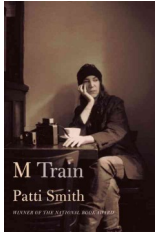


Information, Answers & Reviews

M Train



[view in catalog](#)

This absorbing new memoir by artist, poet, performer, and rock star Patti Smith provides a personal take on her daily life: her dreams, philosophical musings, friendships and myriad exotic journeys. Favorite black jacket, check. Watch cap, check. Black coffee at Café ?Ino, check. Unlike *Just Kids*, which focused on her past, her life with artist Mapplethorpe in the famous Chelsea Hotel, in this book the past and present intertwine. Coffee, the connecting themes. Appropriately enough, it begins with a dream. One of many that thread through the book. Next Patti describes her trip to French Guiana in the 70s. After her husband promised her a trip anyway in the world. Patti--idiosyncratic as always--chose the place where French writer Genet was imprisoned. They were almost jailed themselves on the way back when their driver was caught ferrying a man in the trunk to the airport. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on January 14, 2016

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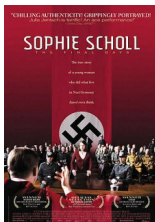
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Sophie Scholl: The Final Days



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While I was growing up in the 60?s and 70?s I learned in my history classes about the horrors of what happened in Germany during WWII. However in these classes the German people were painted with broad sweeping strokes of black as supporters of the Nazi movement and Hitler. I never learned of people such as Oskar Schindler, the German industrialist who managed to save the lives of so many of the Jewish people. Nor had I heard of groups, such as ?The Swing

Kids,? ?The Edelweiss Pirates,? ?The Solf Circle,? and ?The Kreisau Circle.? All of these were groups of German Nationals who were either vocal opponents of the Nazi doctrine or actively fought against them as part of the underground resistance in Germany. In fact there were a lot more ?subversive groups? in Germany than I was aware existed. Another group I had never heard of was one founded by Hans Scholl and his sister Sophie known as ?The White Rose.? [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on January 9, 2016

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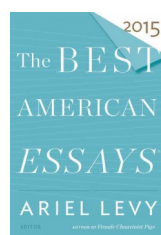
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The Best American Essays 2015



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The year 2015 has rushed out the exit door, but no worries, this wonderful mix of essays is not time-centric.

My favorite in the collection I randomly chose first. Sorry, editor, Ariel Levy, I just dive into these collections and start reading wherever my finger lands. Tim Kreider?s ?A Man and his Cat? describes a single fellow?s devotion for his cat. How one small nonhuman creature fills his home with love and his life with a sense of purpose.

On the other hand, in the humorous sounding essay ?My Grandma the Poisoner? John Reed makes a strong case that the early deaths of several relatives and the upset stomachs and inertia of certain houseguests were not accidental. Reed found himself comatose for fourteen hours several times after eating a Grandma meal.

The sweet and spot-on ?65? describes how aging has affected one boomer?s life. Mark Jacobson milks the slowing down and aches and pains of age for all they are worth. The tone is light but the sentiments serious, especially when he ponders the overarching question, how did this happen to me. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on January 8, 2016

[The Best American Essays 2015](#)

[Nonfiction](#)

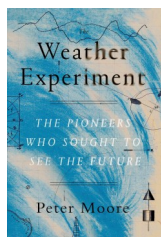
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The Weather Experiment: the pioneers who sought to see the future



[view in catalog](#)

People around the world are fascinated by weather generally and in particular these days with so many unusual events. This intriguing book describes the explorations and discoveries of people who changed weather from a local phenomenon into a science that explains the why, where, and how of weather.

More importantly these new scientists could warn people before harsh storms struck to allow them to postpone travel, particularly by sea, or to mitigate the damage.

On Nov. 23, 1703 an intense storm raged England with no warning. The Great Storm, as it came to be called, sent ships from the North Sea into Sweden. Many were shipwrecked; thousands of others drowned. Leaders discussed the need for weather forecasting to warn the population of danger before it struck and produced casualties and massive property damage. But alas little happened until the nineteenth century.

Did you ever wonder how meteorology got its name? Historically, "meteors" referred to any object in the sublunar zone. This included meteors of course, but also lightning, rainbows, clouds, and gusts of wind. The famous Dr. Johnson of dictionary fame defined meteors as "any bodies in the air or sky that are of flux and transitory nature." [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 28, 2015

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Jacob Lawrence: The Migration Series



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Although migration is obviously a hot topic in the news these days, this beautiful MoMA art book is about an earlier internal movement that began during World War 1 when many blacks left the south for the industrial north of our country to find work and better living conditions. In the end, over six decades, more than six million African Americans left the South for northern cities and

towns.

When he was only twenty-one years old, Jacob Lawrence completed a series of striking tempera paintings. Lawrence himself knew many of these migrants, having moved to Harlem with his parents when he was a young teenager from Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Before beginning this project of sixty paintings, Lawrence did months of research exploring diaries, photographs, news articles, and photographs of the people that made this brave trek into the unknown. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 16, 2015

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The Last Castle



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First lines ? ?Take a look at a castle. Any castle. Now break down the key elements that make it a castle. They haven't changed in a thousand years. 1: Location. A site on high ground that commands the territory as far as the eye can see. 2: Protection. Big walls, walls strong enough to withstand a frontal attack. 3: A garrison. Men who are trained and willing to kill. 4: A flag. You tell your men you are soldiers and that's your flag. You tell them nobody takes our flag. And you raise that flag so it flies high where everyone can see it. Now you've got yourself a castle. The only difference between this castle and all the rest is that they were built to keep people out. This castle is built to keep people in.?

The ?castle? being spoken about in this opening quote is a castle which has been turned inside out: a prison. [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on December 15, 2015

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