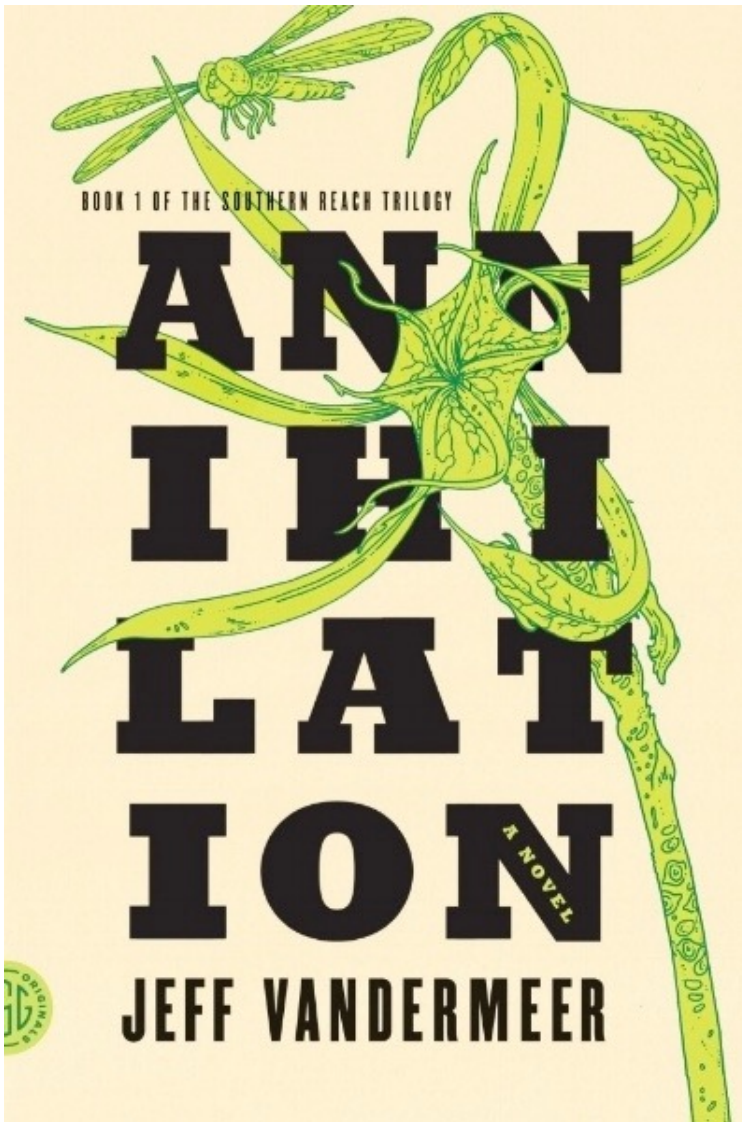


Book Cover Inspirations

20 Creative Book Cover Designs
to Inspire Your Next Project



Annihilation
by Jeff Vandermeer

Vandermeer's critically-acclaimed science fiction novel centers around Area X, a mysterious, sinister patch of wilderness that seems to be growing to reclaim human territory.

To reflect Area X's unnatural invasion into our world, designer Charlotte Strick entangled bold typography with a botanical illustration by Eric Nyquist.

The same illustrator/designer duo created similar covers for all three books in the Southern Reach Trilogy.



The Goldfinch *by Donna Tartt*

When Keith Hayes, a veteran art director for Little, Brown and Company, was tasked with designing a cover for Tartt's 2013 novel, the author had just one ask from Hayes.

"Donna's only request for the cover was that I not show the painting," Hayes wrote in mental_floss. The painting in question is Carel Fabritius's 1654 piece, *"The Goldfinch,"* which plays a role in the novel.

