

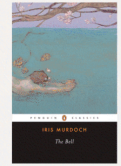
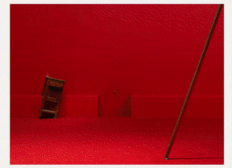
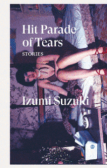


STAFF PICKS

Ed Atkins's *Flower*, Christine Turner's *Sun Ra: Do The Impossible*, and More

The shows, books, albums, and films BOMB's staff recommends this month.

JULY 7, 2025



SHARE

Exclusive to BOMB members, Staff Picks is a list of recommendations—old and new—by BOMB staff and contributing editors that will be published periodically.



Iris Murdoch's *The Bell*

(Penguin Classics, 2001; Chatto & Windus, 1958)

Fantastic. A novel about the tribulations of faith and fidelity that is so sharp, yet so tender, and, at times, so hot. The members of Imber Court, a fledgling lay community attached to a thirteenth-century abbey in the English countryside, have withdrawn from the modern world in search of religious fulfillment, a pursuit disrupted by visitors welcome and unwelcome. Iris Murdoch advances the plot through the thoughts and actions of three characters: a once-aspiring priest beset by spiritual ennui and homosexual desire, a frustrated artist seeking a way out of her turbulent marriage, and an Oxford-bound young man exercising adult agency for the first time. The triangle they form is, to paraphrase Murdoch, complicated and interesting. There's great humor here, and real tragedy. Murdoch's female god, the Abbess, seems to watch over all their exploits, eminent yet ever elusive.

—Tyler Considine, Managing Editor



David Berman's "Cassette County" from *Actual Air*
(Drag City, 2019)

When I first read the poem "Cassette County," I felt surprised to not have yet encountered someone from Richard Linklater's classic 1991 cult film *Slacker*—a world I imagine this poetry lives in—insisting on David Berman's work. "Cassette County" is a rare style of poetry, part of Berman's debut collection *Actual Air*, first published by Open City Books in 1999. Best known for forming the indie-rock band Silver Jews, in *Actual Air*, he strings together anaphoric cadences that resemble lyrics. Within it, "Cassette County" prefers associative, encoded references, erudition, melodic logic, and randomness to new-millennial poetry's trend toward narrative: "Hello," he writes, "to the nonfunctional sprig of parsley / and the game of finding meaning in coincidence." The speaker's embrace of poetry's unusefulness—as in Auden—happens to be deeply meaningful.

—Hanna Dobroszycki, Editorial Assistant



Ed Atkins's *Flower*
(Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2025)

Ed Atkins, renowned for his uncanny video art, brings his unsettling aesthetic to this ninety-six-page "anti-memoir." At times, it's a paean to pre-packaged food; at others, it felt so close to Atkins's stream of consciousness that I was worried I'd fall in. The book is as engaging as it is difficult to describe. Like an ultra-processed delicacy, *Flower* is delightfully alienating yet strangely recognizable. It's almost as if this book was not written but instead extruded directly from Atkins's mind and then shellacked with nanoplastics until it glistened.

—Benjamin Samuel, Senior Editor

Summer Gazpacho

You know it's summer when the cicadas are out and the geese are swimming in the local pond. Sunflowers abound and the garden is bursting with fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers. It's too hot to eat anything heavy, so what's better than to make a cool, refreshing summer gazpacho? Here's my favorite recipe:

Ingredients

- 1 cucumber
- 2–3 pounds ripe tomatoes, chopped
- ½ red bell pepper, decapped, stemmed, and seeded
- ¼ small red onion, rinsed
- 2 garlic cloves
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus more for garnish
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar or sherry vinegar
- ½ cup of extra-virgin olive oil
- 1¼ teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- Fresh herbs, such as rosemary and thyme

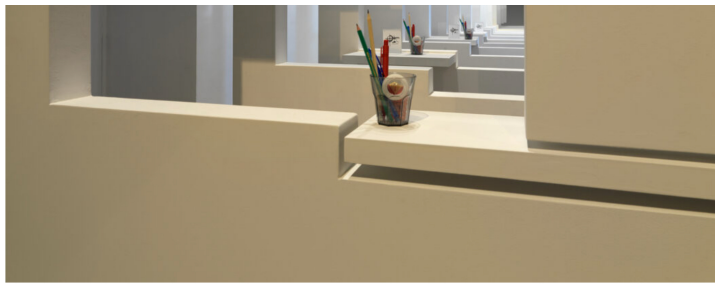
Finely chop one quarter of the cucumber and reserve for garnish. Peel the remaining cucumber, cut into chunks, and transfer to a blender. Add the tomatoes, peppers, onion, garlic, cilantro, vinegar, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Blend until smooth. Season to taste and chill for at least two hours. Serve garnished with the reserved diced cucumber, fresh herbs, drizzles of olive oil, and freshly ground black pepper.

—Laura Howard, Director, Advertising and Sponsorships



Installation view of Pedro Gómez-Egaña, *The Great Learning*, MIT List Visual Arts Center, 2025.





