

Poetry's Finest New Voices Lines That Linger

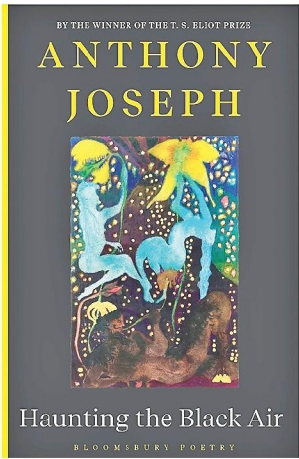
The Guardian (UK)

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Haunting the Black Air by Anthony Joseph; *Selected Poems* by Leontia Flynn; *Sparrow on the Rooftop* by Rachel Long; *You Must Live: New Poetry from Palestine*, edited by Jorie Graham; *Melete* by Jennifer Lee Tsai; *Somebody Should Have Pressed Record* by Galia Admoni

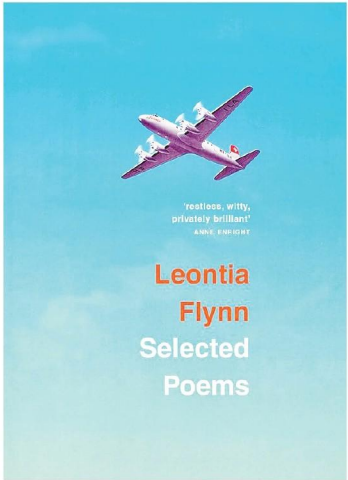
Haunting the Black Air by Anthony Joseph

Joseph's follow-up to the TS Eliot prize-winning *Sonnets for Albert* sees his poetic approach become more radical. He pays homage to avant garde writers such as Will Alexander and Nathaniel Mackey, while exploring "Nostalgia, mostly grief, / a haunting sound – / the frequency of some / magnetic feeling." That makes for challenging syntax on first reading the poems. Persist, and Joseph's unabashed lyricism shines through, finding beauty on dancefloors, city streets and in Trinidadian landscapes: "the way music fills the room, how we embrace until / we become flare bright, light as the white refraction / of the sun upon the summit of hills."



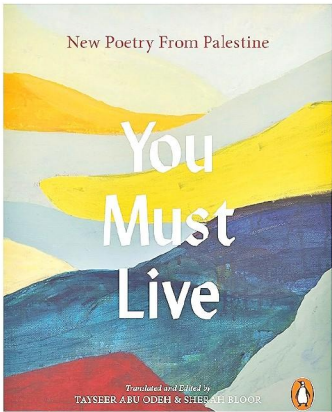
Selected Poems by Leontia Flynn

She was a Next Generation poet and Forward prize winner; it's a shock to remember that Flynn has been publishing for more than 20 years, so fresh do her poems remain. This assembly is a glorious reintroduction to her mordant wit, imaginative image-making and unerring ability to puncture pretension. Letter to Friends from 2011 is a brilliant, Auden-esque dissection of the early 21st century, worth a library of political analyses: "daily threats brought to our Way of Life / by man-made imminent apocalypse / though neither really outweighs private grief". There are pleasures on every page.



You Must Live: New Poetry from Palestine edited by Jorie Graham; translated by Tayseer Abu Odeh & Sherah Bloor

Featuring more than 30 poets living in Gaza and the West Bank, with work written in the last few years, these poems testify to the resilience of the artists, and the role that poetry still has to give voice and bear witness in times of crisis. Unsurprisingly, there's a taut urgency throughout: "who knows how we'll exit love. / Will it be on foot, will it be in a shroud?" as Hamid Ashour puts it. There's joy and humour too, even if the latter is pitch black, Khaled Juma's gravedigger exchanging shovel for excavator: "I have built a business with death. / Now we are first on the stock exchange. / Second to none."



Melete by Jennifer Lee Tsai

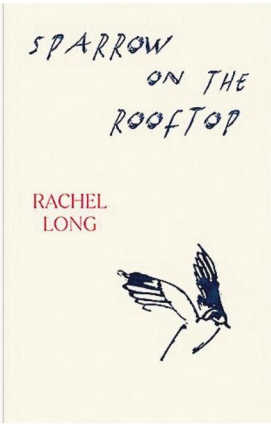
Lee Tsai's debut is a sprawling mix of poetry and prose exploring second-generation Chinese identity in the UK: "She cannot fully know her mother tongue / but she can speak the language / of the coloniser." The book feels roughly hewn, fiercely articulating the need to write: "She wants to empty the contents of her mind upon the page / and create something beautiful." In exploring "the splitting of myself into two halves", and showing the ambivalences in



making sense of it, Lee Tsai has made a landmark work about the British south-east Asian experience.