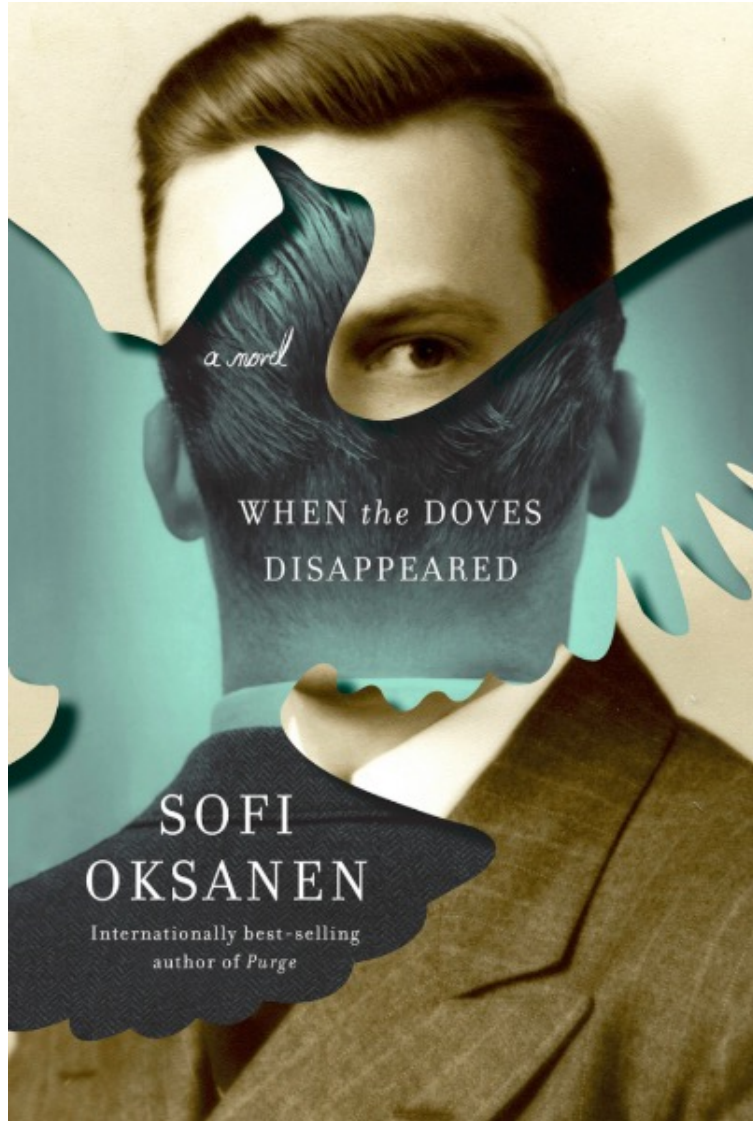
Hayes ended up including the painting after all -- although just a peek. Tartt *"ended up loving it, which means a lot to me, because I knew I better not screw that one up,"* Hayes wrote.



Thrown *by Kerry Howley*

Designer Jonathan Gray is no stranger to iconic cover art. He has designed covers for major authors such as David Foster Wallace and Jonathan Safran Foer.

For Howley's 2014 novel about cage fighting, Gray centers the cover design around a minimal shape resembling a fighting ring. It's a subtle, avant-garde way to symbolize the novel's unique topic.



When the Doves Disappeared
by Sofi Oksanen

This cover from designer Kelly Blair truly conveys a sense of mystery — the perfect visual representation for Oksanen's moody historical novel set in Communist-ruled Estonia.



1Q84

by Haruki Murakami

Murakami's most ambitious novel deserves an equally ambitious cover, and Chip Kidd, a legendary cover designer for Knopf, definitely delivered.

A layer of cloudy velum masks the subject's face, which is clearly visible only through the title's transparent typography. A hidden panel behind the velum reveals another, less clouded version of the subject's face. The effect is intended to evoke a feeling of two realities -- a theme that runs throughout the novel.

The Pelican
SHAKESPEARE

A MIDSUMMER
NIGHT'S DREAM

Edited By
RUSS McDONALD



A Midsummer Night's Dream ***by William Shakespeare***

Illustrator Manuja Waldia designed this whimsical new cover for Shakespeare's classic comedy. While many other covers for the play feature paintings or other historical visuals, Walida's approach is decidedly modern. She perfectly captures the tangled romantic relationships at the center of the plot with this simple crest.

Walida's version is part of The Pelican Shakespeare series, a collection of Shakespeare's classic works accompanied by related scholarship and research. She designed the covers for 14 works in the series.

The Utopia of Rules

by David Graeber

Brooklyn-based graphic designer Christopher Brian King whipped up this topical cover design for anthropologist David Graeber's 2015 exploration of bureaucracy.


The straightforward design resembles a government form. In true bureaucratic style, King even included a section on the bottom right that details the dimensions of the book itself.

