

# *AudioFile* Editors Select **2023 BEST AUDIOBOOKS**

“What are you listening to?” We ask this question all the time—and when we hear something really wonderful, we want to share. That’s why, each December, we celebrate the year’s outstanding audiobooks. We hope that this list will help you find *your* next favorite listen.

On the following pages, you’ll find *AudioFile*’s picks for the Best Audiobooks of 2023 in nine categories. Thank you to all of the authors, narrators, producers, and publishers who filled our year with good listening.

Find more of *AudioFile*’s Best of 2023 online! Listen to narrator interviews (look for podcast icons on the following pages) at [audiofilemagazine.com/podcast](https://audiofilemagazine.com/podcast); hear sound clips, watch narrator videos, and read full reviews at [audiofilemagazine.com/best-audiobooks-2023](https://audiofilemagazine.com/best-audiobooks-2023); and find special coverage on our social media channels.



Listen to narrator interviews on the  
Behind the Mic podcast

# BEST OF FICTION

## CHAIN-GANG ALL-STARS

Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, read by Shayna Small, Aaron Goodson, Michael Crouch, Lee Osorio (Random House Audio)

## THE HEAVEN & EARTH GROCERY STORE

James McBride, read by Dominic Hoffman (Penguin Audio)

## I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

Rebecca Makkai, read by Julia Whelan, JD Jackson (Penguin Audio)

## THE LATE AMERICANS

Brandon Taylor, read by Kevin R. Free (Penguin Audio)

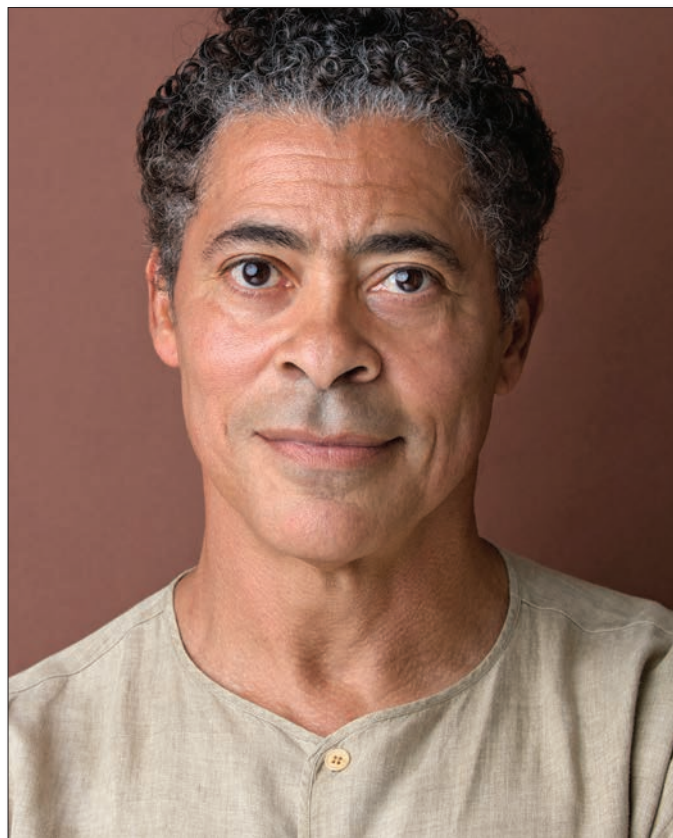
## TOM LAKE

Ann Patchett, read by Meryl Streep (Harper Audio)

