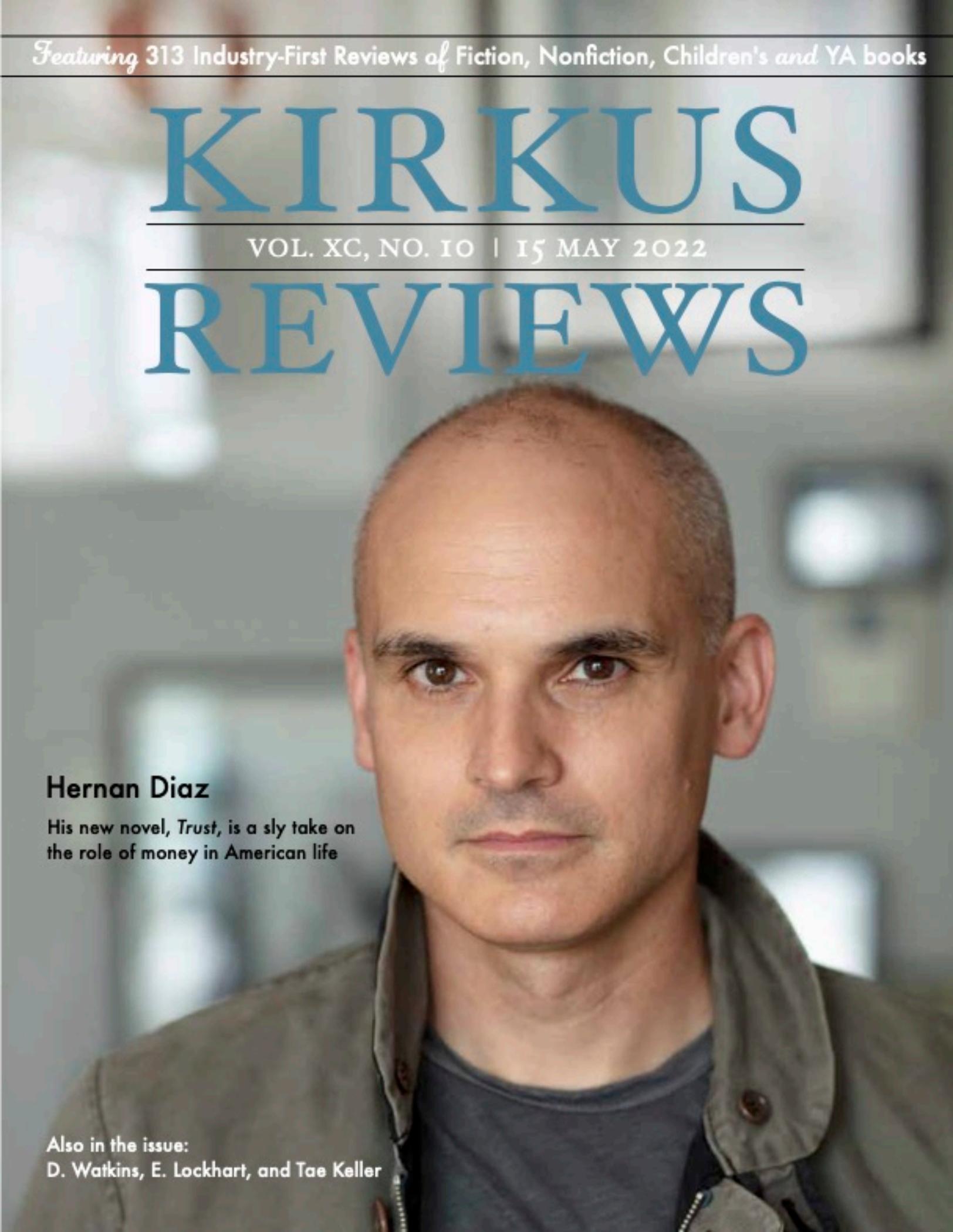


Featuring 313 Industry-First Reviews of Fiction, Nonfiction, Children's and YA books

KIRKUS

VOL. XC, NO. 10 | 15 MAY 2022

REVIEWS

A close-up portrait of author Hernan Diaz. He has a shaved head and is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. He is wearing a dark grey t-shirt under a light-colored, possibly olive green, jacket. The background is a blurred interior space with some light-colored panels or doors.

Hernan Diaz

His new novel, *Trust*, is a sly take on the role of money in American life

Also in the issue:

D. Watkins, E. Lockhart, and Tae Keller

“Roth and Penn ably depict the mixed emotions both animals and humans experience when encountering something new and possibly scary.”

