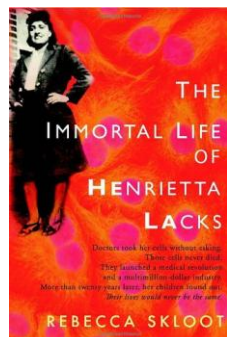


## Newcomers of Great Valley Book List 2011 - 2012

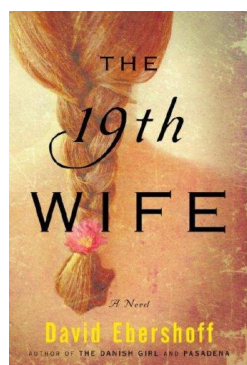
### September 28



### **The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot**

From a single, abbreviated life grew a seemingly immortal line of cells that made some of the most crucial innovations in modern science possible. And from that same life, and those cells, Rebecca Skloot has fashioned in *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* a fascinating and moving story of medicine and family, of how life is sustained in laboratories and in memory. Henrietta Lacks was a mother of five in Baltimore, a poor African American migrant from the tobacco farms of Virginia, who died from a cruelly aggressive cancer at the age of 30 in 1951. A sample of her cancerous tissue, taken without her knowledge or consent, as was the custom then, turned out to provide one of the holy grails of mid-century biology: human cells that could survive--even thrive--in the lab. Known as HeLa cells, their stunning potency gave scientists a building block for countless breakthroughs, beginning with the cure for polio. Meanwhile, Henrietta's family continued to live in poverty and frequently poor health, and their discovery decades later of her unknowing contribution--and her cells' strange survival--left them full of pride, anger, and suspicion. For a decade, Skloot doggedly but compassionately gathered the threads of these stories, slowly gaining the trust of the family while helping them learn the truth about Henrietta, and with their aid she tells a rich and haunting story that asks the questions, Who owns our bodies? And who carries our memories?

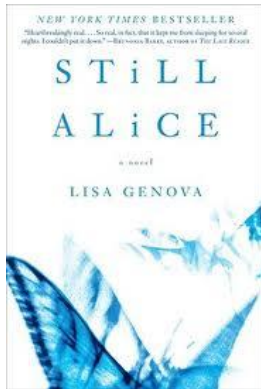
### October 26



### **The 19<sup>th</sup> Wife: A Novel by David Ebershoff**

It is 1875, and Ann Eliza Young has recently separated from her powerful husband, Brigham Young, prophet and leader of the Mormon Church. Expelled and an outcast, Ann Eliza embarks on a crusade to end polygamy in the United States. A rich account of her family's polygamous history is revealed, including how both she and her mother became plural wives. Yet soon after Ann Eliza's story begins, a second exquisite narrative unfolds--a tale of murder involving a polygamist family in present-day Utah. Jordan Scott, a young man who was thrown out of his fundamentalist sect years earlier, must reenter the world that cast him aside in order to discover the truth behind his father's death. And as Ann Eliza's narrative intertwines with that of Jordan's search, readers are pulled deeper into the mysteries of love, family, and faith.

## **November 16**

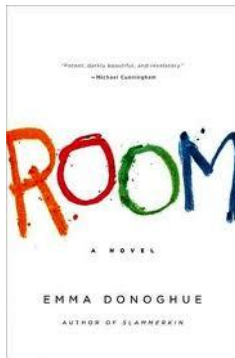


### **Still Alice by Lisa Genova**

*Still Alice* is a compelling debut novel about a 50-year-old woman's sudden descent into early onset Alzheimer's disease, written by first-time author Lisa Genova, who holds a Ph. D in neuroscience from Harvard University.

Alice Howland, happily married with three grown children and a house on the Cape, is a celebrated Harvard professor at the height of her career when she notices a forgetfulness creeping into her life. As confusion starts to cloud her thinking and her memory begins to fail her, she receives a devastating diagnosis: early onset Alzheimer's disease. Fiercely independent, Alice struggles to maintain her lifestyle and live in the moment, even as her sense of self is being stripped away. In turns heartbreaking, inspiring and terrifying, *Still Alice* captures in remarkable detail what's it's like to literally lose your mind...