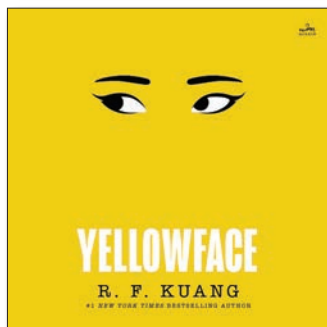
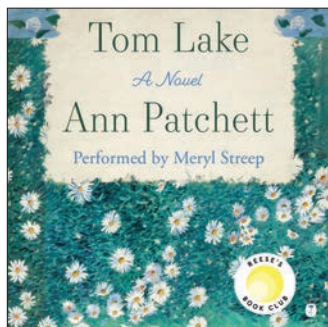
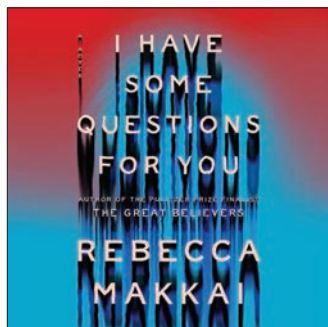
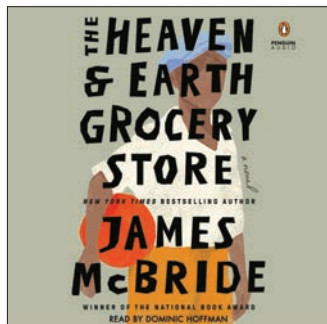
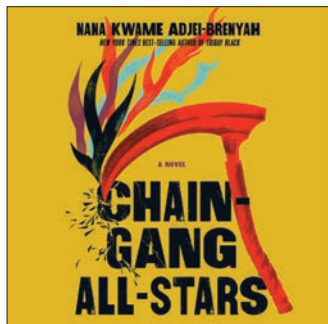


## YELLOWFACE

R.F. Kuang, read by Helen Laser (Harper Audio)



Dominic Hoffman, narrator of The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store



Helen Laser, narrator of Yellowface

Helen Laser photo by John DeAmara

# BEST OF NONFICTION & HISTORY

## DIFFER WE MUST

Steve Inskeep, read by Steve Inskeep  
(Penguin Audio)

## MISBELIEF

Dan Ariely, read by Simon Jones  
(Harper Audio)



## POVERTY, BY AMERICA

Matthew Desmond, read by Dion Graham  
(Random House Audio)



## TABULA RASA

John McPhee, read by Grover Gardner  
(Recorded Books)

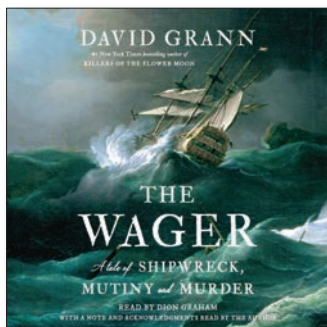
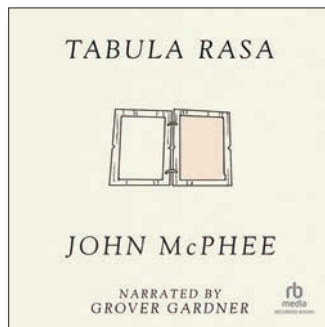
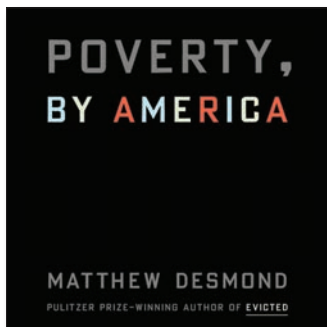
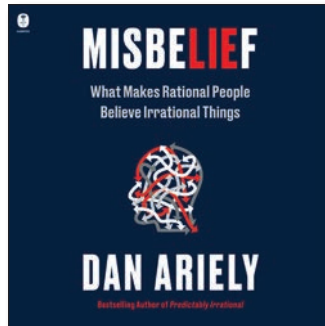
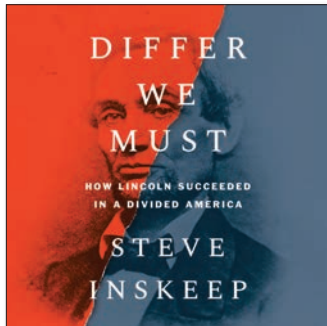


