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RARE BIRD AND UNNAMED TO JOINTLY REISSUE TWO ACCLAIMED CLASSIC NOVELS BY HOWARD A. RODMAN ON MAY 19

LOS ANGELES, MARCH 2—Leading Los Angeles-based independent publishing houses Rare Bird and Unnamed Press are pleased to announce the publication of new editions of Howard A. Rodman’s novels, *Destiny Express* (release date: May 19, ISBN-13: 978-1644285534, trade paperback, 224 pages, \$20), originally published in 1990, and *The Great Eastern* (release date: May 19, ISBN-13: 978-1644285541, trade paperback, 352 pages, \$20), originally published in 2019. These Rare Bird/Unnamed titles are distributed to the trade by Simon & Schuster.

Praise for the work of Howard A. Rodman:

Destiny Express is “daringly imagined and darkly romantic—a moral thriller.” —Thomas Pynchon

“The sleek facade of Lang and von Harbou’s marriage is depicted in [*Destiny Express*] with the artfulness of one of their exquisitely structured screenplays” —Deborah Mason, *New York Times Book Review*

The Great Eastern is “a kind of return to what adventurous literature used to be.” —Brian Evenson, *Los Angeles Review of Books*

The Great Eastern is “The ultimate confluence of the nineteenth century, its technological advances, anti-heroes, and crimes.” —Walter Mosley

Howard A. Rodman is the author of the novels *Destiny Express* and *The Great Eastern*. His work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Black Clock*, and elsewhere. As a screenwriter his films include *Joe Gould’s Secret*; *August* with Josh Hartnett, Rip Torn, and David Bowie; and *Savage Grace* with Julianne Moore and Eddie Redmayne.

On television, he’s written for *Fallen Angels* and staffed on HBO Max’s *The Idol*. He’s a vice president of the Academy for Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and a past president of the Writers Guild of America West. Rodman is one of seventeen members of the Screenwriters Hall of Fame, and was knighted by the Republic of France as an Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

As an academic, Rodman is professor and former chair of the division of screenwriting at USC; as a journalist, he’s published hundreds of articles beginning with his tenure as editor-in-chief of the *Cornell Daily Sun*. In 2011 Rodman organized the nationwide *Fantômas* centennial, and remains on the steering committee of NOIRCON. Those who lived through the post-punk era in lower Manhattan may have seen him play guitar with the bands Arsenal and MADE IN USA. A proud son of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Rodman currently lives in Los Angeles.

About *Destiny Express*:

Hailed as “caviar for the art-film buff” by *Kirkus Reviews*, the novel *Destiny Express* captures the glamour and the terror of an era, dramatizing the perilous moment when art, politics, and destiny converged on the tracks out of Berlin.

Berlin, the last day of February, 1933. The Reichstag lies in smoldering ruins, a new world about to spring from its ashes. And now for German filmmakers the choices are stark: stay and collaborate with a government that believes in cinema’s power to shape reality, or leave everything behind. *Destiny Express* is the story of Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou, husband and wife, director and screenwriter—together, they made some of the greatest films of all time: *M.*, *Metropolis*, *Doctor Mabuse*. As each day is torn from the calendar they watch as one by one Bertolt Brecht, Max Ophuls, Billy Wilder, take the next train out. *Destiny Express* follows Lang, von Harbou, and a host of real and fictional others—novelist-turned-

minister-of-culture Joseph Goebbels, American café Surrealist Sam Harrison, Mercedes racing champ Otto Merz, film star Rudolf Klein-Rogge, a pair of not-so-secret police—as their paths converge, intertwine, and separate across the grid of Berlin, from the artificial daylight of the UFA soundstage to the artificial night of Berlin's most exclusive and decadent nightclubs.

Harsh lights, long shadows: the perfect setting for a deeply researched, deftly imagined tale, as one character puts it, of “crime, gambling, cocaine, jazz, stock exchange maneuvers, smuggling, hypnosis, counterfeiting, violence, Expressionism.” *Destiny Express* is the story of a marriage at the end of its passion, at the edge of history—all at the end of an era when film was to mean more than it ever would again.

About *The Great Eastern*:

From the shipyards of London to the ports of New York, from the undersea abyss to the halls of empire, *The Great Eastern* is a sweeping tale of invention, rebellion, and the war between creation and destruction.

A vast iron ship. Two legendary captains. A battle for the soul of an age.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the world stood on the brink of transformation. Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the audacious engineer, dares to build the largest vessel ever conceived—the *Great Eastern*, a ship so immense it might stitch continents together with telegraphic wire. But beneath the waves lurks Captain Nemo, haunted genius of the submarine *Nautilus*, sworn enemy of empire and progress alike. When Nemo discovers Brunel's plans, he vows to destroy both the ship and the world it represents.

Into this collision of titans steps another ghost of literature and legend: Captain Ahab, dragged from his watery grave, driven by obsession and vengeance, and drawn inexorably into the struggle between Brunel's vision and Nemo's rage.

At once a thrilling sea adventure and a subversive reimagining of classic myth, Howard A. Rodman's audacious novel resurrects larger-than-life characters to tell a story that is as strange and wondrous as the century that gave birth to them. As Ricky Jay put it, “*The Great Eastern* is a nook of confabulations, real and imagined. Surprises on every page. A splendid and notable achievement.”

About the publishers:

Unnamed Press and Rare Bird Books are two of Alta's “four Los Angeles presses committed to independent literature.”

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