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FILM RIGHTS SOLD / OPTIONED

TV rights to author of **MONSTER** and **ALL SECURE** Steve Jackson's **NO STONE UNTURNED**, a weekly dramatic TV series based on the real-life work of the team at Necro-Search, who volunteer their expertise to look into cold case crimes, sold to NBC/Universal Studios.

MONSTER is a true crime book about Tom Luther - a man convicted of brutally raping and beating Mary Brown in 1982 - who, when unleashed upon society ten years later, leaves a trail of murder and mayhem from the Rockies to West Virginia, and Detective Scott Richardson must race against time to catch a vicious killer.

In **ALL SECURE**, one of the most highly regarded special operations soldiers in American military history shares his war stories and personal battle with PTSD.

Suranne Jones will produce and star in an adaptation of five-time boxing champion Jane Couch's memoir **THE FINAL ROUND** (Pitch).

Jones' firm TeamAkers and "Gentleman Jack" producers Lookout Point optioned TV rights for the series.

Couch's 2019 book explains her rise from a tough upbringing in Fleetwood to success in the ring. At the heart of her story is her successful legal battle with the UK Boxing Board of Control to allow women to compete in the UK.

Faith Penhale and Laura Lankester, from Lookout Point, will develop the show with Jones and production partner Laurence Akers.

Akers said: "Jane's story is one that needs to be told and now is the time to tell it. It's incredible that women weren't allowed to box in this country until 1998 and Jane's treatment by the media around that time was draconian. She gave her entire life to boxing and it almost destroyed her. Her courage and fight are an inspiration and I believe this will truly be a landmark television series."

Amazon Studios has signed a new overall deal for television with the Oscar- and Emmy-winning team at Pitt's Plan B Entertainment.

Under the exclusive new agreement, Plan B's first devoted to TV production, the company will develop and produce series for Amazon globally.

Plan B is currently in production with Oscar-winning director Barry Jenkins on upcoming Amazon

original series *The Underground Railroad* and will also produce new Amazon original series *Outer Range*, created by Brian Watkins.

The producer, of which Pitt is founder and CEO, is also working with Amazon Studios and Legendary Television to develop *Paper Girls*, a dramatic series based on Brian K Vaughan's bestselling graphic novel, **PAPER GIRLS**. The comic is set in 1988 and follows four 12-year-old newspaper delivery girls who uncover the most important story of all time. Suburban drama and otherworldly mysteries collide in this series about nostalgia, first jobs, and the last days of childhood.

Elsewhere, Amazon Studios has greenlit drama series *Jack Reacher*, based on the international bestselling novels from Lee Child. The first season will be based on the first *Jack Reacher* novel, **THE KILLING FLOOR**. This first volume starts with the hero getting off a Greyhound bus in the fictional town of Margrave, Georgia, because he remembers his brother mentioning that a blues musician named Blind Blake died there. Much to his surprise, shortly after his arrival, he is arrested in a local diner for murder...

Nick Santora will showrun and exec produce the show, which will be produced by Amazon Studios, Skydance Television and Paramount Television Studios.

Finally, Amazon Studios has revealed more details about its upcoming series based on **THE LORD OF THE RINGS**, the first season of which will span eight episodes.

Its multi-generational cast will include Robert Aramayo, Owain Arthur, Nazanin Boniadi, Tom Budge, Morfydd Clark, Ismael Cruz Córdova, Ema Horvath, Markella Kavenagh, Joseph Mawle, Tyroe Muhafidin, Sophia Nomvete, Megan Richards, Dylan Smith, Charlie Vickers and Daniel Weyman. Production will begin in February.

As previously announced, the series is led by showrunners and executive producers J.D. Payne and Patrick McKay.

AMC Networks in the US has renewed *Breaking Bad* spin-off series *Better Call Saul* for a sixth and final season, alongside revealing a slate of drama projects in development.

The 13-episode run is set to go into production later this year ahead of airing in 2021. The drama's fifth season is due to premiere on February 23.

Meanwhile, AMC Networks Entertainment Group has revealed details of seven projects in development. These include *More as This Story Develops*, a drama series produced by Katie Couric and Wendy Walker, which has been inspired by their friendship and careers in broadcast news in the 1980s.

Musical dramedy *National Anthem* is from writer Scott Z Burns (*The Report*, *Contagion*) and executive producer Mark Johnson (*Breaking Bad*, *Better Call Saul*). It follows a family that has fallen down the ladder of American life.

Sleeping Beauties is based on the novel by Stephen King and his son Owen, **SLEEPING BEAUTIES**. It focuses on a mystical occurrence that puts all the women in a small town to sleep, leaving the men to rescue them.