## THE WAGER

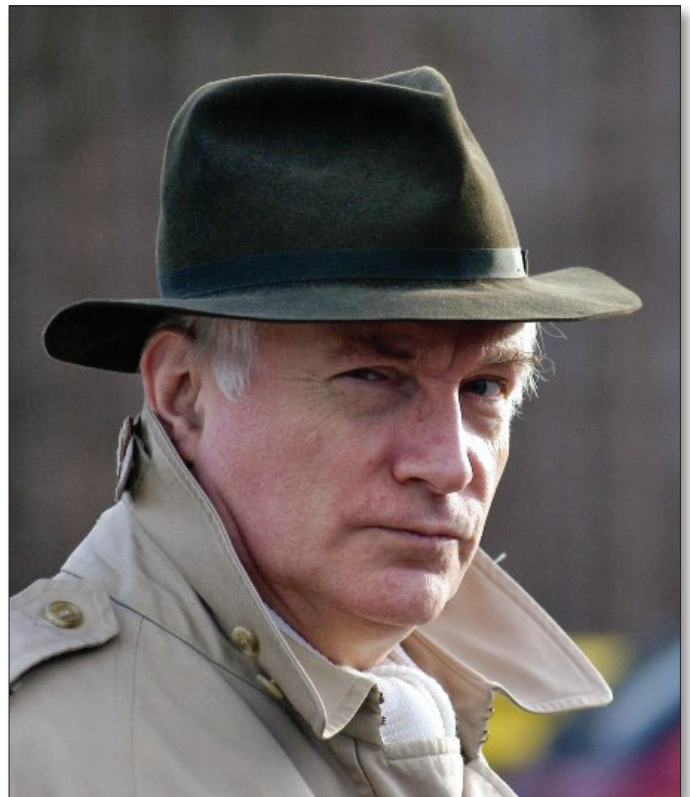
David Grann, read by Dion Graham  
(Random House Audio)

## WASTELAND

Oliver Franklin-Wallis, read by Chris Harper  
(Hachette Audio)



Dion Graham, narrator of  
*Poverty, By America* & *The Wager*



Simon Jones, narrator of *Misbelief*

Dion Graham photo by Max Fladov

# BEST OF BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

## THE ART THIEF

Michael Finkel, read by Edoardo Ballerini, Michael Finkel [Note]  
(Random House Audio)

## HOW TO SAY BABYLON

Safiya Sinclair, read by Safiya Sinclair  
(Simon & Schuster Audio)



## KING: A LIFE

Jonathan Eig, read by Dion Graham  
(Macmillan Audio)

## MAKING IT SO

Patrick Stewart, read by Patrick Stewart  
(Simon & Schuster Audio)

## WHILE YOU WERE OUT

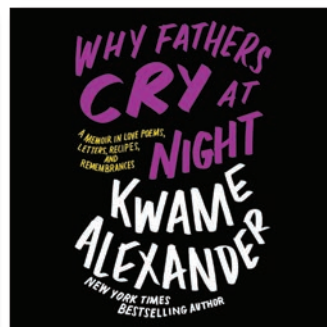
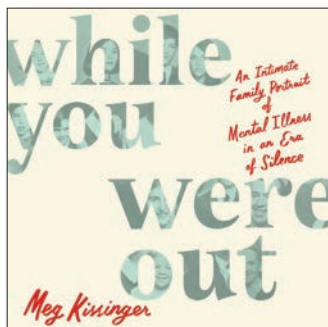
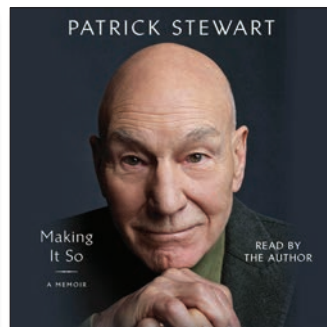
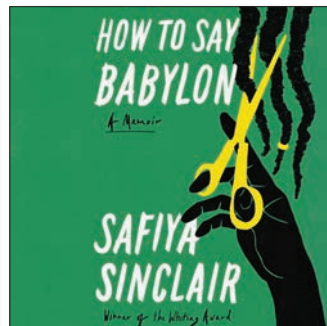
Meg Kissinger, read by Meg Kissinger  
(Macmillan Audio)

## WHY FATHERS CRY AT NIGHT

Kwame Alexander, read by Kwame Alexander  
(Hachette Audio)



Safiya Sinclair, author & narrator of  
How to Say Babylon



Kwame Alexander, author & narrator of  
Why Fathers Cry at Night

Safiya Sinclair photo by Brewell Sheehan, Kwame Alexander photo by Ponta Wiggins

# BEST OF MYSTERY & SUSPENSE

## ALL THE SINNERS BLEED

S.A. Cosby, read by Adam Lazarre-White  
(Macmillan Audio)

## BIRNAM WOOD

Eleanor Catton, read by Saskia Maarleveld  
(Audible, Inc.)