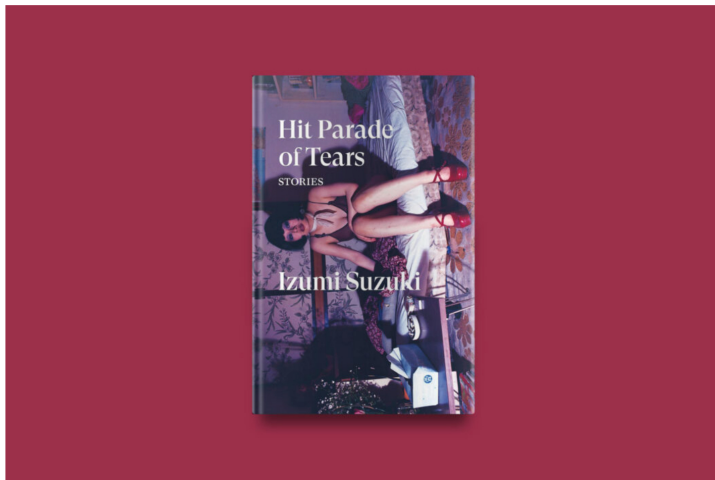
Installation view of Pedro Gómez-Egaña, *The Great Learning*, MIT List Visual Arts Center, 2025.

Pedro Gómez-Egaña's *The Great Learning*

(MIT List Visual Arts Center, February 21–July 27, 2025)

I was deeply inspired and moved by Pedro Gómez-Egaña's ambitious yet intimate installation when, by chance, I found myself at MIT List a few weeks ago. Time is slippery, profound, and powerful, and that this work could even begin to touch and play with its most magical and strange effects is remarkable. The performance of the gallery guard pushing and pulling the gigantic metal frame—which cuts through the many tiny rooms of the sculpture, moving furniture and accessories through perfectly cut out spaces in the Sheetrock—was also very moving. Had the sculpture operated itself, the effect would not have been as great.

—Sheryl Oppenheim, Institutional Giving Manager



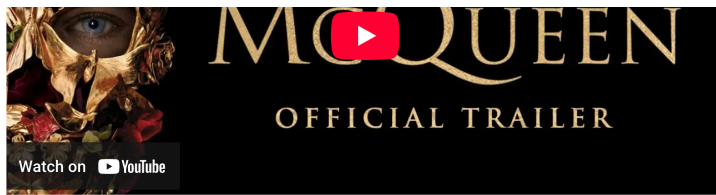
Izumi Suzuki's *Hit Parade of Tears*

(Verso, 2023)

When I saw Izumi Suzuki's *Hit Parade of Tears*, I pointed at the cover and said, "That." The photograph on the cover, a portrait of Suzuki by Nobuyoshi Araki, immediately drew me in: her deep purple eyeshadow, red ballet flats, and piercing look. I was not prepared for the witty, dark, and warped world she pulled me into through her collection of short stories that bridge reality, lust, and fantasy. Just like her portrait, Suzuki's voice is deeply intoxicating, revealing the most intimate and magical pieces of her life.

—Piper Fishkind, Intern





Ian Bonhôte and Peter Ettedgui's *McQueen*
(Lionsgate, 2018)

If you're looking to beat the heat indoors with a free-to-watch documentary on one of fashion's greats, *McQueen* is perfect for you. In under two hours, the documentary chronicles the life and work of British designer Alexander McQueen from his days apprenticing on Savile Row to his untimely death in 2010. *McQueen* puts his fashion legacy on full display, capturing the designer and creative genius at his best and his most divisive.

—Cathy Li, Intern

Mental Health First Aid Training

I was recently certified for "Mental Health First Aid" through an early-intervention course that teaches people to identify and respond to signs of mental health challenges and substance use disorders. I had always wanted to learn how I could help deescalate situations involving someone experiencing a mental health crisis without resorting to the police or other carceral systems but felt wholly unequipped to do so, especially in a world explicitly designed for us to depend on, benefit from, and blindly accept such systems. After some research, I registered for a training on the [Mental Health First Aid website](#), which was organized through CASES. After a full day of training, I left feeling a little more empowered to help prevent and intervene in moments of crisis in a way that wouldn't bring harm to others.

—Ha Duong, Associate Editor



Alystyre Julian's *Outrider*
(Independently distributed, 2025)

Outrider is less a filmic biography of the poet Anne Waldman and more a lyrical documentary of Waldman's sixty-year commitment to her practice. Like its subject, the film is expansive and generous in scope as it thematically narrates the different dimensions to Waldman's work as a poet, teacher, activist, and builder of alternative cultural institutions.

