>A story of brotherhood, true love and the most unlikely of friendships, <i>Boy Swallows Universe</i> will be the most heartbreaking, joyous and exhilarating novel you will read all year.</p>

<p>17<sup>th</sup> December</p>	<p>Park Avenue Summer</p> <p>By Renee Rosen</p>		<p><i>Mad Men</i> meets <i>The Devil Wears Prada</i> as Renée Rosen draws readers into the glamour of 1965 New York City and <i>Cosmopolitan Magazine</i>, where a brazen new Editor-in-Chief--Helen Gurley Brown--shocks America by daring to talk to women about all things off limits...</p> <p>New York City is filled with opportunities for single girls like Alice Weiss who leaves her small Midwestern town to chase her big city dreams and unexpectedly lands the job of a lifetime working for Helen Gurley Brown, the first female Editor-in-Chief of a then failing <i>Cosmopolitan Magazine</i>.</p> <p>Nothing could have prepared Alice for the world she enters as editors and writers resign on the spot, refusing to work for the woman who wrote the scandalous bestseller, <i>Sex and the Single Girl</i>. While confidential memos, article ideas, and cover designs keep finding their way into the wrong hands, someone tries to pull Alice into this scheme to sabotage her boss. But Alice remains loyal and becomes all the more determined to help Helen succeed. As pressure mounts at the magazine and Alice struggles to make her way in New York, she quickly learns that in Helen Gurley Brown's world, a woman can demand to have it all.</p>
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