Best of the Best

Step Up meets *Pitch Perfect* in this blast of a dance movie

MOVIE If the Step Up movie franchise were to be revived with a jolt of Bollywood, this would be the result. Maya (*Never Have I Ever*'s Maitreyi Ramakrishnan) and Anjali (Priyanka Kedia) are childhood best friends and UCLA freshman roommates who join the school's Bollywood dance troupe. Thanks in part to clever choreography from *So You Think You Can Dance* alums Makenzie and Phillip Chbeeb, they make a splash as they find their places on the team and prepare to face off against rivals in the Best of the Best collegiate competition. —**BREANNE L. HELDMAN** *(PG-13, Sept. 18 on Netflix)*

Ramakrishnan (left) and Kedia.

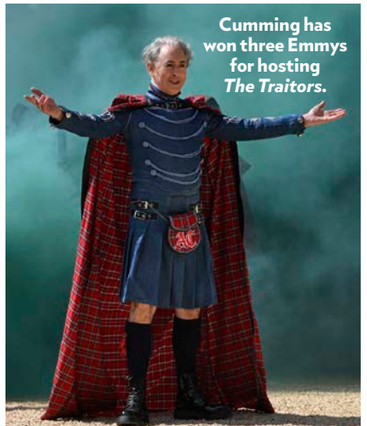
Brill (left) schemes against the principal (Rob Lowe).

The Musical

MOVIE A delightful yet darker-than-dark comedy, this spurned lover's revenge tale hinges on a middle school's musical about an American tragedy. Audiences should go in knowing as little as possible except that Will Brill's Doug may be cinema's most evil drama teacher. —**JACK SMART** *(In theaters Sept. 18)*

The Traitors: New Blood

SERIES Alan Cumming hosts 22 non-famous players in Scotland for a fresh game of death and deception. "It's like we're going to Hogwarts except everyone wants to murder each other," remarks Joe, a funeral director from Long Island. While this iteration lacks the sartorial fireworks of the celeb seasons, it's full of fun twists and relatable charm. —**B.L.H.** *(Sept. 17 on NBC)*



Cumming has won three Emmys for hosting *The Traitors*.

Q&A

Tove Lo

The Swedish pop star, 38, is touring her new album, Estrus, *out now.*

"Estrus" means "in heat." What inspired the title?
The state of the animal in estrus is contradicting. It's like, "I'm horny; let's procreate," but also, "I'm feeling fragile and anxious and vulnerable." I'm feeling all those emotions at once.

"Performing is better than any drug," says Lo.

How did you prepare for this tour?
Running on the treadmill while singing. I laughed when I saw people do that. Then I was like, "If I want to be at a certain level as a performer, I've got to step into those shoes."

Your party-girl image might make fans think you go from the club to the stage.
Well, that's still true. But if I've done the treadmill stuff, it's easier to fake like I *wasn't* coming straight from the club.

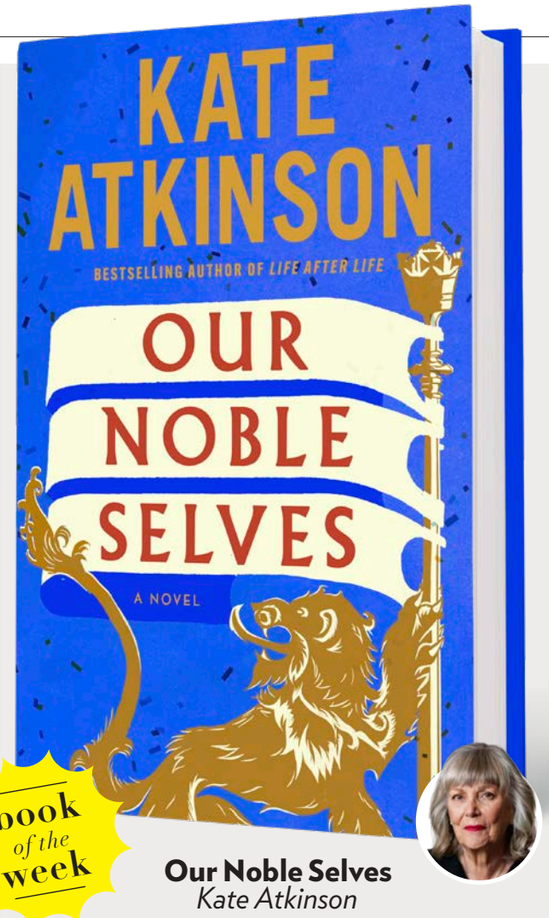
—**JACK IRVIN**

(TOVE LO HEADSHOT) STEVE GRANITZ/FILMMAGIC; (PERFORMANCE) MATT WINKELMEYER/GETTY IMAGES; (BEST OF THE BEST) EMELY V. ARAGONES/NETFLIX; (THE TRAITORS) EUAN CHERRY/NBC; (THE MUSICAL) TU DO (ATKINSON) CHRIS BOLAND; (MANDEL) LAURA BARISONZI; (PICOULT) JESSE DITTMAR

The Best New Books

Three award-winning authors return with a trio of stunning novels set in vastly different eras

Edited by **LIZZ SCHUMER**



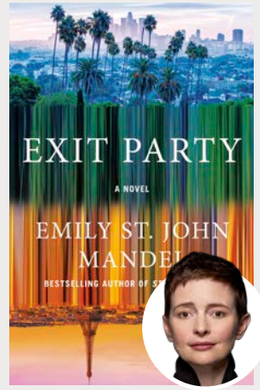
book of the week

Our Noble Selves

Kate Atkinson

HISTORICAL FICTION

In 1951 London former crime reporter and war correspondent Harry Flynn works for the Festival of Britain, a celebration of British ingenuity meant to lift postwar malaise. When a French woman goes missing, Harry becomes the prime suspect. The *Life After Life* author's latest is gently witty and immaculately plotted, with vivid characters and intricate period detail deftly woven into a gripping mystery about a country reinventing itself.



Exit Party

Emily St. John Mandel

DYSTOPIAN FICTION

During a party to celebrate the end of curfew in 2031 Los Angeles, the host vanishes, a guest appears in two places at once, and a painting is taken off the wall and ends up in an alternate timeline. This urgent, unsettling novel is an addictive puzzle that maps the twinship of authoritarianism and chaos.

Hollow Bones

Jodi Picoult

FICTION

After losing her mom on 9/11, Molly later becomes Rhode Island's director of emergency preparedness. Her husband, Jesse—a character from Picoult's *My Sister's Keeper*—is a polygraph expert laser-focused on lies. In her 30th page-turner, Picoult hits the couple with a crisis and a shattering revelation. Riveting and relentless.

Twisty New Thrillers

Murder at the Grand Alpine Hotel

Lucy Foley

This delectable throwback to the golden age of whodunits channels Agatha Christie splendidly in a new Miss Marple mystery set at a remote Swiss resort.

Call Off the Dark

Hallie Shepherd

After her husband's murder, Helen quickly remarries and moves off the grid, forsaking her vibrant city life to become a tradwife. Her trauma deepens when a stranger arrives. A twisty genre-bender.

People APP

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