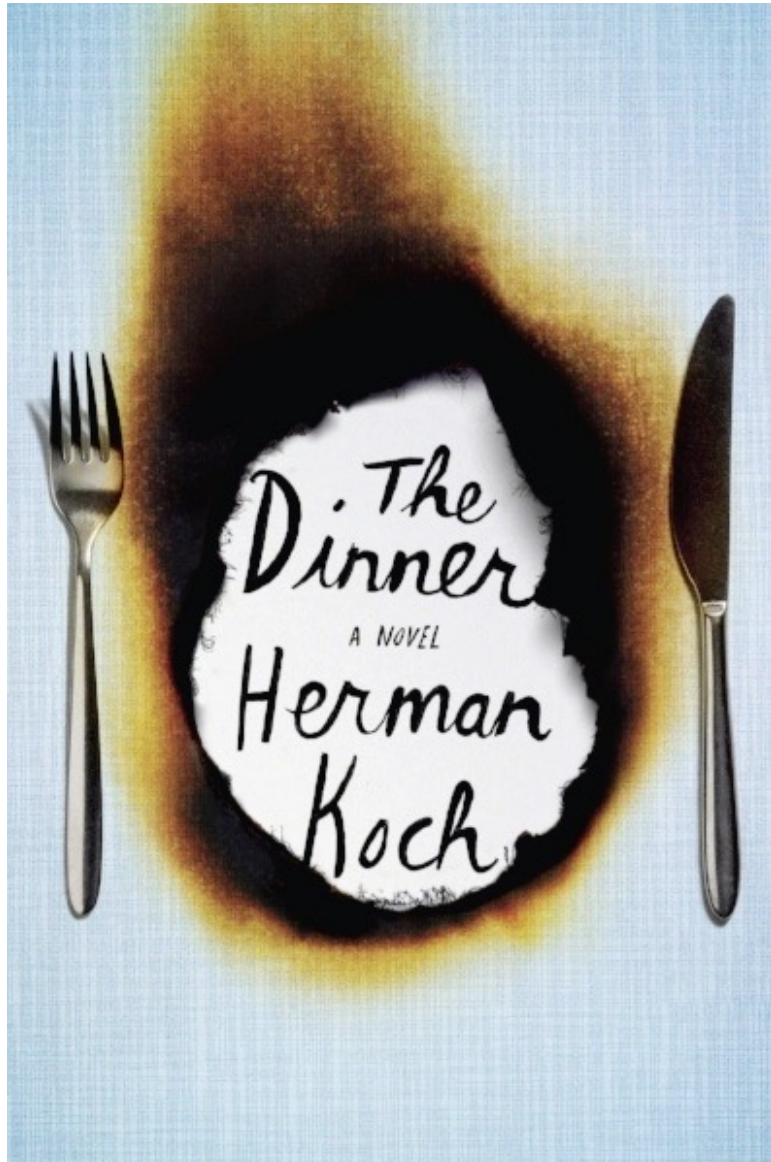
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<h1>The Utopia of Rules</h1> <hr/> <h2>On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy</h2> <hr/> <h1>David Graeber</h1> <hr/> <p>Author of <i>Debt: The First 5,000 Years</i></p> <hr/> <p>"A brilliant, deeply original political thinker." —Rebecca Solnit</p>
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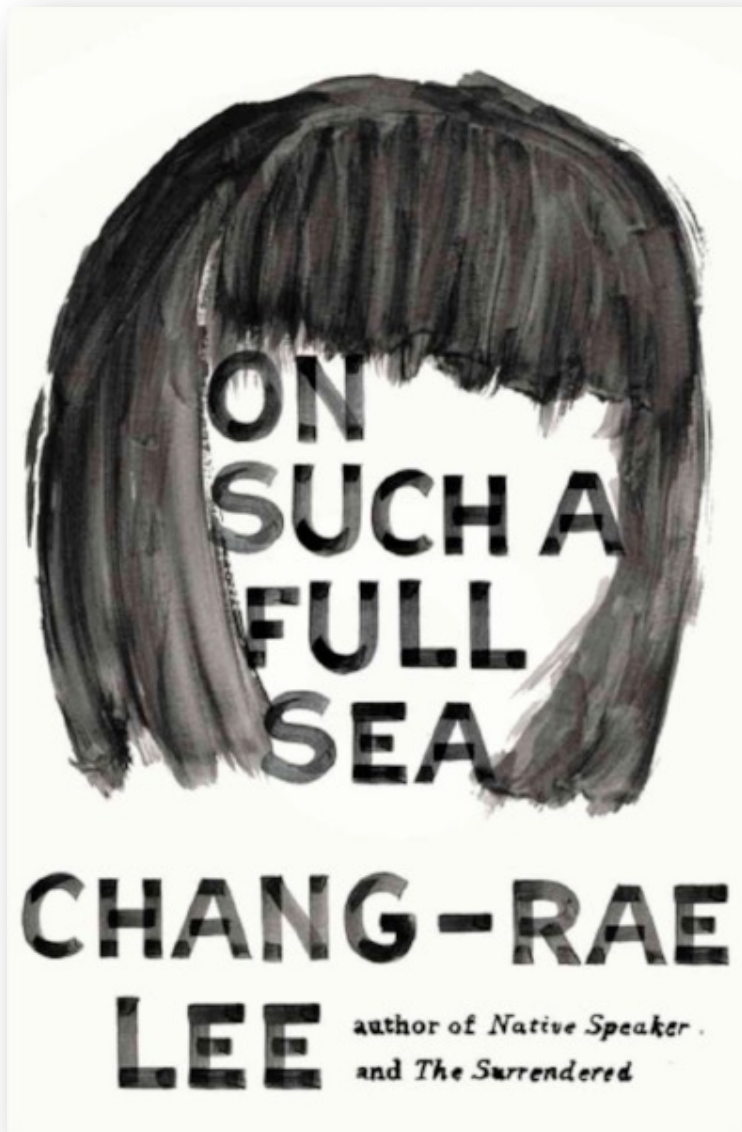




The Dinner *by Herman Koch*

Koch's novel focuses on a family in crisis. After their sons commit a horrible act of violence, they must decide whether or not to turn them in, all over the course of a single lavish dinner.