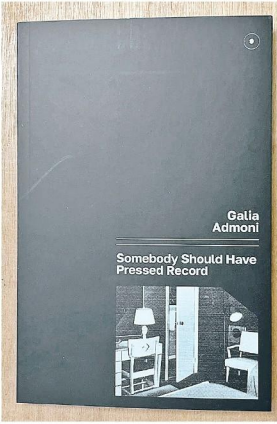
Sparrow on the Rooftop by Rachel Long

The playfulness in My Darling from the Lions, Long's debut, has been replaced in this second collection by a directness of diction and image. Repeatedly the poems, ranging across alcoholism, eating disorders and the grief triggered by the end of a relationship, pull you up with their unflinching gaze, such as in Sad Shower, after a work by Tracey Emin: "Now you are entirely / hungry, a rib on the pavement." Long's lightness of touch means the pain isn't overwhelming. Instead, she converts it into recovery: "that living- / room dancing might make it better; / and by increments, it does".



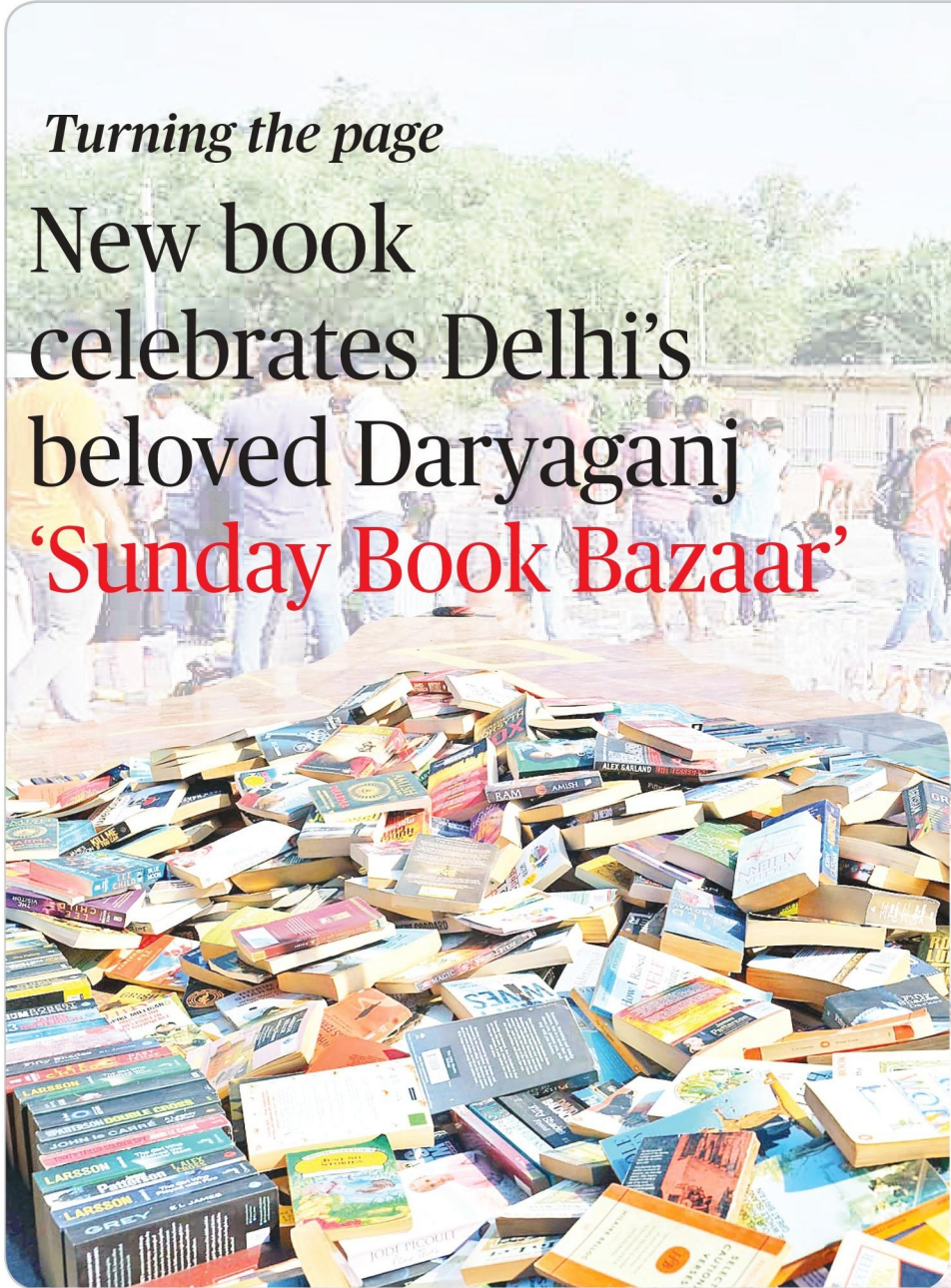
Somebody Should Have Pressed Record by Galia Admoni

