

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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Keyhole Factory.

Gillespie, William (Author)

Nov 2012. 368 p. Soft Skull, paperback, \$16.95. (9781593764463).

Gillespie's mainstream-press debut is graphic in its subject matter. A man-made hemorrhagic fever decimates major urban areas, the U.S. is engulfed in anarchy, and the moon may or may not have blown to bits. The novel is graphic, too, in that chapters are identified with icons and the text appears in various configurations—columns, circles of various sizes, numbered lines, and abundant blank space. Some shapes recall seventeenth-century emblem poems, and there are poems throughout, though nothing so antiquated as rhyme appears. Gillespie deploys almost all these methods in service to the problem of simultaneity, of how to portray actions taking place in several places at the same time. Author of an award-winning hypertext novel, Gillespie is responsible for the world's longest literary palindrome—watch for other word and world games at play in *Keyhole Factory*. The story itself is fragmentary, and yet the whole is better than the sum of the parts, a violent, apocalyptic story told with an arsenal of narrative tropes.

— *Michael Autrey*