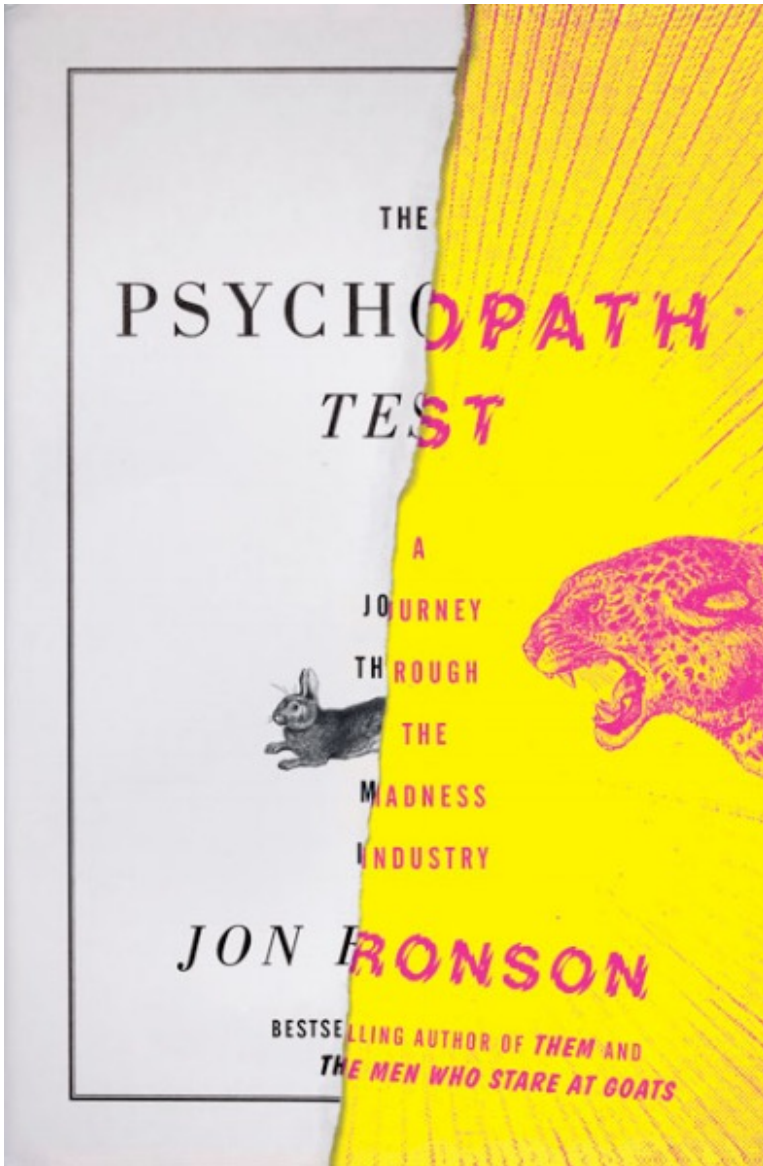
This clever cover design by Christopher Brand puts the focus on a scorched tablecloth — the perfect metaphor for the novel's simmering tensions. The burn-marks reveal the title and author's name scrawled out in handwritten lettering.



On Such a Full Sea
by Change-Rae Lee

Many dystopian novels opt for flashy covers, but this book jacket by designer Helen Yentus features minimal hand-lettering and a bob hairdo painted with visible ink marks.

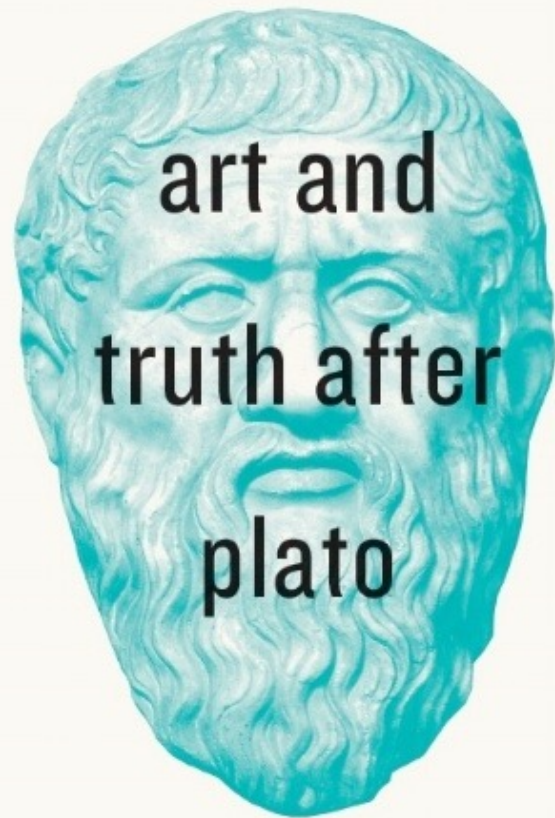
The faceless portrait represents the novel's main character, Fan, and the simple, hand-painted art complements the novel's serious tone.



The Psychopath Test *by Jon Ronson*

Designer Matt Dorfman created this shocking split-cover for Ronson's nonfiction work on mental health. Equal parts hilarious and horrifying, the book investigates occurrences of psychopathy in the general population.

