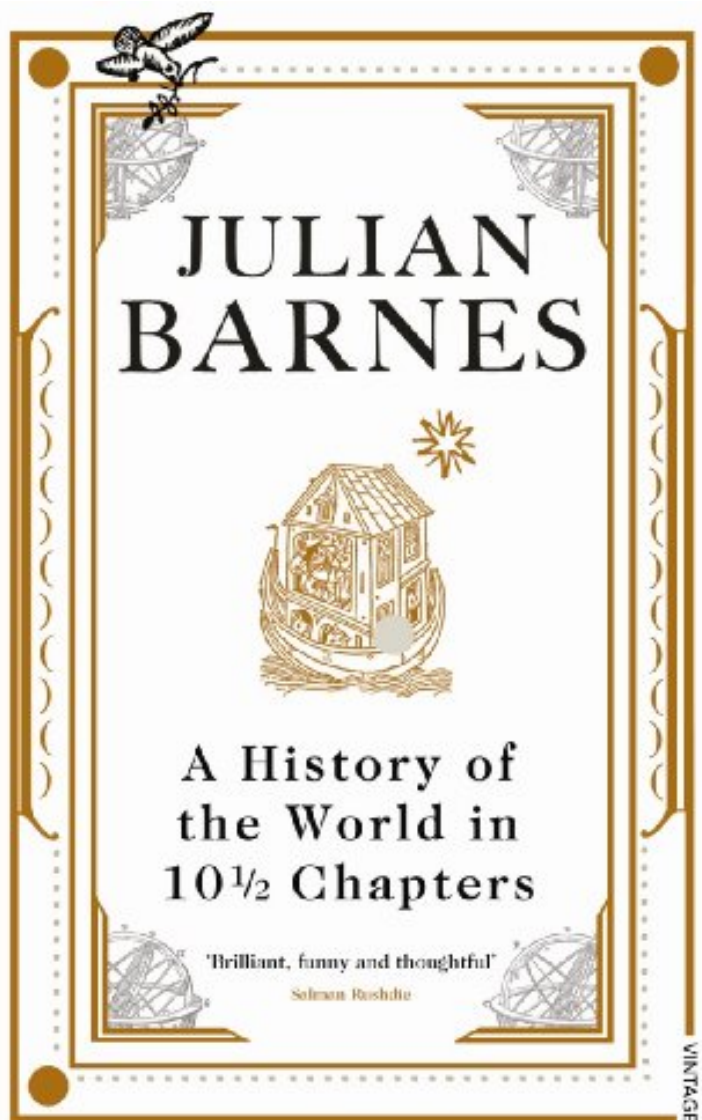


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Prsentation de l'diteurBeginning with an unlikely stowaway's account of life on board Noah's Ark, A History of the World in 10 Chapters presents a surprising, subversive, fictional history of earth told from several kaleidoscopic perspectives. Noah disembarks from his ark but he and his Voyage are not forgotten: they are revisited in on other centuries and other climes - by a Victorian spinster mourning her father, by an American astronaut on an obsessive personal mission. We journey to the Titanic, to the , to the raft of the Medusa, and to an ecclesiastical court in medieval France where a bizarre case is about to begin...This is no ordinary history, but something stranger, a challenge and a delight for the reader's imagination. Ambitious

yet accessible, witty and playfully serious, this is the work of a brilliant novelist. From Publishers Weekly Noah's Ark, Gericault's The Raft of the Medusa and "an offbeat vision of the Hereafter" are some of the ingredients of this pyrotechnical work. "Admirers of Barnes are accustomed to thoroughly unorthodox approaches to the novel, and his latest, while brilliantly entertaining, certainly strains the limits of the genre," PW remarked. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal A revisionist view of Noah's Ark, told by the stowaway woodworm. A chilling account of terrorists hijacking a cruise ship. A court case in 16th-century France in which the woodworm stand accused. A desperate woman's attempt to escape radioactive fallout on a raft. An acute analysis of Gericault's "Scene of Shipwreck." The search of a 19th-century Englishwoman and of a contemporary American astronaut for Noah's Ark. An actor's increasingly desperate letters to his silent lover. A thoughtful meditation on the novelist's responsibility regarding love. These and other stories make up Barnes's witty and sometimes acerbic retelling of the history of the world. The stories are connected, if only tangentially, which is precisely Barnes's point: historians may tell us that "there was a pattern," but history is "just voices echoing in the dark; . . . strange links, impertinent connections." Fascinating reading from the author of Flaubert's Parrot, but not for those wanting conventional plot.- Barbara Hoffert, "Library Journal" Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.