LITTLE LOVABLE LUCY'S BIG DAY

character's older sister, whom she's never met. An extra touch of intrigue comes in the novel's exploration of the funeral industry: *You Only Die Once* is a green business, and Baynard uses natural elements like cloves and vanilla, rather than toxic formaldehyde, to freshen corpses. This series starter spends a lot of time on worldbuilding, introducing such lore as an elf-mage war and a Blood Pact. Minerva also has a complicated relationship with nemesis Prince Thorn, and the two share a devastating kiss that foreshadows a deeper emotional struggle in the future.

Fans of magic-school tales and Norse mythology will adore this exceptionally detailed YA series opener.



LITTLE LOVABLE LUCY'S BIG DAY

Roth, Norma E. & Shayna Rose Penn

Illus. by Adua Hernandez

Self (40 pp.)

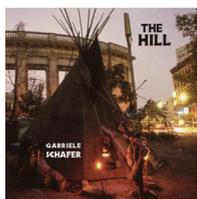
March 15, 2022

978-1-73766-300-3

A small pup meets her forever family in this simply worded picture book.

Lovable Lucy, a small brown pup with a white belly and white paws, is both excited and nervous about meeting her forever family. “My tail is very confused,” she confesses. But her new family members—a mother, a father, and three children—are all ready to love her and guide her around her new home. Lucy compares her curly fur, freckles, floppy ears, and brown eyes to the features of her diverse family members (depicted in Hernandez's illustrations as a family of varying skin tones, eye colors, and hair types). When the newness becomes overwhelming, her family steps in to help. Authors Roth and Penn ably depict the mixed emotions both animals and humans experience when encountering something new and possibly scary, even when it's exciting. The simple sentences and vocabulary make this a good choice for emerging readers, although Lucy's calling herself “little me” sometimes creates odd grammatical structures (“Little me is sleepy from my big day”). Hernandez's cartoon illustrations capture the family warmly welcoming Lucy into their home. The design choice to depict Lucy's wagging as text within the illustration makes for fun, repeated words throughout.

A sweet introduction to the process of welcoming a new pet.



THE HILL

Schafer, Gabriele

Photos by Andreas Sterzing & Margaret Morton

Autonomedia (216 pp.)

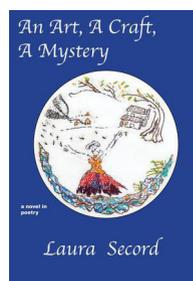
\$23.96 paper | Oct. 19, 2021

978-1-57027-384-1

Debut author Schafer presents a memoir of time spent with New York City's homeless.

On Thanksgiving evening in 1990, a reproduction of a Lakota tepee went up among a homeless encampment near the Manhattan Bridge. The encampment was known as The Hill. Those who put up the structure were, however, not the typical residents. The author and her partner, Nick Fracaro, had decided to set up their tepee as a way to commemorate the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee. The event eventually took on a life of its own. Not only did the tent remain standing, it became a gateway for getting to know the community of The Hill. Although the couple kept their apartment in Brooklyn, they wound up spending a lot of time among the locals. The Hill was home to heroin addicts, drunks, and formerly incarcerated people. Of course these were also people with families, pasts, and stories to tell. As the author states, “Generally, The Hill is a sad place.” This was often due to the fact that the “need for drug-money is all-powerful.” Still, high school students, tourists, and the media came to visit. It all comes to life in this collection of journal entries, photographs, newspaper clippings, and other miscellanea. Rather than provide an overarching statement on homelessness, the book lets the author's experiences speak for themselves—a powerful statement that doesn't force an agenda. From Juan, a pushover crack addict, to Mr. Lee, who diligently tends to his own shack, the individuals are as unique as they are tragic. For those on the Hill with nowhere else to go, “There is no option like ‘giving up,’ only completing one's destiny.” The reader comes to understand how “the future is not a concept on The Hill. Anything beyond today is a mystery.” Some entries, such as the author's attempts to secure grant funding, are, naturally, not quite as interesting. Nevertheless, the material forms a highly readable firsthand account that is neither overly sentimental nor dismissive. The work features sketches by the author, usually portraits of residents of the Hill, and includes no-frills photos by Morton and Sterzing.

A personal, informative portrayal of a unique New York community.



AN ART, A CRAFT, A MYSTERY
A Novel in Poetry

Secord, Laura

Livingston Press (181 pp.)

\$18.95 paper | \$9.95 e-book

Feb. 22, 2022

978-1-60489-303-8



Two women journey to Colonial America and are accused of witchcraft in poet Secord's debut novel in verse.

“Don't think these skills were simple, / they were an art, a craft, a mystery, / yet when the men took notice, / they doubted diligence and named it witchery,” reads the closing verse of this book's title poem. The skills to which the poet refers are those adopted by 17th-century women to nurture their communities—skills that outsiders distorted and called malevolent acts. This novel initially hurls the reader into the heart of London, England, at a time of plague. Lydea Gilbert and her niece, Kate, tend to the