The ripped-away cover perfectly represents the unexpected threat of psychopathy looming beneath the surface of our expectations. The left side resembles a classic academic textbook cover, while the right side appears to be torn away, revealing a bright, snarling jungle cat and chaotic typeface.



tom rockmore

Art and Truth After Plato
by Tom Rockmore

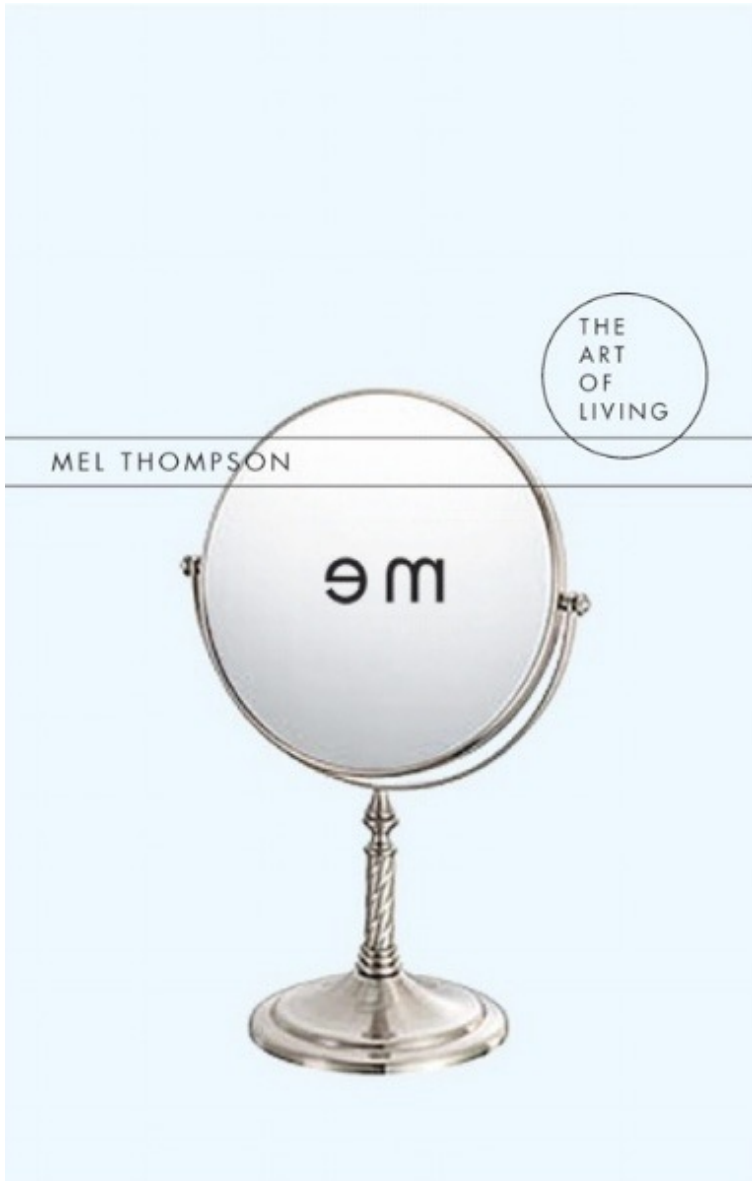
“Modern graphic design” probably isn't the first thing that comes to mind when you hear “Plato,” but this cover by Isaac Tobin might have you rethinking that association.

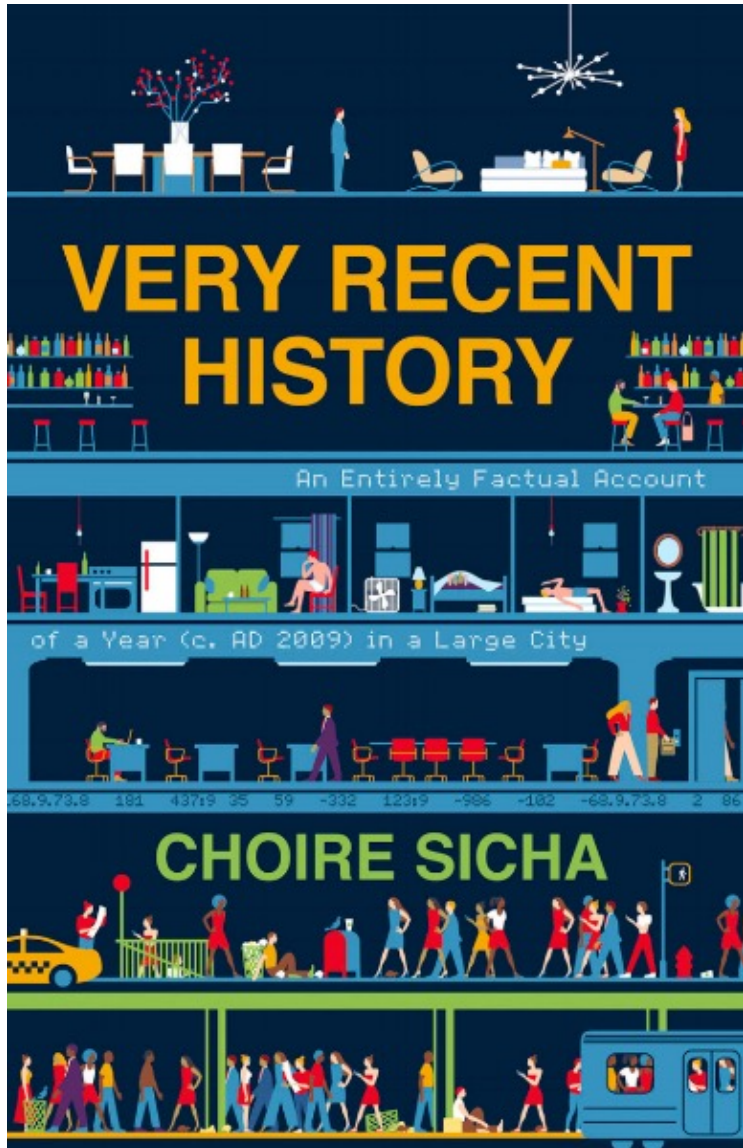
Tobin uses a vivid, two-tone silhouette of a Plato bust and contrasting lowercase text for the title, giving the ancient philosopher a 21st century makeover.