Bunny, by Megan Mostyn Brown (*NOS4A2*, *Gotham*) is also based on a novel, **BUNNY**, this time by Mona Awad. The show centres on a lonely student who is drawn into a mysterious clique of girls.

Animated drama series Pantheon, based on the short stories by sci-fi writer Ken Liu, **PANTHEON**, is also on the development slate, as is Nigeria 2099, which is set in a poor district of Lagos in the future.

Finally, Silverbird, from journalist and screenwriter Scott Gold (Shooter, Under the Dome), is the story of an army veteran who, needing to disappear, falls in with a collective of mercenaries on their way to Africa with an unusual mission.

AMC production arm AMC Studios, meanwhile, has teased four projects that will be available to third-party buyers. The Sparrow, based on the science fiction novel by Mary Doria Russell, **THE SPARROW**, follows a secret mission into space to trace the source of musical communication from extraterrestrial life. Mark Johnson is the exec producer.

Fates & Furies, based on Lauren Groff's novel, **FATES & FURIES**, explores two perspectives of marriage, while I Run Hot follows the relationship between a gay curmudgeon who never quite fits in with the community and an Instagram celebrity who can't help but exemplify it.

Finally, dark comedy Work it Out will be executive produced by and star Anna Camp (Pitch Perfect, True Blood). It focuses on a long-time Jane Fonda devotee in 1994 Myrtle Beach who will do whatever it takes to establish her workout empire.

Ahead of Comcast's investor presentation today to officially unveil NBCUniversal's upcoming streaming service Peacock, the platform has announced its inaugural development slate. It includes comedies MacGruber, starring and co-written by Will Forte; and Clean Slate, starring and co-written by Laverne Cox and George Wallace. Creative auspices on Peacock's series in development also include Amy Poehler, Mindy Kaling, Norman Lear and Lorne Michaels, among others. The projects come from within NBCUniversal Content Studios — from both Universal TV and UCP — as well as from outside studios, Warner Bros. and Sony.

When coming to book adaptation, Peacock has put in development an anthology drama series, whose first installment, Hatching Twitter, goes behind the meteoric rise of the tech company.

Through exclusive access and exhaustive investigative reporting, New York Times best-selling author and Vanity Fair special correspondent Nick Bilton draws on hundreds of sources, documents, and internal e-mails to tell intimate true stories of companies behaving badly and technology gone awry. The first installment of this anthology series will be based on Bilton's acclaimed book **HATCHING TWITTER**, a tale of betrayed friendships and high-stakes power struggles that accompanied the meteoric rise of the infamous tech company. 140 characters and a few lines of code changed the world, disrupting the very fabric of the way people communicate. This series will explore the real masterminds behind it all, how it was done, and the colossal ramifications the technology will have on our future.

Amazon Studios has passed on The Dark Tower pilot. The adaptation of Stephen King's book, **THE DARK TOWER**, came from executive producer/showrunner Glen Mazzara and MRC. The production company is shopping the two original scripts that were the basis for the pilot pickup, sources said.

THE DARK TOWER has always been considered very difficult to adapt to the screen, which explains the title's lengthy road to being made into a feature by Sony and a pilot by Amazon. Largely because of the challenges translating the material, Amazon opted to go with a pilot vs. straight-to-series order, which is rare for a big-scale, big-budget production like The Dark Tower. In the end, Amazon executives felt like the pilot was not on the level of other large-scale elevated genre series the streamer has in production/pre-production like Wheel Of Time and The Lord Of the Rings.

The Dark Tower TV series was designed to be independent from the 2017 film and was meant to be a more faithful retelling of the book than the movie was. It takes place many years before the events depicted in the feature and focused on the origin story of Roland Deschain's (Sam Strike) – how he first became a gunslinger and got his guns, his first conflict with the man in black (Jasper Pääkkönen), his first love and his first mission as a gunslinger.

The cast of the pilot, which was never officially announced or confirmed, also is believed to have included Michael Rooker, Jerome Flynn and Joana Ribeiro.

King's eight **DARK TOWER** books draw from multiple genres, including dark fantasy, science fantasy, horror and Western.

HBO Max has given a green light to The Uninhabitable Earth, a climate change anthology series inspired by David Wallace-Wells' global best-selling book and New York Magazine article of the same name, from Oscar- and Emmy-winning writer Adam McKay and his Hyperobject Industries, wiip and Animal Kingdom. The series was announced Wednesday during the TCA Winter Press Tour.

