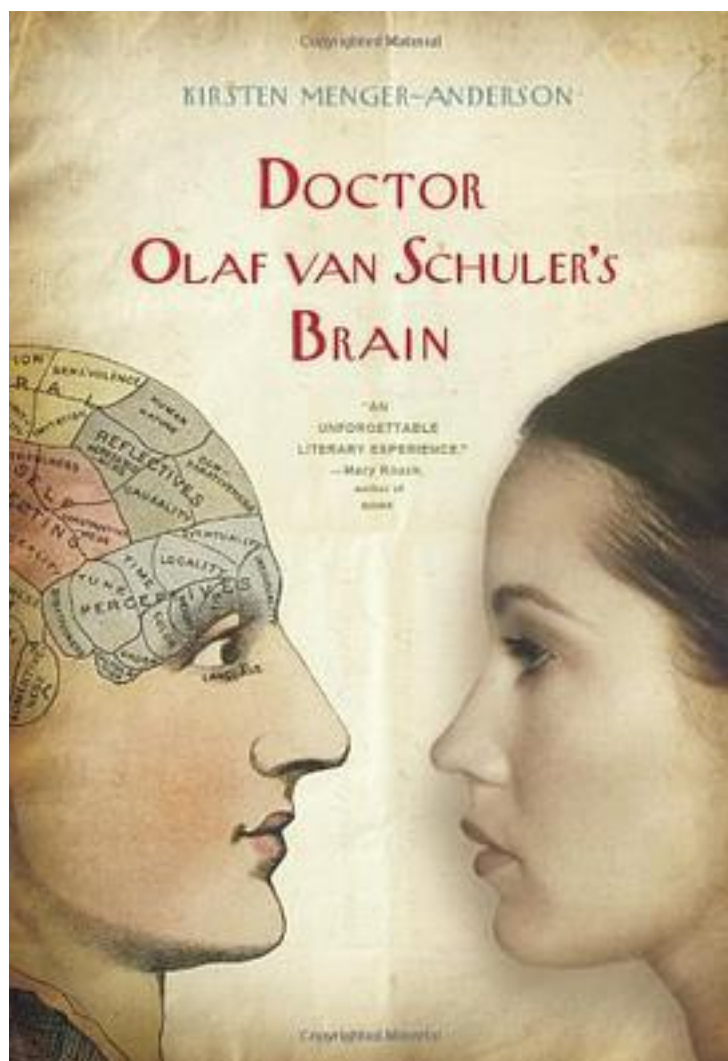


Doctor Olaf Van Schuler's Brain



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In 1664 Dr. Olaf van Schuler flees the Old World and arrives in New Amsterdam with his lunatic mother, two bags of medical implements, and a carefully guarded book of his own medicines. He is the first in what will become a long line of peculiar physicians. Plagued by madness and guided by an intense desire to cure human affliction, each generation of this unusual family is driven by the science of its day: spontaneous combustion, phrenology, animal magnetism, electrical shock treatment, psychosurgery, genetic research. As they make their way in the world, New York City, too, evolves--from the dark and rough days of the seventeenth century to the towering, frenetic metropolis of today. Like Patrick Suskind's classic novel "Perfume," Kirsten Menger-Anderson's debut is a literary cabinet of curiosities--fascinating and unsettling, rich and utterly singular.

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[Doctor Olaf Van Schuler's Brain_ 下载链接1](#)

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