Me (The Art of Living)
by Mel Thompson

David Drummond designed this decidedly minimal cover for philosopher Mel Thompson's 2014 publication that explores self-reflection and the nature of self.

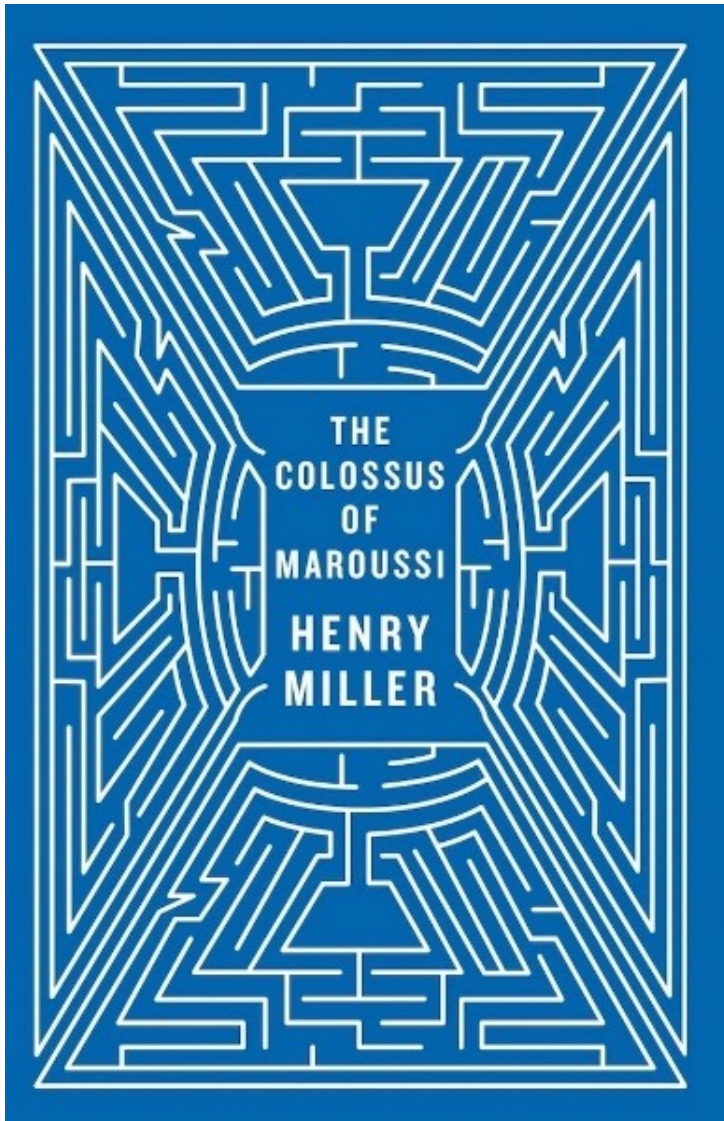
To represent these themes, a simple mirror graphic is anchored in the center, reflecting the book's title back at the viewer.





Very Recent History *by Choire Sicha*

There's a lot happening in this cover design for Sicha's novel of interweaving narratives in a single city. Designer Ben Wiseman captures the feeling of multiple lives running parallel in close proximity with his intricate cover illustration.



The Colossus of Maroussi *by Henry Miller*

The Colossus of Maroussi is a 1941 travelogue by American writer Henry Miller, chronicling his time in Greece during World War II. The original cover featured horizontal blue and white stripes across the book jacket: a minimal homage to the Greek flag.

This updated cover by designer Steve Attardo borrows similar elements from the 1941 cover, but takes them up a notch. Where the original used simple stripes, Attardo created a labyrinthine series of white lines over a blue backdrop.

{ "THIS IS A BOOK
TO TREASURE." } **V.E. SCHWAB** { BESTSELLING AUTHOR
DEBORAH
HARRNESS }



A DARKER SHADE OF MAGIC

A Darker Shade of Magic *by V.E. Schwab*

It can be a challenge for cover designers to distill the plot of a book into a single piece of work, but Will Staehle does a superb job of it in this cover he designed for the 2015 novel **A Darker Shade of Magic**.