## DEAD MAN'S POSE

Susan Rogers, John Roosen, read by Rupert Degas  
(G-EMS PTY LTD, PS LLC)



## ROGUE JUSTICE

Stacey Abrams, read by Adenrele Ojo  
(Random House Audio)

## THE SECRET HOURS

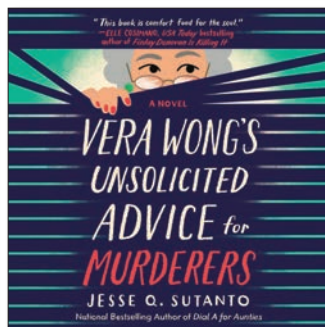
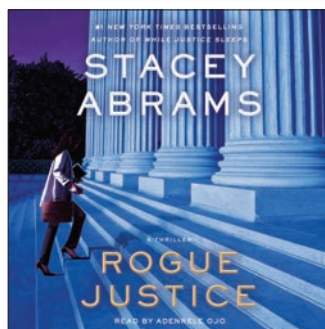
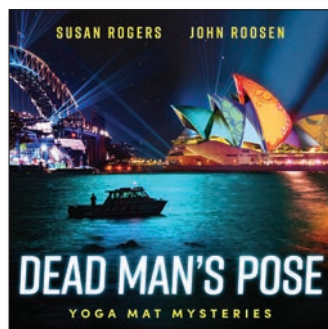
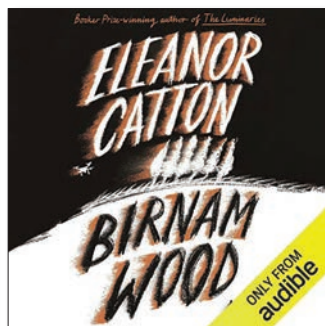
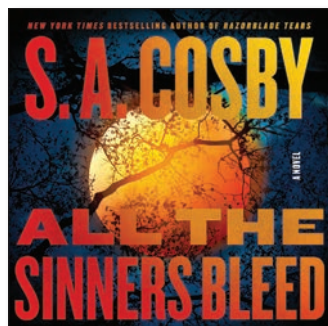
Mick Herron, read by Gerard Doyle  
(Recorded Books)

## VERA WONG'S UNSOLICITED ADVICE FOR MURDERERS

Jesse Q. Sutanto, read by Eunice Wong  
(Penguin Audio)



Eunice Wong, narrator of Vera Wong's  
Unsolicited Advice for Murderers



Adenrele Ojo, narrator of Rogue Justice

Eunice Wong photo by Hobermann Studio, Adenrele Ojo photo by Michael Roud Photography

# BEST OF AUDIO ORIGINALS

## ALISON BECHDEL'S DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

Alison Bechdel, Madeleine George, read by Jane Lynch, Carrie Brownstein, Roberta Colindrez, and a Full Cast (Audible, Inc.)

## EXODUS: THE SHANGHAI JEWS

Kate McAll, read by Edita Brychta, Michael Canavan, Shannon Cochran, and a Full Cast (L.A. Theatre Works)

## THE SCAVENGER DOOR

Suzanne Palmer, read by Karen Novack, John Kielty, Gail Shalan, and a Full Cast (GraphicAudio)



## SUNSHINE

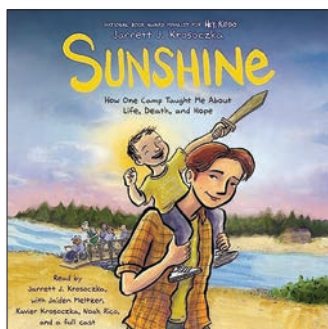
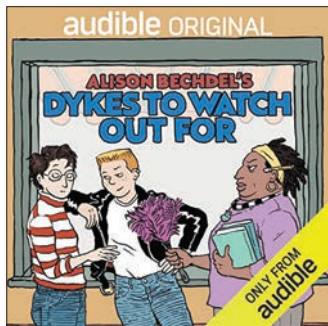
Jarrett J. Krosoczka, read by Jarrett J. Krosoczka, Jaiden Meltzer, Xavier Krosoczka, and a Full Cast (Scholastic Audiobooks)

