



# The Goldfinch

## The Human Fascination with Birds in the Arts

Simon Schama

<b>ISBN</b>	9789493416512
<b>Publisher</b>	Hannibal Books
<b>Binding</b>	Hardback
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<b>Size</b>	8.4 in x 10.2 in
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<b>Price</b>	\$45.00

- Curated by Historian Simon Schama: Featuring insightful writing and curation by one of today's most celebrated cultural historians, lending the book both intellectual depth and wide appeal
- A Unique Exploration of Birds in Art and Culture: Goes beyond a traditional exhibition catalogue to explore the symbolic, sensual, and emotional roles birds have played in human history, art, and imagination
- Lavishly Illustrated & Perfect for a Broad Audience: Visually stunning and thematically rich, the book will appeal to art lovers, nature enthusiasts, cultural historians, and general readers alike

This book is centered on Carel Fabritius's haunting **The Goldfinch**. Far more than a catalogue, this richly illustrated volume – curated with Simon Schama – explores the enduring human obsession with birds.

Through five evocative themes, the book reveals how birds mirror our desires, fears, and fantasies. From the dazzling creativity of *Art by Birds* – murmurations, intricate nests, courtship dances – to *Stilled Flight*, where birds are caged, chained, or hunted. *Love Birds* delves into flirtation, myth, and the erotic symbolism of birds in art. *Poultry and Butchery* considers how birds become food, while *Obsessive Flight* examines artistic longing through figures like Brancusi.

With historical depth and visual beauty, this book invites readers to rediscover birds not just as creatures of the sky, but as powerful symbols of the human condition.

This book accompanies the exhibition at the Mauritshuis, The Hague, from February 2026 onward. With text contributions by Simon Schama, Laura Cumming and Philip Hoare, amongst others.

**Sir Simon Schama** is a University Professor of Art History and History. His courses have addressed the British Empire, English and French art and politics, the Gothic Revival in England, Ruskin, and Victorian culture. His award-winning 15-part television series, *A History of Britain*, was broadcast on the BBC and the History Channel from 2000 to 2002, and a new series, *The Power of Art*, on PBS and BBC in 2006 and 2007. He served as Vice President of PEN American Center from 1994 to 1996, and from 1995 to 1998 he was art critic of *The New Yorker* magazine, for which he continues to write. In 2019, he was awarded a knighthood for services to history at Buckingham Palace.