

# ARTNEWS

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### THE YEAR IN BOOKS—UNDER THE COVERS, BETWEEN THE LINES

by Katherine MacMahon, Claire Selvin



*So many books, so little time! Yet we read what we can and find ourselves enriched as a result. In tribute to some (but by no means all) of the books we turned to when in want or need of learning, here's a list of favorites from 2018. - The Editors*

When the downtown gallery and bookseller Karma put on New York's first exhibition in more than a half-century of the inimitable American surrealist Gertrude Abercrombie, the walls teemed with the artist's eerie—and charming—paintings of moons, cats, owls, shells, oceans, barren landscapes, ostrich eggs, and more. The accompanying catalogue offers an intimate look at Abercrombie's life and career (via essays by Robert Storr, Susan Weininger, and Robert Cozzolino), as well as photos of Abercrombie stationed among the many curiosities in her Chicago home or engaging with her friends. Also featured are a transcript of a 1977 radio interview with Studs Terkel and excerpts from Abercrombie's own *Joke Book*, a journal filled with encounters with others as well as anecdotes about her family. In one colorful entry, she wrote, "A man, a well-known scholar—he worked on the atom-bomb project—asked me why I painted the moon in a room, and I said, 'Yes it is a puzzle. Why is it anywhere?'" —Claire Selvin