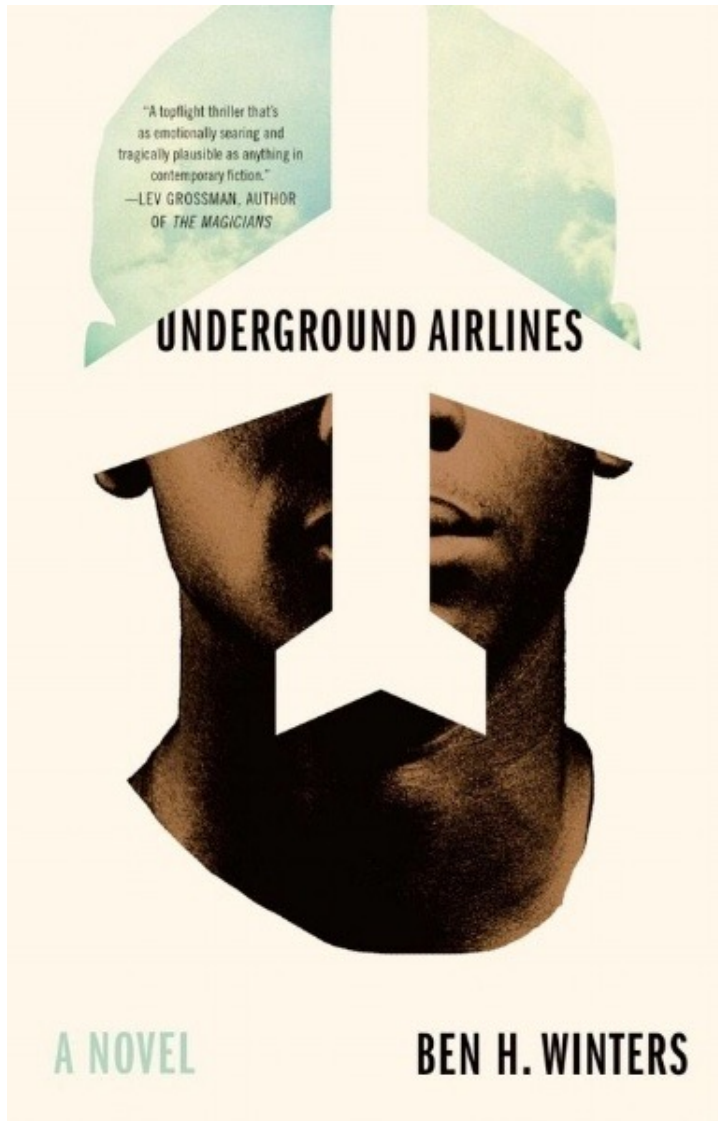
The book follows magicians who can travel between parallel universes in London. Staehle's design features two circular maps of London -- one red and one black -- with a caped figure jumping between them. It's a simple, elegant way to give browsers a peek at the magic tricks contained in the book's pages.



The Night Guest
by Fiona McFarlane

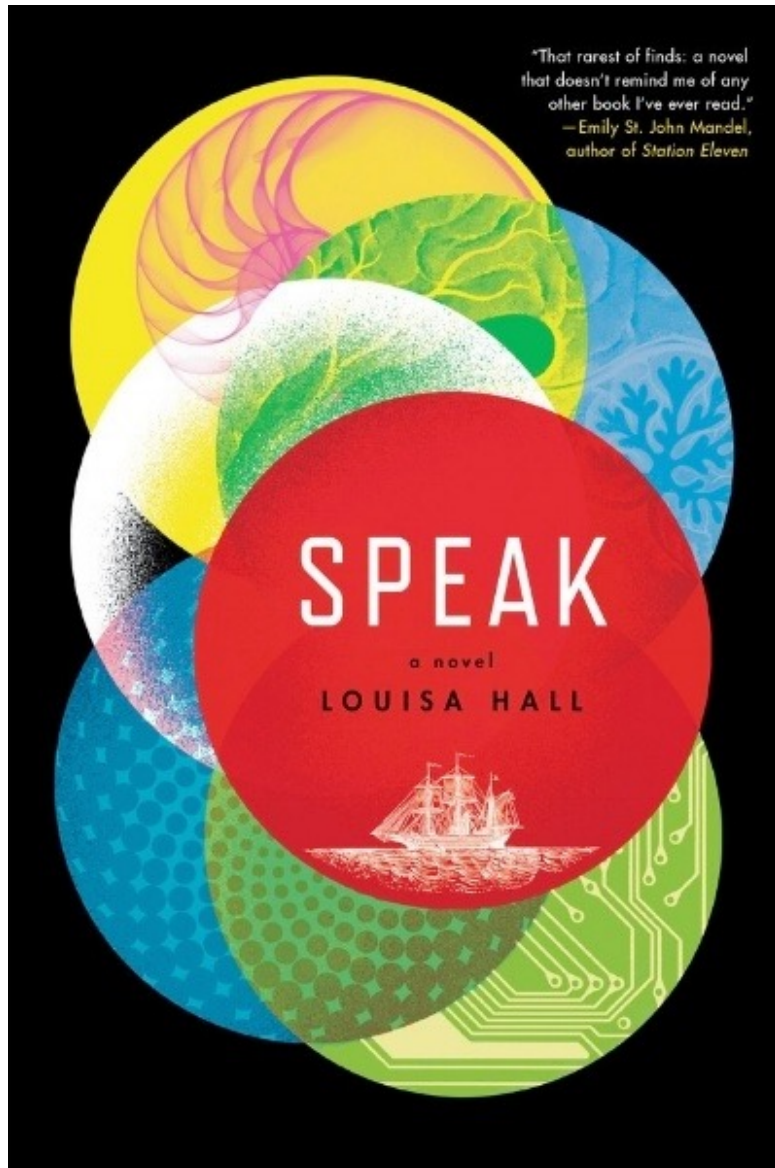
In McFarlane's debut novel, the protagonist Ruth is haunted by the sounds of a tiger roaring in the distance.

