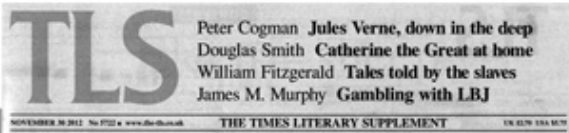




REVIEWS

Books of the Year: Gabriel Josipovici chooses *The Number and the Siren*
Times Literary Supplement, Nov 2012



NOVEMBER 30 2012 No 5722

Books of the Year

- | | |
|---|---|
| Hilary Mantel, Frederic Raphael, Ali Smith, Jeremy Treglown, Ruth Scurr, Elaine Showalter, Stanley Wells, A. S. Byatt, Roy Foster, Katherine Duncan-Jones, A. N. Wilson | Mary Beard, Peter Green, John Ashbery, Marjorie Perloff, Simon Jenkins, Brian Vickers, Peter Thonemann, Paul Muldoon, Rowan Williams, Graham Robb, Alex Clark |
|---|---|

Memory in our time

John Sutton



Hal Jensen
 A Clockwork
 Orange on
 stage

deep in our genetic make-up. We are groups, interests, tribes, collectives. Reason is our sword and shield, not a genuine exchange of argument – or every debate would end in agreement. Haidt well explains the hysterical polarities of today’s blogosphere.

GABRIEL JOSIPOVICI

Who would have thought that a book on Mallarmé’s *Un Coup de dés*, one of the austere peaks of modernist poetics, would be a page-turner? But that is precisely what Quentin Meillassoux’s remarkable study, *The Number and the Siren* (Urbanomic/Sequense Press) turns out to be. I haven’t read a critical book with such eagerness to find out what happens next for a very long

Chinocoteague pony; from *The Majesty of the Horse* by Tamsin Pickeral and Astrid Harrison (288pp. Collins. £25. 978 0 00 746689 4)

time. Beautifully produced and translated (by Robin MacKay), this is a book every poetry lover will want to have in his pocket to read on bus, train and plane.

Kirsty Gunn’s *The Big Music* (Faber) seeks to give voice to the bleak and silent loneliness of the Scottish Highlands through meticulous adherence to the form of the high-

est mode of bagpipe music, the pibroch. It begins as it ends: “The hills only come back the same: I don’t mind, and all the flat moorland and the sky. I don’t mind, they say, and the water says it too . . . and the mountains”. It reminded me not of any British writer but of Faulkner. It is one of the finest novels of the past decade.

