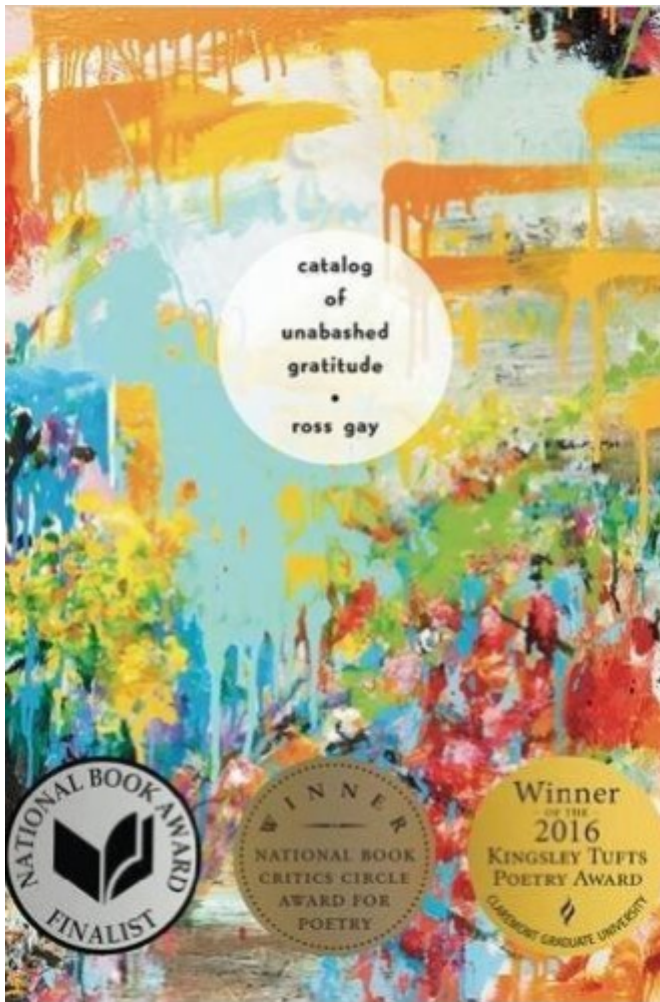


Amy Frykholm's Christmas picks

selected by [Amy Frykholm](#) in the [December 7, 2016](#) issue

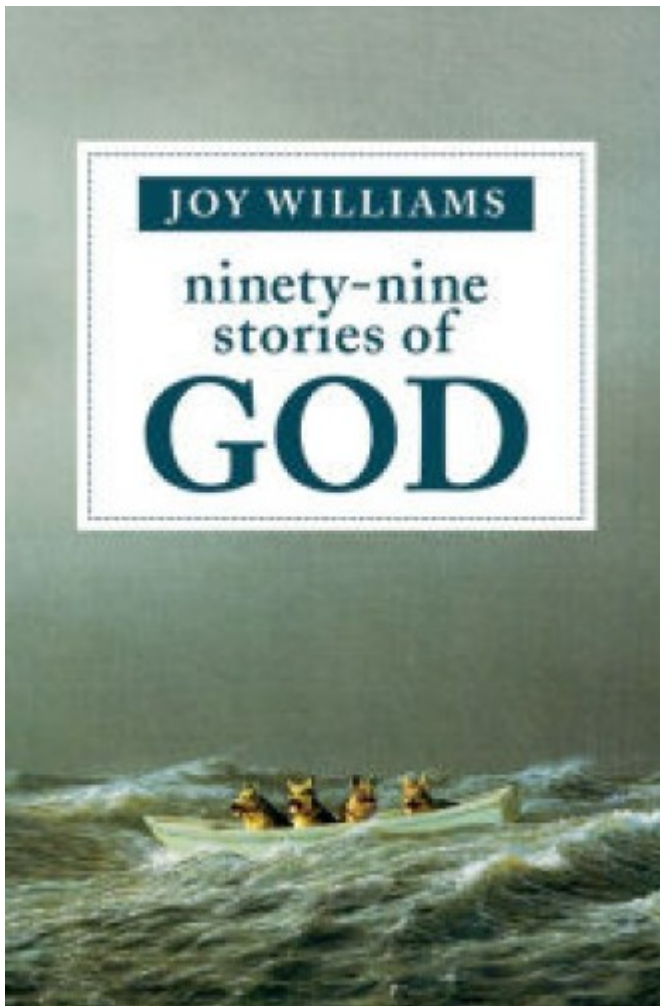
In Review



Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude

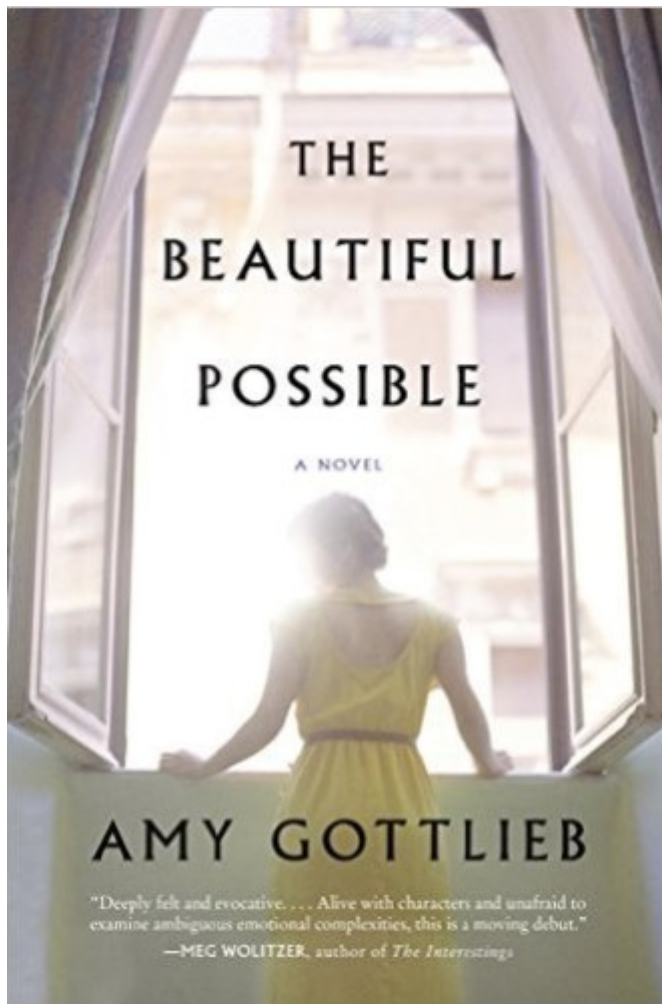
by Ross Gay

University of Pittsburgh Press



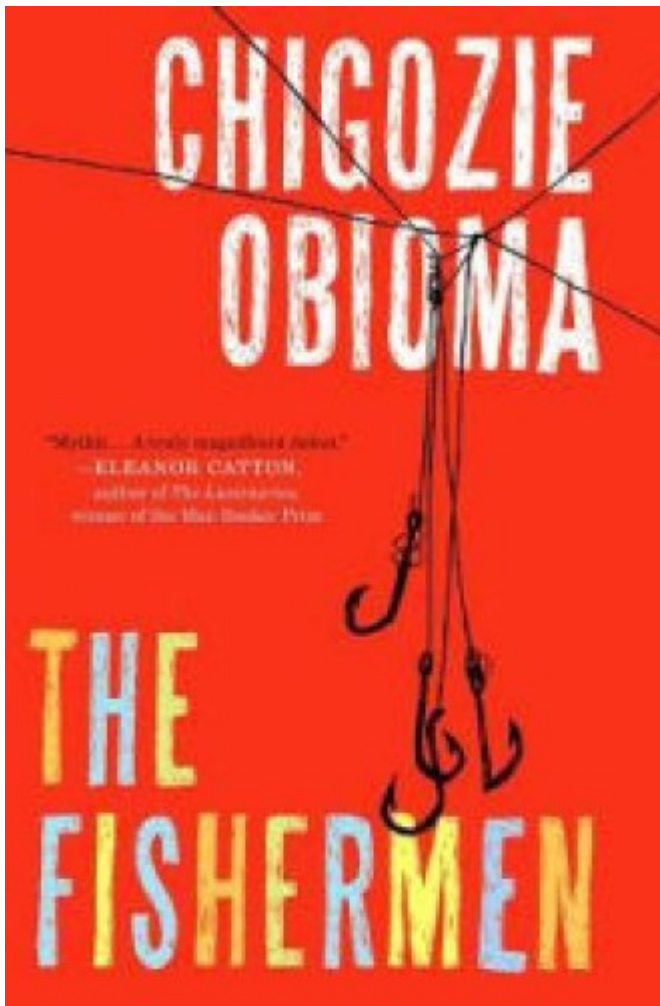
Ninety-Nine Stories of God

By Joy Williams
Tin House Books



The Beautiful Possible

by Amy Gottlieb
Harper Perennial



The Fishermen

By Chigozie Obioma
Back Bay Books

The book I would most like to give to everyone I know comes from poet Ross Gay. His *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude* (University of Pittsburgh Press) is a riotous, sensual, sexy celebration of the world as it is, including its grief and compost. I have already given this book away several times, so when I go to my shelf to look for it, it is not there. "Put your feet up," Gay advises. "Here's a light blanket / a pillow, dear one / for I can feel this is going to be long. / I can't stop / my gratitude, which includes, dear reader, / you, for staying here with me."

If the people on your Christmas list are too shy for unabashed gratitude, I would recommend Joy Williams's *Ninety-nine Stories of God* (Tin House Books). These very short stories offer wry interactions with the Creator. Many of them are laugh-out-

loud funny, and some of them are puzzling. All of them are born out of a lifelong inquiry into the mystery and meaning of life.

A different form of inquiry comes from Amy Gottlieb's debut novel *The Beautiful Possible* (Harper Perennial). Gottlieb explores the lives of Jewish intellectuals living in America after World War II. The three characters at the heart of the novel grapple with their proximity and distance to their faith.

Another debut novel, from Nigerian Chigozie Obioma, uses myth, history, and family drama to tell the story of four brothers in Nigeria. With political, emotional, and philosophical layers, *The Fishermen* (Little, Brown) is also just a good story.

Read the other 2016 Christmas picks [here](#).