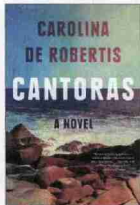


MEDIA SHELF

Love Stories, Cosmic Comics, and Conscious Eating

New works by Carolina De Roberts, Lisa Mezzacappa Six, and Sophie Egan.



Cantoras by Carolina De Roberts (Alfred A. Knopf, 2019, 317 pp., \$26.95)
 Five cantoras — or women who sing — come together in Uruguay during the brutal era of the revolutionary 1970s on isolated Cape Polonio with a sole lightkeeper. This novel about queer

love traces their lives from their secret sanctuary to their homes and daily routines in Montevideo as they try to live as gay women when homosexuality carried serious societal consequences such as torture and disappearance. Prompted by the author's discovery of once hidden queer life in Uruguay, this book follows Romina, Flaca, Anita "La Venus," Paz, and Malena over 35 years on their journeys to build lives expressing their true selves. The author teaches at San Francisco State University and lives in Oakland with her wife and two children. She is also the author of *The Invisible Mountain*, *Perla*, and *Z*.

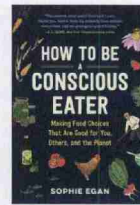
— Judith M. Gallman



Cosmicomics by Lisa Mezzacappa Six. (Queen Bee Records, queenbeerecords.com)

If East Bay bassist Mezzacappa were as active on the New York jazz scene as she is here, she'd be as heralded as such avant-garde composer-instrumentalists of her approximate generation as pianist Kris Davis, guitarist Mary Halvorson, and saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock. A relentless project developer, Mezzacappa based the 11 pieces here on author Italo Calvino's *Cosmicomics* stories. Complex but listener-friendly written passages, many in the "avant-noir" vein, open out into sprawling improvisations. Amalgams of experimental jazz, rock, and electronics — alternately dreamy and thorny, compact and free-ranging, and reminiscent of British band Henry Cow 40-plus years ago — are brilliantly realized by tenor saxophonist Aaron Bennett, electric guitarist John Finkbeiner, vibraphonist Mark Clifford, electronics wizard Tim Perkis, drummer Jordan Glenn, and Mezzacappa on acoustic bass. — Derk Richardson

— Derk Richardson



How to Be a Conscious Eater: Making Food Choices That Are Good For You, Others, and the Planet by Sophie Egan and illustrated by Iris Gottlieb (Workman Publishing, March 17, 2020, 270 pp., \$16.95)

Looking for a neat little guide to conscious eating? This tome is it. It's

jam-packed with tidbits from San Francisco author Sophie Egan, a science writer who can explain complicated concepts simply. And the illustrations by Iris Gottlieb help cement myths, facts, and fictions into memorable charts, graphics, and pictures. Egan, who holds a master's degree from UC Berkeley, suggests adhering to a conscious eater's checklist that addresses whether what you eat is good for you, good for others, and good for the planet. She places what we eat into four broad categories: food from plants, food from animals, food from factories, and food from restaurant kitchens. Each segment is color-coded and offers five top takeaways. — JMG

