

Graham Swift

Writer - fiction

Graham Swift was born in 1949 and is the author of nine novels. He is the recipient of many awards for his fiction, including the bi-annual Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize for SHUTTLECOCK (1981); the *Guardian* Fiction Prize for WATERLAND (1983); and in 1996, the Booker Prize for Fiction for LAST ORDERS. Two of his novels have been made into films: WATERLAND, starring Jeremy Irons, and, more recently, LAST ORDERS, starring Michael Caine, Helen Mirren, Bob Hoskins and Tom Courtenay.



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Publications

Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
HERE WE ARE 2020 UK Simon & Schuster US Knopf	It is Brighton, 1959, and the theatre at the end of the pier is having its best summer season in years. Ronnie, a brilliant young magician, and Evie, his dazzling assistant, are top of the bill, drawing audiences each night. Meanwhile, Jack - Jack Robinson, as in 'before you can say' - is everyone's favourite compère, a born entertainer, holding the whole show together. As the summer progresses, the off-stage drama between the three begins to overshadow their theatrical success, and events unfold which will have lasting consequences for all their futures. Rich, comic, alive and subtly devastating, Here We Are is a masterly piece of literary magicianship which pulls back the curtain on the human condition.

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MOTHERING SUNDAY 2016 Simon & Schuster, Knopf	<p>It is March 30th 1924.</p> <p>It is Mothering Sunday.</p> <p>How will Jane Fairchild, orphan and housemaid, occupy her time when she has no mother to visit? How, shaped by the events of this never to be forgotten day, will her future unfold?</p> <p>Beginning with an intimate assignation and opening to embrace decades, Mothering Sunday has at its heart both the story of a life and the life that stories can magically contain. Constantly surprising, joyously sensual and deeply moving, it is Graham Swift at his thrilling best.</p>
ENGLAND AND OTHER STORIES 2014 Simon & Schuster	<p>These twenty-five new stories mark Graham Swift's return to the short form after seven acclaimed novels and confirm him as a master storyteller. They unite into a richly peopled vision of a country that is both a crucible of history and a maze of contemporary confusions. Meet Dr Shah who has never been to India and Mrs Kaminski, on her way to Poland via A meet Holly and Polly who have come to their own Anglo-Irish understanding and Lily Hobbs, married to a shirt; Charlie and Don who have seen the docks turn into Docklands; Mr Wilkinson the weirdo next door; Daisy Baker who is terrified of Yorkshire; and Johnny Dewhurst, stranded on Exmoor. Graham Swift steers us effortlessly from the Civil War to the present day, from world-shaking events to the secret dramas lived out in rooms, workplaces, homes. With his remarkable sense of place, he charts an intimate human geography. In doing so he moves us profoundly, but with a constant eye for comedy. Binding these stories together is Swift's grasp of the universal in the local and his affectionate but unflinching instinct for the story of us all: an evocation of that mysterious body that is a nation, deepened by the palpable sense of our individual bodies finding or losing their way in the nationless territory of birth, growing up, sex, ageing and death.</p>
WISH YOU WERE HERE 2011 UK: Picador; US: Alfred A. Knopf; Chinese (simplified): People's Literature; Czech: Albatros; French: Gallimard; Greek: Hestia;	<p>On an autumn day in 2006, on the Isle of Wight, Jack Luxton, former Devon farmer and now the proprietor of a seaside caravan park, receives the news that his soldier brother Tom, not seen for years, has been killed in Iraq.</p> <p>For Jack and his wife Ellie this will have a potentially catastrophic impact. For Jack in particular it means a crucial journey—to receive his brother's remains, but also into his own most secret, troubling memories and into the land of his and Ellie's past.</p> <p>WISH YOU WERE HERE is both a gripping account of things that touch and test our human core and a resonant novel about a changing England. Rich with Graham Swift's love of the local, full of humour and tenderness in the face of tragedy, it is also, inescapably, about a wider, afflicted world. Moving towards an almost unbearably tense climax, it allows us to feel the stuff of headlines—the return of a dead soldier from a foreign war—as heart-wrenching personal truth.</p>

