15 READS

Pertaining to
women's voices
place
family and community
languages
displacement
time
the stories we tell to
make sense of our world

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CAMPLE LINE

1 | Ursula Le Guin, *The Shobies' Story* in 'A Fisherman of the Inland Sea', 1995 (Harper Paperbacks)

A group of people board The Shoby and embark on a voyage into space, travelling there and back using faster than light propulsion. It is only when back on earth and sitting in their communal space around a hearth, as each relates their own unique and individual experience that time and space re-unite and a communal narrative is discovered. This short story was the inspiration for Rosalind Nashashibi's new two-part film.

2 | Atef Abu Saif, with a foreword by Noam Chomsky, *The Drone Eats with Me. Diaries from a City Under Fire*, 2015 (Comma Press)

Begun one month after Rosalind Nashashibi's film *Electrical Gaza* ends, Saif describes the mundane drudgery of survival during the 2014 Israel-Gaza Conflict, his fears for his friends and family, war as part of a child's life growing up in Gaza, the digitization of warfare and the terrorism of the drones.

3 | Mark Augé, (trans. Chris Turner), *No Fixed Abode*, 2013 (Seagull Books)

A fictional account of a man who having lost his flat, sleeps in his car and empty houses whilst attempting to maintain the appearance and routine of a working Parisian. Augé questions what is needed to remain part of a community and to retain the ability to relate to others without the security of home.

4 | John Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos*, (1984) 2005 (Bloomsbury Press)

Snapshots of imagistic prose, poetry and thought-provoking short texts contextualised within time and place. Beautiful and contained, the writing is rich with a romanticism of thought and image.

5 | Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems*, 2011 (Chatto & Windus)

Often beginning with place and the everyday: Brazil, Nova Scotia, a waiting room, a long distance bus, a giant toad, the ideas contained below the surface of her writing shift inwards. Like a miniature painting each situation is a contained world, described in a language which appears straightforward, confuting the complexity of her subjects: love, loss, belonging and alienation.

6 | J.M.G. Le Clézio, (trans. C Dickson), *Desert*, (1980) 2009 (Atlantic Books)

Moving between the defeat of the Touareg's by French colonial troops in the early 19th century, a shanty town on the edge of the desert in Morocco and the slums of Marseille towards the end of the 20th century, this is a lyrical exploration of loss and displacement, and the beauty of the desert where trauma explodes the parameters of past and present.

7 | Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, 1995 (Abacus)

Set in Haiti and America, this semi-autobiographical novel tells a story of displacement and return, of birth and death, of family – one born into, one created – and the lives of generations of women. The oral tradition is marked by the 'Cric! Crac?' which heralds the re-telling of a story, binding people to place, to their communal history and to each other.

8 | Nell Dunn, with a foreword by Ali Smith, *Talking to Women*, (1965) 2018 (Silver Press)

Dunn interviewed nine women living and working in London in 1964. Over a bottle of wine each talk frankly about their lives, their roles in society, relationships with men, the impact of children, juggling family and work. Interviewees include artist Pauline Botty, writer Edna O'Brien, and factory worker Kathy Collier.

9 | Alan Lightman, *Einstein's Dreams*, 1994 (Bloomsbury Classics)

Mechanical time, instinctive time, time as continuum, simultaneous time, time cherished, time constrained, time as metaphor, no time and therefore no past or future, textures of time. Brief vignettes, flashes of time in an unnamed German town. Or are they simply a young man's dreams?

10 | Atef Abu Saif (ed) *The book of Gaza, A City in Short Fiction*, 2014 (Comma Press)

Written during the Israeli occupations of Gaza in the 1970s and 1980s, the handwritten manuscripts of each short story, impossible to publish in the Strip, were smuggled to the world outside. The stories tell of the stifling position of women, of a population under occupation, a friendship between a Palestinian and an Israeli, the desire for freedom, the tedium of attempting to cross the border, fear, love and a kind of liberation to be found in the sea.

11 | Ahmet Hamdi Tanpier, (trans. Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe), with an introduction by Pankaj Mishra, *The Time Regulation Institute*, (1962) 2014 (Penguin Classics)

Hayri Irdals, is the luckless hero of this anarchic satire of life in Atatürk's Istanbul, fast transforming from a traditional Eastern influenced way of life to a time-bound Western model. Both are reflected in Hayri's account of his life story, which shifts between the detail found in the oral tradition and the confines of objective modernism. Caught between the old world and the new, Hayri is the victim of circumstance, never the master of his own destiny ...

12 | Rebecca Solnit, *The Faraway, Nearby*, 2013 (Granta)

Narrative threads woven across time and continents are held together by the story of Solnit's relationship with her mother suffering from Alzheimers. Triggered by the arrival of a box of ripe apricots gathered from her mother's garden, much of the book was written whilst on residency in the Library of Ice, Iceland.

13 | Chantal Akerman, *My Mother Laughs*, trans. Daniella Shreir, 2019 (Silver Press)

In 2013, the filmmaker Chantal Akerman's mother was dying. She flew back from New York to Brussels to care for her, and between dressing her, feeding her and putting her to bed, she wrote. She wrote about her childhood, the escape her mother made from Auschwitz but didn't talk about, the difficulty of loving her girlfriend, her fear of what she would do when her mother did die. Among these fragments of writing about her life, she placed stills from her films. *My Mother Laughs* is both the distillation of the themes Akerman pursued throughout her creative life, and a version of the simplest and most complicated love story of all: that between a mother and a daughter.

For young readers–

14 | John Ruskin, Illus, Quentin Blake, *The King of the Golden River*, (1851) 2019 (Thames & Hudson)

Written in 1841 and then published ten years later, Ruskin's story tells of Treasure Valley, the natural resources and beauty of which are diminished by the greed of two brothers Hans and Schwarz. Written as a fable, Ruskin's story might seem more relevant than ever in its understanding of how the actions of man impact upon the earth and its resources, and that these are powerful ideas for children and young people to grasp.

15 | Michelle Knudsen, *Library Lion*, 2006 (Candlewick Press). Illustrated by Kevin Hawkes. Suggested ages 4+

Miss Merriweather, the head librarian, is very particular about rules in the library. No running allowed. And you must be quiet. But when a lion comes to the library one day, no one is sure what to do. There aren't any rules about lions in the library. And, as it turns out, this lion seems very well suited to library visiting and even undertaking the odd job or two. His big feet are quiet on the library floor. He makes a comfy backrest for the children at story hour. His tail is useful for dusting. But when Miss Merriweather has an accident, the lion quickly comes to the rescue in the only way he knows how.

15 Reads is inspired by the programme and selected by Jane McArthur, Chair, CAMPLE LINE Programme group