—Alan Gilbert, Web Editor

[Read our interview with Anne Waldman.](#)

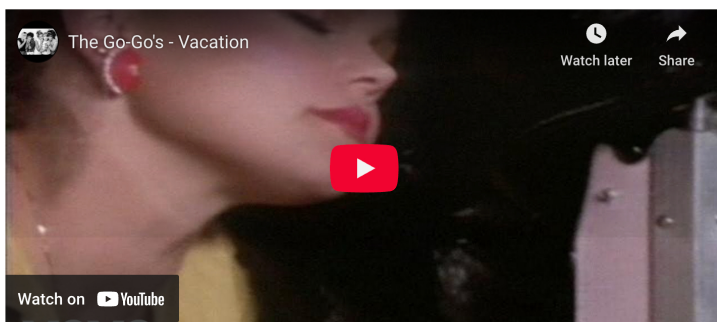


Sun Ra on stage with the Arkestra. Photo by Leni Sinclair.

Christine Turner's *Sun Ra: Do The Impossible*
(Firelight Films, 2025)

Christine Turner's latest documentary is an entertaining and informative exploration into the life and works of Sun Ra. Incredibly well-paced, the film provides an overview of Sun Ra's underexplored early life as a talented musician before he became the leader of The Arkestra and a philosopher, poet, and filmmaker. I was most impressed by the brilliant archival footage and candid interviews with Arkestra members, which excavate the roles of science, history, and myth in Sun Ra's method and process for his experimental music and writing.

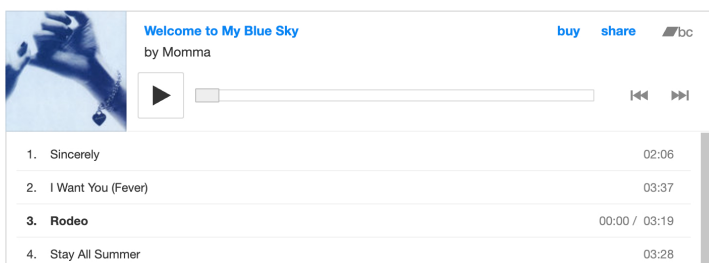
—Janée Moses, Oral History Project Director



The Go-Go's "Vacation" Music Video
(I.R.S. Records, 1982)

Campy and catchy, this slice of '80s MTV magic perfectly pairs iconic visuals with a hit summer anthem. The punk rock girl group effortlessly performs synchronized waterskiing while sporting tutus and tiaras.

—Leela Sze, Intern



5.	New Friend	03:44
6.	How to Breathe	03:30
7.	Last Kiss	03:13
8.	Bottle Blonde	02:39
9.	Ohio All The Time	03:04
10.	Welcome to My Blue Sky	03:12

Momma's *Welcome to My Blue Sky*

(Polyvinyl Records, 2025)

I have followed Momma very closely since *Interloper*, their debut album released in 2018. The development of their sound and lyricism has been all uphill from there. Songs on *Welcome to My Blue Sky* have traces of grunge ("Last Kiss") and dreamy pop ("Stay All Summer"), and the title track hits on a liberating breakup sentiment. If you're feeling nostalgic for '90s alt-rock radio, tune in to this group.

—Aatia Davison, Interim Digital Media Coordinator

Header credits, clockwise from left to right: Cover for Izumi Suzuki's *Hit Parade of Tears* (Verso, 2023); Sun Ra playing the piano. Photo by Hans Kumpf; installation view of Pedro Gómez-Egaña, *The Great Learning*, MIT List Visual Arts Center, 2025. Photo by Dario Lasagni; cover of Iris Murdoch's *The Bell* (Penguin Classics, 2001); cover of David Berman's *Actual Air* (Drag City, 2019); cover of Momma's *Welcome to My Blue Sky* (Polyvinyl Records, 2025).

Support BOMB's mission to deliver the artist's voice.

DONATE

JOIN/SUBSCRIBE

MORE Indie Music Documentary Film Experimental Writing
Exhibitions Music Videos

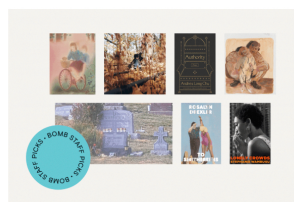
Sign up for our newsletter and get an email every week.

EMAIL ADDRESS

SUBMIT

By signing up, you agree to our [User Agreement](#) and [Privacy Policy & Cookie Statement](#).

READ MORE



STAFF PICKS

**Radu Jude's *Sleep #2*,
Lynne Tillman's *Thrilled
to Death*, and More**



EDITOR'S CHOICE

**bruno dario's *Lantana, or
the indissoluble
exhalation***

BY EMERSON GOO

EDITOR'S CHOICE

**Melissa Febos's *The Dry
Season: A Memoir of
Pleasure in a Year
Without Sex***

BY AYDEN LEROUX



EDITOR'S CUT

**Patrice Aphrodite Helmar
on Borges's "Matthew
XXV: 30"**

GET CLOSER. ↘ Become a member and connect with the artist's voice.

Supported by
**Bloomberg
Philanthropies**

SUBSCRIBE & JOIN NOW

[LISTEN TO THE PODCAST](#)

[READ THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT](#)

BOMB

DIRECTORIES

MFA Programs
Fellowships & Residencies

RESOURCES

Oral History Study Guides

ABOUT

About Us
Support
Patrons & Supporters
Masthead
Advertise
Events
Contact
Press Releases

SUPPORT

Become a Member
Donate
Other Ways to Give