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<p>TOMORROW 2010 UK: Picador; US: Knopf; Canada: Random House; Czech: Euromedia Group; French: Gallimard; German: DTV; Greek: Hestia; Romanian: P</p>	<p>On a midsummer's night Paula lies awake, Mike, her husband of twenty-five years asleep beside her, her two teenage children, Nick and Kate, sleeping in nearby rooms. The next day, she knows, will redefine all their lives.</p> <p>Recalling the years before and after her children were born, she begins a story which is both a glowing celebration of love possessed and a moving acknowledgement of the fear of loss, of the fragilities, illusions and secrets on which even our most intimate sense of who we are can rest.</p> <p>It is 1995. A revelation lies in store. Her children's future lies before them. The house holds a family's history and fate. As a millenium draws to its close, and as day draws nearer, Paula's intensely personal thoughts touch on all our tomorrows.</p> <p>Brilliantly distilling half a century into one suspenseful night, as tender in its tone as it is deep in its soundings, TOMORROW is a magical exploration of coupledness, parenthood and selfhood, and a unique meditation on the mystery of happiness.</p>
<p>LAST ORDERS 2010 UK: Picador; US: Knopf; Canadian: Random House Canada; Catalan: Destino; Chinese (simplified): Yilin Press; Chinese (complex): A</p>	<p>Four men once close to Jack Dodds, a London butcher, meet to carry out his peculiar last wish: to have his ashes scattered into the sea. For reasons best known to herself, Jack's widow, Amy, declines to join them.</p> <p>On the surface the tale of a simple if increasingly bizarre outing, LAST ORDERS is Graham Swift's most richly surprising novel to date and his most poignant exploration of the complexity and courage of ordinary lives. A journey on many levels, as universal as it is vividly local, it is funny, moving and humane.</p>
<p>THE LIGHT OF DAY 2006 UK: Hamish Hamilton; US: Knopf; Canadian: Random House Canada; Catalan: Anagrama; Czech: Euromedia; Danish: Samlerens; Dutch: De</p>	<p>Sarah is into the second year of her life sentence for the murder of her husband, Bob. Every fortnight she is visited in prison by George, the private eye she employed to observe the final stage of Bob's adulterous affair, who might just have saved Bob's life. As in his Booker-winning novel LAST ORDERS, Graham Swift transforms ordinary lives through extraordinary story-telling.</p> <p>THE LIGHT OF DAY combines a powerful love story and a narrative of intense suspense into a brilliant, tender and far-reaching novel about what drives people to extremes of love and hate.</p>

Non-Fiction

Publication Details Notes

**MAKING AN
ELEPHANT**

2010

UK: Picador; US:

Knopf; Chinese:

Yilin; Dutch: De

Bezige Bij; Greek:

Hestia;

As a novelist, Graham Swift delights in the possibilities of the human voice, imagining his way into the minds and hearts of an extraordinary range of characters. In *Making an Elephant*, his first ever work of non-fiction, the voice is his own. As generous in its scope as it is acute in its observations, this highly personal book is a singular and open-spirited account of a writer's life. Swift brings together a richly varied selection of essays, portraits, poetry and interviews, full of insights into his passions and motivations, and wise about the friends, family and other writers who have mattered to him over the years. Kazuo Ishiguro advises on how to choose a guitar, Salman Rushdie arrives for Christmas under guard, and Ted Hughes shares the secrets of a Devon river. There are private moments, too, with long-dead writers, as well as musings on history and memory that readers of Swift's novels will recognize and love.

A journey through place and time, *Making an Elephant* is a book of encounters, between a son and his father, between an author and his younger selves, between writer and reader, and between friends. It brims with charm and candour, and tells of alertness to experience and a true engagement with words, in short, with what it means to feel that writing and reading are an essential part of living.