The focal point of this unique cover design by Charlotte Strick is the mesmerizing tiger illustration by Ariana Nehmad Ross. Tree branches twist and contort to form a predatory face, all while a serene figure sleeps in the mouth of the beast.



Underground Airlines *by Ben Winters*

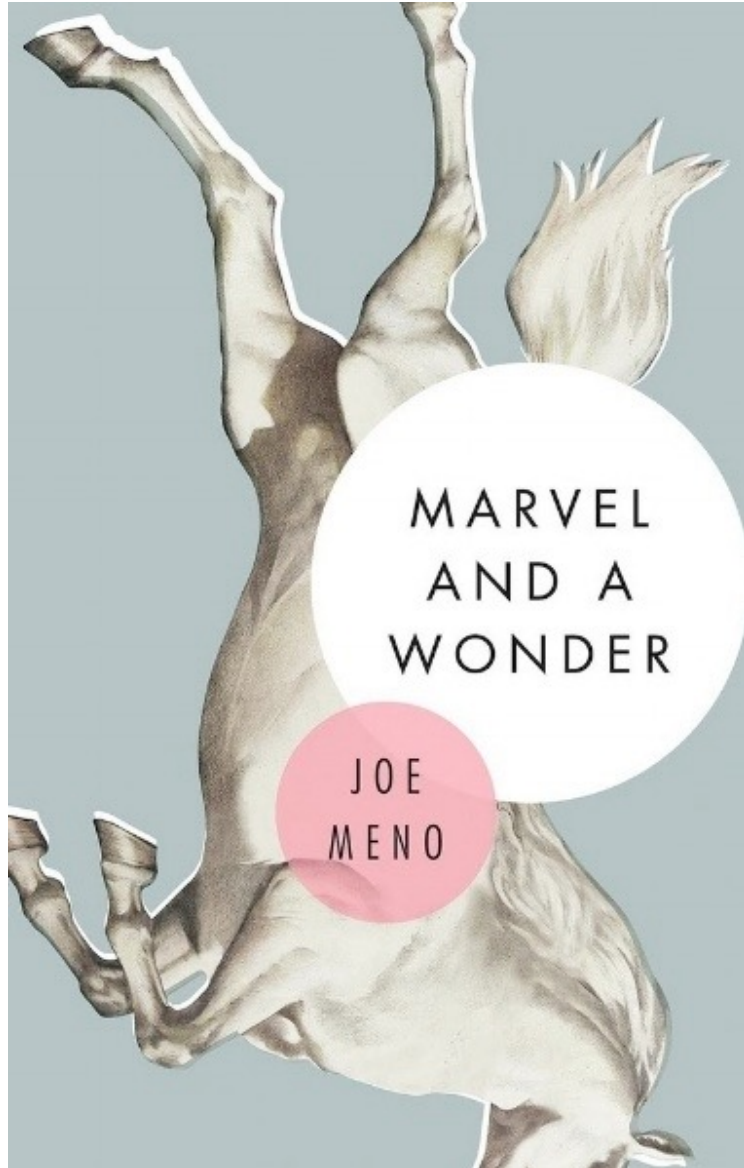
The negative silhouette of an airplane cuts over an anonymous face in this cover design by Oliver Munday. The effect is contemporary and dramatic, a perfect fit for this speculative fiction novel.



Speak *by Louisa Hall*

This science fiction novel contemplates what it truly means to be human in a world increasingly permeated by artificial intelligence.

To capture the essence of the book on the cover, designer Jim Tierney used bold, overlapping circles, some containing signs of natural evolution and one marked by the distinctive lines of a motherboard.



Marvel and a Wonder *by Joe Meno*

A failing farm. A boy who can talk to animals. A miracle in the form of a runaway racehorse. Joe Meno's novel is equal parts whimsy and emotional heft, and the cover perfectly captures this.

Designer Jon Resh worked alongside the author to develop this design. There's something distinctly off-kilter about the racehorse illustration running vertically down the center off the cover — an apt reflection of the book itself.