



Bats of the Republic: An Illuminated Novel

By Zachary Thomas Dodson

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"Archetypes of the cowboy story, tropes drawn from sci-fi, love letters, diaries, confessions all abound in this relentlessly engaging tale. Dodson has quite brilliantly exposed the gears and cogs whirring in the novelist's imagination. It is a mad and beautiful thing."

--Keith Donohue, *The Washington Post*

Winner of Best of Region for the Southwest in PRINT's 2016 Regional Design Awards

Bats of the Republic is an illuminated novel of adventure, featuring hand-drawn maps and natural history illustrations, subversive pamphlets and science-fictional diagrams, and even a nineteenth-century novel-within-a-novel—an intrigue wrapped in innovative design.

In 1843, fragile naturalist Zadock Thomas must leave his beloved in Chicago to deliver a secret letter to an infamous general on the front lines of the war over Texas. The fate of the volatile republic, along with Zadock's future, depends on his mission. When a cloud of bats leads him off the trail, he happens upon something impossible...

Three hundred years later, the world has collapsed and the remnants of humanity cling to a strange society of paranoia. Zeke Thomas has inherited a sealed envelope from his grandfather, an esteemed senator. When that letter goes missing, Zeke engages a fomenting rebellion that could free him—if it doesn't destroy his relationship, his family legacy, and the entire republic first.

As their stories overlap and history itself begins to unravel, a war in time erupts between a lost civilization, a forgotten future, and the chaos of the wild. *Bats of the Republic* is a masterful novel of adventure and science fiction, of elliptical history and dystopian struggle, and, at its riveting core, of love.

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Bats of the Republic: An Illuminated Novel By Zachary Thomas Dodson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

Winner of Best of Region for the Southwest in PRINT's 2016 Regional Design Awards

The Washington Post: Notable Fiction Books of 2015

"Pick up *Bats of the Republic* and — even before you start reading — you're instantly transfixed. The author, Zachary Thomas Dodson, is a book designer who co-founded Featherproof Books out of Chicago, and **his debut novel is a glorious demonstration of what old-fashioned paper can still do in the hands of a creative genius...** *Bats of the Republic* cumulatively becomes a book about the way books are made and the way stories work. Novels, Dodson suggests, are contraptions, jury rigged together with parts of other novels, archived letters, remembered conversations, maps, scraps of info, imagined journeys, and creatures real and strange. **Archetypes of the cowboy story, tropes drawn from sci-fi, love letters, diaries, confessions all abound in this relentlessly engaging tale. Dodson has quite brilliantly exposed the gears and cogs whirring in the novelist's imagination. It is a mad and beautiful thing.**"

--Keith Donohue, *The Washington Post*

"You want a taste of epic Western machinations filtered through epistles and transcripts and stories-within-stories? You want an arcane tapestry of weird fantasy enhanced by transgenerational mysteries and their possible solutions? You want a character-rich and treacherous journey through the ancient Republic of Texas with a reluctant, heartsick emissary from the Museum of Flying, and with his beleaguered blood relative hundreds of years in the mechanically surveilled future? Then **you want to experience this thickly threaded wonderment that Doubleday's had the good sense to publish, citizen – you really, really do.**"

--*The Austin Chronicle*

"*Bats of the Republic* is a waking dream of America gone sideways: it's familiar, enchanting, and just pretty damned weird in the most beguiling possible ways. Zachary Thomas Dodson has made a magnificent book."

—Audrey Niffenegger, author of *The Time Traveler's Wife*

"A richly textured, deeply felt, magical trove of a book."

—Patrick deWitt, author of *The Sisters Brothers*

"Amazing. Actually amazing. Zachary Thomas Dodson has created a new form to tell his story, and in so doing, he has found a way to fuse adventure to love, weld science fiction to sorrow, and encircle everything in a winsome, mystifying experience of art, illustration, and design. Like the living secrets its hero finds in the deep, forgotten caves of Texas, *Bats of the Republic* is itself a hidden, undiscovered beauty."

—Patrick Somerville, author of *This Bright River*

"In *Bats of the Republic*, even the surprises are full of surprises."

—Amelia Gray, author of *Gutshot and Threats*

"Incredible ... Dodson's vision of American society after the Collapse invokes all our fears of surveillance, nepotism, and discrimination."

—*Barnes & Noble Review*

"Honestly, this is the most beautiful book I've ever seen."

--Adam Morgan, SF.Signal.com

“Zachary Thomas Dodson’s first novel feels destined to make a splash with its sprawling combination of science fiction and mysticism, art and text, western and dystopia … a puzzle box of a novel with beautiful art and astounding breadth of imagination, and the result begs to be opened.”

—Shelf Awareness

“Dodson’s ambitious literary debut combines elements of a Wild West adventure with aspects of a dystopian sci-fi thriller … Extravagant and mesmerizing, Dodson’s complex, evocative tale gradually reveals a mythos surrounding love, adventure, and the natural world.”

—Booklist

“Dodson’s debut is a creatively illustrated tale of letters lost and found in the vein of J.J. Abrams and Doug Dorst’s *S.*”

—Publishers Weekly

“Science fiction, the Old West, a book within a book, and wide-ranging graphics are among the paraphernalia that festoon this tale of bats, bloodlines, witches, and love played out over two centuries.”

—Kirkus Reviews

“An elaborately designed novel that weaves a 19th-century manuscript into its pages, this story of a future dystopia created through an alternate past (Texas gained independence, for one) is an original and thrilling ride.”

—BookPage

“A fantastical adventure that stretches from revolutionary-era Texas to twenty-second-century Texas, is festooned with technical diagrams, animal portraiture, and newspaper clippings that somehow never overwhelm the story.”

—Texas Monthly

“A most imaginative book – ambitious in design and presentation … Fans of David Mitchell and Mark Z. Danielewski will rejoice.”

—LitHub

“*Bats of the Republic* is a story that pushes the boundaries of what narrative can do … it invites us into its world as it enters our own.”

—The Lit Pub

“Zachary Thomas Dodson’s novel *Bats of the Republic* weaves together a pair of narratives, one historical and one science fictional, along with innovative narrative techniques, impressive illustrations, and nestled narrative elements.”

—Vol. 1 Brooklyn

About the Author

ZACHARY THOMAS DODSON co-founded featherproof books in 2005 in Chicago. He lives with his wife

in Helsinki, Finland.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Randy North:

Book is actually written, printed, or outlined for everything. You can learn everything you want by a guide. Book has a different type. As we know that book is important thing to bring us around the world. Next to that you can your reading proficiency was fluently. A guide Bats of the Republic: An Illuminated Novel will make you to end up being smarter. You can feel more confidence if you can know about almost everything. But some of you think which open or reading a new book make you bored. It's not make you fun. Why they are often thought like that? Have you seeking best book or acceptable book with you?

David Nester:

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