How might you react to feeling lonely? Perhaps start a relationship with an imaginary version of Brassic actor Joseph Gilgun? That's the premise behind Admoni's narrative poem, where the central character is haunted by "Joe", part unreliable friend, part life coach: "Careful. They'll start giving you targeted ads for therapy." Admoni's tone is reminiscent of Georges Perec, both in its jabs at contemporary living and in what it reveals about the difficulties we have in making sense of ourselves in the absence of others: "Try saying 'I love you' in the mirror. / Your reflection says nothing." The conceit, and book, is a delight.



Turning the page

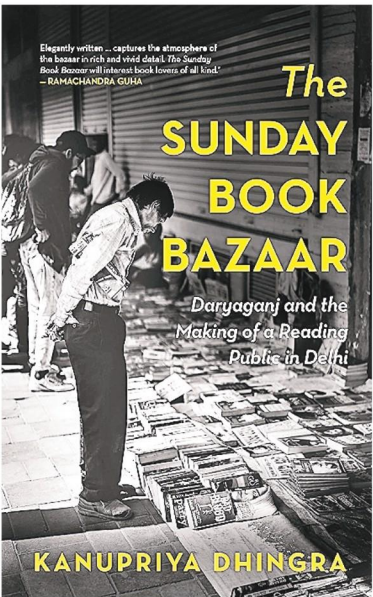
New book celebrates Delhi's beloved Daryaganj 'Sunday Book Bazaar'



For decades, an ordinary footpath in Old Delhi would go through a remarkable transformation on Sunday and turn into a haven for bibliophiles. A new book, "The Sunday Book Bazaar: Daryaganj and the Making of a Reading Public in Delhi", charts the history and cultural legacy of this unique literary marketplace. The book, currently available on pre-order, will hit the stands on June 25. It is written by author Kanupriya Dhingra and published by Speaking Tiger Books. In "The Sunday Book Bazaar", Dhingra traces the life of this remarkable market -- from its roots in the centuries old book cultures of Shahjahanabad to its rise as a second-hand book world of its own, and from its displacement and legal battles to its relocation inside Mahila Haat. "This is a story of resilience: of books emerging in the unlikely places, in chaotic yet somehow orderly ways, carried by booksellers who have built a reading public across decades of Sundays while surviving scrutiny, censorship, and indifference. "Researching it meant moving between archives and pavements, records and memories, always returning to the same insight -- that every city has its own joyful, unruly, necessary space, taken for granted until it disappears. Daryaganj is

Delhi's," Dhingra, a scholar of book history and print cultures, said in her statement. The Daryaganj Sunday Book Bazaar is renowned for drawing book lovers from different corners of Delhi into its orbit -- students on tight budgets, collectors, curious tourists, families, and lifelong 'shaukeen' chasing the thrill of an unexpected find. Its pavement stacks offer a world between covers: textbooks and comics, rare first editions and pirated bestsellers, forgotten magazines and discarded library holdings. Built by migrant booksellers, sustained by bargain hunters and bibliophiles, and animated by

the rhythms of the street, the bazaar grew into far more than a marketplace and became one of Delhi's most beloved cultural landmarks. Described by the publishers as part "urban history, part ethnography, and part memoir", "The Sunday Book Bazaar" asks a simple question: 'what makes a market more than a place of commerce'. "Who gets to read, who gets to sell, and who gets to occupy public space? And what does a city lose when it tides away the unruly, democratic spaces where its readers first learn to browse, bargain, linger, and belong?" The book has also earned praise from eminent historian Ramachandra Guha, who called it "mandatory reading" for citizens of Delhi seeking to understand their city more deeply -- even, or perhaps especially, those who do not themselves buy or read books.



Book: The Sunday Book Bazaar: Daryaganj and the Making of a Reading Public in Delhi
Author: Kanupriya Dhingra
Rating: ★★★★★ (4/5)