## THIRD EYE

Felicia Day, read by Sean Astin, Felicia Day, Neil Gaiman, LilyPichu, London Hughes, Wil Wheaton, and a Full Cast (Audible, Inc.)



Edita Brychta, part of the cast of Exodus: The Shanghai Jews



Gail Shalan, part of the cast of The Scavenger Door

Edita Brychta photo by Matt Pestl, Gail Shalan photo by Jessica Osler

# BEST OF SCI-FI, FANTASY & HORROR

## **GODKILLER**

Hannah Kaner, read by Kit Griffiths  
(Harper Audio)

## **HOLLY**

Stephen King, read by Justine Lupe, Stephen King [Note]  
(Simon & Schuster Audio)



## **IN THE LIVES OF PUPPETS**

TJ Klune, read by Daniel Henning  
(Macmillan Audio)

## **SILVER NITRATE**

Silvia Moreno-Garcia, read by Gisela Chipe  
(Random House Audio)

## **TRANSLATION STATE**

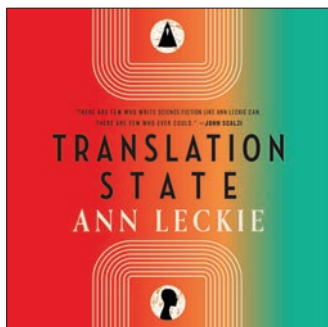
Ann Leckie, read by Adjoa Andoh  
(Hachette Audio)

## **THE WATER OUTLAWS**

S.L. Huang, read by Emily Woo Zeller  
(Dreamscape)



Daniel Henning, narrator of  
In the Lives of Puppets



Emily Woo Zeller, narrator of  
The Water Outlaws

Daniel Henning photo by Stephen Mosher, Emily Woo Zeller photo by William Colton

# BEST OF CHILDREN & FAMILY LISTENING

## ELF DOG & OWL HEAD

M.T. Anderson, read by Pete Cross  
(Dreamscape)

## NIC BLAKE AND THE REMARKABLES: THE MANIFESTOR PROPHECY

Angie Thomas, read by Joniece Abbott-Pratt  
(Harper Audio)

## REMEMBER US

Jacqueline Woodson, read by Jacqueline Woodson  
(Listening Library)

## SANDOR KATZ AND THE TINY WILD

Jacqueline Briggs Martin, June Jo Lee,  
read by Lori Prince, Sandor Katz  
(Live Oak Media)

## THE SKULL

Jon Klassen, read by Fairuza Balk, Jon Klassen [Afterword]  
(Dreamscape)

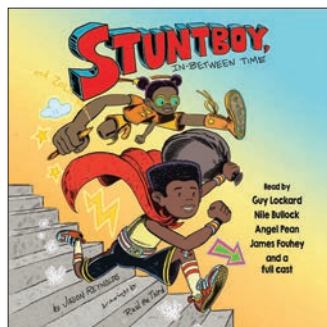
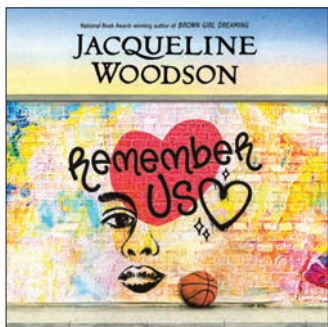
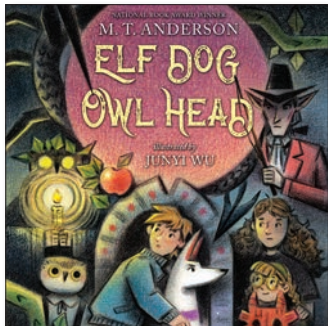