The series will be comprised of stand-alone fictional stories covering a wide range of genres and possible futures that could result from the rapid warming of our planet. McKay, who recently closed a five-year, overall television deal with HBO and HBO Max, is attached to write and direct the first episode. The plan is for the first season to enlist top directors and writers to join in creating a provocative and entertaining series that taps into our unease with just how delicately our planet is teetering on the precipice.

"Adam is one of the rare artists who can deliver a pointed, impactful message in a piece of great entertainment," said Kevin Reilly, chief content officer, HBO Max and president TBS, TNT, and truTV. "I can't wait to see what he does with this material, as there is no timelier and more relevant message than a wake-up call on climate change and the growing impact on our lives."

In the 2019 #1 New York Times bestseller, **THE UNINHABITABLE EARTH**, author Wallace-Wells offers readers a travelogue of the near future and the impending terrors – rising sea levels, food shortages, refugee emergencies, climate wars and economic devastation – we will all face. His work forecasts all of the ways the world will be forever transformed if we don't take swift, sweeping

measures.

"I've been chomping at the bit to get this show going. I'm very happy that HBO Max stepped up and made the commitment. There's obviously no subject as vast and daunting," said Adam McKay.

The Uninhabitable Earth is executive produced by Hyperobject Industries' McKay and Kevin Messick (Succession), wiip's Paul Lee (Dickinson) and Mark Roybal (No Country for Old Men), and Animal Kingdom's David Kaplan (It Follows) and Andrea Roa (It Comes at Night). David Wallace-Wells serves as a consulting producer.

HBO announced its documentary slate for the first half of 2020 at TCA few days ago, including films about three-time Oscar nominee Natalie Wood, Muhammad Ali's relationship with talk show host Dick Cavett, "fake news," Roy Cohn, cyberwarfare, autism, LGBTQ issues and more.

Here is the list of upcoming HBO docus and their premiere dates ranging from February to June, with synopses provided by HBO:

McMILLION\$ (Feb. 3)

The six-part documentary series, is the incredible true story of how \$24 million-dollars was stolen from the McDonald's Monopoly game of the 1990s, the mysterious mastermind behind the scam and the intrepid FBI agents on his trail. For over a decade, McDonald's fast-food empire awarded prizes in its Monopoly promotional game tie-in, unaware that the biggest winning tickets were being stolen and sold to undeserving winners through a complex web of family and friends who became co-conspirators. An anonymous tip to the FBI in 2001 triggers a far-reaching chain of events that will come to include dogged and unorthodox investigative work, undercover sting operations and dirty dealings by shifty ex-cons with ties to the mafia. The series unfolds with suspense and improbable hijinks as it unravels the twisted threads of the fast-food fraud and reveals the real-life characters for whom a winning ticket was too good to turn down, and who hoped they could get away with stealing from Ronald McDonald. Directed by James Lee Hernandez and Brian Lazarte and executive produced by Mark Wahlberg, Stephen Levinson and Archie Gips.

ALI & CAVETT: THE TALE OF THE TAPES (Feb. 11)

This documentary offers a unique look at boxing legend Muhammad Ali by chronicling his life and career through the lens of his relationship with television talk show host Dick Cavett. Ali appeared on Cavett's three-time Emmy-winning late-night show fourteen times. The unlikely duo became known for their provocative primetime debates on race relations, which blossomed into a 50-plus year friendship. The film focuses on Ali's rise to greatness during the mid-60s, his draft evasion controversy, and how he, as the first boxer to truly be a product of the television age, leveraged his media influence to advocate for racial justice. Directed by Robert S. Bader.

HBO @ TCA: Deadline's Complete Coverage

WE ARE THE DREAM: THE KIDS OF THE OAKLAND MLK ORATORICAL FEST (Feb. 18)

Every year in Oakland, CA, hundreds of pre-K through 12th-grade students compete in the Martin

Luther King Oratorical Festival, performing a mix of published and original poetry and speeches. This documentary chronicles the months leading up to the 40th annual festival, as schools across the city send their top-placing students to compete. It is a portrait of passionate young people raising their voices about issues they care about – racial injustice, immigration and more – and of a community that celebrates them. Directed by Emmy winner Amy Schatz and executive produced by Mahershala Ali.

AXIOS SEASON THREE (March & May)

The news-breaking documentary series will continue to work with Axios journalists to cover it all – politics, business, technology – and share insight on other big topics shaping the future. Cofounded in 2016 by Mike Allen, Jim VandeHei and Roy Schwartz, Axios is known for its headline-generating interviews, illuminating coverage and trustworthy insight delivered with “smart brevity.” Directed and produced by Emmy winner Matthew O’Neill and Perri Peltz.