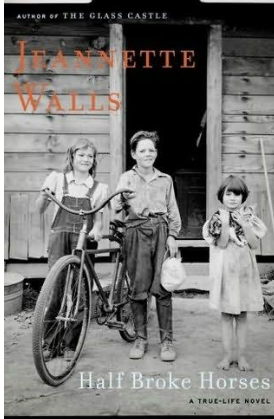
## **December 14**



### **Room: A Novel by Emma Donoghue**

Room is home to Jack, but to Ma it's the prison where she has been held for seven years. Through her fierce love for her son, she has created a life for him in this eleven-by-eleven-foot space. But with Jack's curiosity building alongside her own desperation, she knows that Room cannot contain either much longer. *Room* is a tale at once shocking, riveting, exhilarating--a story of unconquerable love in harrowing circumstances, and of the diamond-hard bond between a mother and her child.

## **January 25**



### **Half Broke Horses by Jeannette Walls**

"Those old cows knew trouble was coming before we did." So begins the story of Lily Casey Smith, Jeannette Walls's no-nonsense, resourceful, and spectacularly compelling grandmother. By age six, Lily was helping her father break horses. At fifteen, she left home to teach in a frontier town—riding five hundred miles on her pony, alone, to get to her job. She learned to drive a car and fly a plane. And, with her husband, Jim, she ran a vast ranch in Arizona. She raised two children, one of whom is Jeannette's memorable mother, Rosemary Smith Walls, unforgettably portrayed in *The Glass Castle*.

## **February 22**

**OPEN for fall selection**

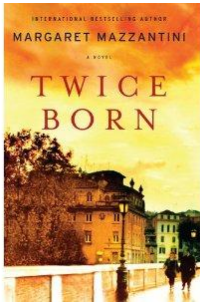
## **March 28**



### **In Lucia's Eyes by Arthur Japin**

Lucia works as a servant girl in Italy and is engaged to be married. But after the pox disfigures her face, she flees in shame without telling her lover. Years later, as a renowned Amsterdam courtesan who never goes out without her veil, Lucia is at the theater when she recognizes her long-lost fiancé, Giacomo Casanova; and she cannot resist the opportunity to encounter him again. Based on a woman who appeared briefly in Casanova's legendary diaries, Lucia emerges as a brilliant woman who becomes every bit his match. *In Lucia's Eyes* is an elegant and moving story of love denied and transformed.

## **April 25**



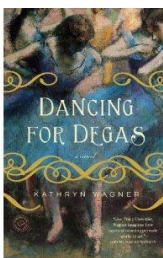
### **Twice Born by Margaret Mazzantini**

Filled with memories of the four-year siege of Sarajevo, Gemma reluctantly boards a flight from her native Rome to that war-scarred city with her sixteen-year-old son, Pietro. She hopes to teach her son about the city of his birth and about Diego, the father he never knew. Once there Gemma is caught between the present and the past, reliving her love affair with Diego, their determination to start a family, and their deep connection to Sarajevo even as the threat of war loomed.

## **May 23**

### **Book Selection Meeting**

## **June 20**



### **Dancing for Degas by Kathryn Wagner**

With this fresh and vibrantly imagined portrait of the Impressionist artist Edgar Degas, readers are transported through the eyes of a young Parisian ballerina to an era of light and movement. An ambitious and enterprising farm girl, Alexandrie joins the prestigious Paris Opera ballet with hopes of securing not only her place in society but her family's financial future. Her plan is soon derailed, however, when she falls in love with the enigmatic artist whose paintings of the offstage lives of the ballerinas scandalized society and revolutionized the art world. As Alexandrie is drawn deeper into Degas's art and Paris's secrets, will she risk everything for her dreams of love and of becoming the ballet's star dancer.