## STUNTBOY, IN-BETWEEN TIME

Jason Reynolds, read by Guy Lockard,  
Nile Bullock, Angel Pean, and a Full Cast  
(Simon & Schuster Audio)



Jacqueline Woodson, author & narrator of Remember Us



Pete Cross, narrator of Elf Dog & Owl Head

Jacqueline Woodson photo © John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, used with permission. Pete Cross photo by Paul Gagne



# BEST OF YOUNG ADULT

## ANDER & SANTI WERE HERE

Jonny Garza Villa, read by Avi Roque  
(Macmillan Audio)

## FOR LAMB

Lesla Cline-Ransome, read by Tyla Collier, Kevin R. Free, Rebecca Lee, Jaime Lincoln Smith, Dion Graham, Angel Pean  
(Dreamscape)

## FREE RADICALS

Lila Riesen, read by Gilli Messer  
(Listening Library)

## THE GRIMOIRE OF GRAVE FATES

Hanna Alkaf, Margaret Owen [Eds.],  
read by January LaVoy, Nicky Endres  
(Listening Library)



## ONLY THIS BEAUTIFUL MOMENT

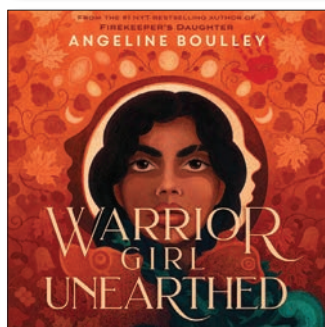
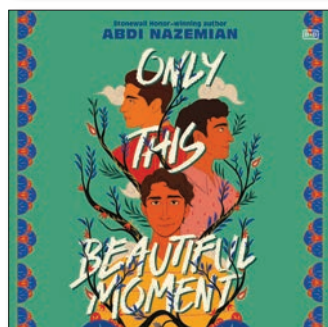
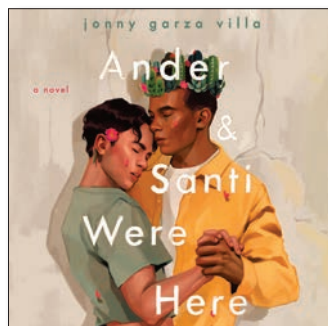
Abdi Nazemian, read by Vikas Adam,  
Fajer Al-Kaisi, Iman Nazemzadeh  
(Harper Audio)

## WARRIOR GIRL UNEARTHED

Angeline Boulley, read by Isabella Star LaBlanc  
(Macmillan Audio)



Vikas Adam, co-narrator of  
Only This Beautiful Moment



Gilli Messer, narrator of Free Radicals

Vikas Adam photo by Ilya S Savanok for Getty Images, Gilli Messer photo by Matt Kallish

# BEST OF ROMANCE

## 10 THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPENED

Alexis Hall, read by Will Watt  
(Dreamscape Media)

## EVEN IF THE SKY IS FALLING

Taj McCoy [Ed.], read by Adenrele Ojo, Soneela Nankani,  
Karen Murray, Marissa Hampton, Donnabella Mortel,  
Joy Beharie, Teddy Hamilton  
(Harlequin Audio)

## FULL MOON OVER FREEDOM

Angelina M. Lopez, read by Stacy Gonzalez  
(Harlequin Audio)

## LOVE, THEORETICALLY

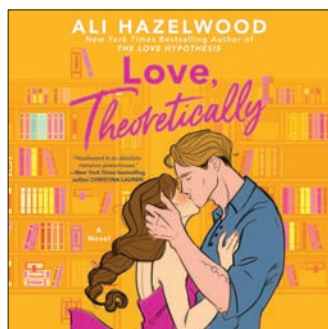
Ali Hazelwood, read by Thérèse Plummer  
(Penguin Audio)

## A RAKE OF HIS OWN

A.J. Lancaster, read by Nicholas Boulton  
(Podium Audio)

## ROLE PLAYING

Cathy Yardley, read by Chris Brinkley, Elyse Dinh  
(Brilliance Audio)



Elise Dinh, co-narrator of Role Playing



Will Watt, narrator of 10 Things That Never Happened