AFTER TRUTH: DISINFORMATION AND THE COST OF FAKE NEWS (March)

In the age of social media, this eye-opening documentary examines the rising phenomenon of “fake news” in the U.S. and the impact that disinformation, conspiracy theories and false news stories have on the average citizen. The film focuses on several high-profile made-up news stories in recent years with real-world consequences, including the infamous “Pizzagate” case, the disinformation campaigns that influenced the 2016 presidential election, the Jade Helm conspiracy, and others. Drawing from exclusive verite access and interviews with a variety of experts, as well as purveyors and targets of misinformation, the documentary sheds light on how post-truth culture has become an increasingly dangerous part of the global information environment. Directed by Andrew Rossi and executive produced by Brian Stelter.

KILL CHAIN: THE CYBER WAR ON AMERICA’S ELECTIONS (March)

Takes a chilling look into the security of election technology revealing how unprotected our voting systems really are. With the integrity of 2016’s election in question, 2020 is also at risk as malware may already be in place to disrupt aspects of the multi-faceted election system – from voter registration rolls to ballots. As more precincts rely on electronic voting machines, seemingly unrelated attacks over the past few years can be seen as part of a “kill chain,” in which state sponsored hackers to employ cyberweapons instead of military force to undermine faith in the democratic process and the freedoms that many Americans assume are protected. Following Harri Hursti, the legendary Finnish hacker turned election expert, as he investigates election-related hacks, the film also features candid interviews with key figures in the election security community as well as U.S. Senators from both parties who are fighting to protect the sanctity of the votes of U.S. citizens. A film by Simon Ardizzone, Russell Michaels and Sarah Teale.

ATLANTA CHILD MURDERS (working title, April)

Offers a never-before-seen look at the abduction and murder of at least 30 African American children and young adults that occurred over a two-year period in Atlanta in the late-’70s and early-’80s, from the initial disappearance and discovery of two murdered teenage boys and the fear that gripped the city, to the prosecution and indictment of 23-year-old Atlanta native Wayne Williams and the rush to officially shut down the case. With unprecedented access and a treasure trove of archival material, this timely documentary series brings new evidence to light as the cases are reopened, providing a powerful window into one of America’s darkest chapters. The series is produced and directed by the Emmy-winning team at Show of Force, including Joshua Bennett,

Maro Chermayeff and Jeff Dupre, and Oscar nominee Sam Pollard and executive produced by Patrick Reardon of Roc Nation and by the Emmy-winning team at Get Lifted Film Co., Mike Jackson, Ty Stiklorius and John Legend.

AUTISM: THE SEQUEL (April)

This film follows five young adults on the spectrum as they navigate their early 20's. Intercut with present day interviews is footage of the same youth and their families shot 12 years ago for the Emmy-winning film "AUTISM: The Musical." The new film answers the prevailing question all of the families struggled with: what will happen when my kid grows up? Directed by Sasha Alpert.

THE ART OF POLITICAL MURDER (April)

Based on Francisco Goldman's book of the same name, **THE ART OF POLITICAL MURDER**, and executive produced by Oscar-winner George Clooney and Grant Heslov, this film tells the story of the 1998 murder of Guatemalan human rights activist Bishop Juan Gerardi, which stunned a country ravaged by decades of political violence. Just two days after presenting a damning report blaming the atrocities of the civil war on the Guatemalan military, Bishop Gerardi was found dead in his home. Fearing a cover-up, the church assembles a team of young investigators to take on the case. They begin to unearth a web of conspiracy and murder, entangling the upper echelons of the government. Directed by Paul Taylor and produced by Teddy Leifer.

NATALIE WOOD: WHAT REMAINS BEHIND (May)

Natalie Wood's remarkable life and career are often overshadowed by the circumstances surrounding her tragic death at age 43. Guided by her daughter, Natasha Gregson Wagner, as well as her extensive circle of family and close friends, the film intimately explores Wood's personal life and illustrious career that spanned nearly five decades. The film chronicles her triumphs and challenges, featuring previously unseen home movies, photographs, diaries and letters, as well as interviews with those that knew her best. Directed by Laurent Bouzereau. Darryl Frank and Justin Falvey executive produce for Amblin Television.

WELCOME TO CHECHNYA (June)

In the present-day Russian republic of Chechnya, gay and transgender citizens are targeted as part of a deadly "cleansing" campaign. This searing documentary shadows a group of brave LGBTQ activists risking their lives to confront the ongoing persecution, working undercover to rescue the victims of this aggression. Through a succession of safe houses and a global underground network of collaborators, the LGBTQ advocates provide victims temporary safety and urgent visa assistance, because fleeing Russia is their only chance for survival. Directed by David France.

