

# BOOKS

*The Celts: Life, Myth, and Art*  
Juliette Wood  
(Raincoast Books)

One word for this book: fantastic. It contains fully detailed maps and geographic information about the ancient Celtic people. It covers its history from its humble beginnings to how the Celtic influence ran from Ireland to as far as Asia Minor. It reveals how the Celts were considered fierce and powerful fighting people and how a Celtic tribe named the "Galli" (the Gauls) sacked and looted Rome.

This book has fantastic and breathtaking images of European landscapes that contained many of the Celtic villages and cities of the past. The book also has many wonderful pictures of actual artifacts found in a recent site contained in Austria. Most of the ancient art work and artifacts contain spectacular bronze and gold craftsmanship that is considered unusual for that time period. However, the entire book is not written in a highly academic tone, but it is written mainly as an "easy to read for all types of people." The author, Dr. Juliette Wood, is a lecturer at the Welsh at the University of Wales, and the College of Cardiff. Her past publications include *Celtic Goddesses: Myths and Mythology*, *The feminist Companion to Mythology*, and *The Horse in Welsh Folklore*. Wood has achieved an excellent account of the Celtic people and I would recommend the book to anybody with any interest in the Celts.

- Brody Morrison

*Malt Whiskey: A contemporary Guide*  
Graham Moore  
(Raincoast Books)

What can I say about this book? As you can guess by the title this is a book about malt whiskey. This book is full of information for those who call whiskey their favourite type of drink. It doesn't just tell you how to make it, but gives you amazing bits of facts and information about whiskey.

"Scientific analysis has proved that whiskey contains some 800 chemical compounds, but exactly how these compounds relate to each other and interact has never been discovered," according to the book. "It has never been more true that ignorance is bliss... Scotch whisky will remain a magical substance, and if that discovery is made the magic will die." The author also gives an wonderful tour and description of malt whiskey markets. This description is done region by region of Scotland. This description includes how to properly read and interpret a whiskey labels. It also gives some accounts of brand name labels' histories, such as that of Glenfiddish malt whiskey. Glenfiddish is an old company that got started during prohibition and was a major bootlegger. Over all, I would recommend this book for whisky lovers and for those who are curious about the drink and how it is made.

- Brody Morrison

*Monstrum*  
By Philip James  
Arrow Books.

The question of "Who lost Russia?" to the economic and political chaos that seems set to consume the Russian people is already on the lips of people in the know in North America and Europe. These same people, of course, have no idea just how they could have kept Russia from sinking into economic and political chaos. The thriller *Monstrum* takes a look at this new, jaded, Russia.

*Monstrum* was written by one Philip James, a free-lance author who wrote *The Fall of the Russian Empire* in 1985, predicting the collapse of the Soviet empire in Europe. The story is set in the Russia of 2015, which has been devastated by a bitter civil war between resurgent Communists and democratic forces. Narrated by Constantin Vadim - a police detective from the northern city of Murmansk and former husband of the leader of a prominent Communist army - *Monstrum* explores Russia in the aftermath of a century of violence, criminal and otherwise.

People who are both interested in Russia and like reading well-written thrillers should pick up *Monstrum*.

- Randy McDonald

more good '98  
records...  
continued from p.10

last *oeuvre* is a fitting way to say goodbye. This is pop at its best: poppy and popular. From the straight-ahead opening track, "Attitude" to the fiercely melancholy "Sometimes," each song of this album is penned with melody and infection in mind. The saddest sads and happiest happies, and you can sing-along with all of them.

Strawberry  
Brokeheart Audio  
(No Records)

PEI's transplanted Strawberry has put together a delicious album of a dozen solid tracks, clocking in at over 60 minutes. Their soothing brand of infrapop is characterized by airy vocals and innovative instrumentals. "On the Bottom" and "The Seven Eyeball Waltz" are among the album's entrancing experiments in swirling layers.

Beck  
Mutations  
(DGC)

Beck surprised a lot of those who thought "Where it's at" is where "it" should stay with a raspier, rawer disc of organic tunes. The ample samples and electronics prevalent on *Odelay!* have been usurped in favour of more sparse instrumentation with typical Beck lyricism. A hidden track offers solace for audiophiles wanting his last work.

next week: Sloan, Neutral Milk Hotel, Portishead, Knifey Moloko, Zwerg. 1998. What a year.

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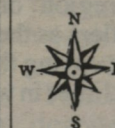
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