TRANSHOOD (June)

Filmed over five years in Kansas City, this documentary follows four transgender kids – beginning at ages 4, 7, 12, and 15 – as they redefine "coming of age." These kids and their families show us the intimate realities of how gender is re-shaping the family next door in a unique and unprecedented chronicle of growing up transgender in the heartland. The film is a nuanced story of how parents and children are challenged, transform, and sometimes find unexpected purpose in their identities as transgender families. Moving, surprising and inspiring, this story teaches us something new about being human. Directed and produced by Sharon Liese.

BULLY. COWARD. VICTIM. THE STORY OF ROY COHN (June)

This film offers an unflinching look at the infamous attorney who prosecuted Ivy Meeropol's grandparents, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and later argued persuasively for their execution in what became known as the "atomic spies" case. The film examines Cohn's life as chief counsel to Senator Joseph McCarthy in the late 1950s, through the 1980s when he became a darling of the Reagan White House, a rabid anti-homosexuality activist and political mentor to Donald J. Trump before meeting his death from AIDS in 1986. The film draws from extensive, newly unearthed archival material, recorded at the height of Cohn's career as a power broker in the rough and tumble world of New York City business and politics. Directed by Ivy Meeropol.

Aladdin screenwriter John August has been set to write *Toto*, an animated musical for the Warner Animation Group. The film is based on the book **TOTO: THE DOG-GONE AMAZING STORY OF THE WIZARD OF OZ**, written by Michael Morpurgo and illustrated by Emma Chichester.

Jared Stern's A Stern Talking To is attached to produce. **TOTO** tells the Wizard of Oz story from the point of view of Dorothy's dog.

August has a strong track record in writing fantastical movies, co-writing with director Guy Ritchie the Aladdin live-action film that grossed \$1 billion worldwide last year, and before that films that include *Big Fish*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and *The Nines*. *Toto* becomes the second high-profile musical for August, with the *Grease* prequel *Summer Nights* in development at Paramount Players.

August is also the author of the international best-selling middle-grade fantasy trilogy of novels **ARLO FINCH IN THE VALLEY OF FIRE**, **ARLO FINCH IN THE LAKE OF THE MOON** and **ARLO FINCH IN THE KINGDOM OF SHADOWS**. In the trilogy, Arlo thought becoming a Ranger meant learning wilderness skills, like camping and knots. But upon arriving in the tiny town of Pine Mountain, Colorado, Arlo soon learns there's so much more. His new friends teach him how to harness the wild magic seeping in from the mysterious Long Woods - a parallel realm of wonder and danger.

PARADISE FOUND by Bill Plaschke (which was acquired last year by William Morrow) has been optioned by 101 Studios with *The Rookie* producer Mark Ciardi attached. The book follows the high school football team from the town of Paradise, Calif., which was ravaged by the Camp Fire in 2018.

Jonathan Lethem's **GUN, WITH OCCASIONAL MUSIC** (1994) has been optioned by Legendary Television. Chernobyl director Johan Renck is attached to helm the planned miniseries.

GUN, WITH OCCASIONAL MUSIC is a 1994 novel by American writer Jonathan Lethem. It blends science fiction and hardboiled detective fiction. It was nominated for the Nebula Award for Best Novel in 1994.

The novel follows the adventures of Conrad Metcalf, a tough, smart-alecky private detective, through a futuristic version of San Francisco and Oakland, California. Metcalf is hired by a man who claims that he's being framed for the murder of a prominent urologist. Metcalf quickly discovers that nobody wants the case solved: not the victim's ex-wife, not the police, and certainly not the gun-toting kangaroo who works for the local mafia boss.

Verso Fiction has bought a prize-winning novel by Olivier Guez about Josef Mengele's escape from justice, which has already sold 300,000 copies in France.

Fiction editor Cian McCourt acquired UK and Commonwealth rights (excluding Canada) for **THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOSEF MENGELE** from Heidi Warneke at Éditions Grasset. It will be released in paperback on 9th June.

The book was first published in France in 2017, going on to win the Prix Renaudot. It has been translated into 13 languages and is currently being made into a film. Georgia de Chamberet has now translated the book into English for the first time.

It is based on the story of Mengele, also known as the Angel of Death, who performed deadly experiments on prisoners and was a member of the team of doctors who selected victims to be killed in the gas chambers. After the war, Mengele fled to South America where he evaded capture for the rest of his life.

The synopsis states: "In this darkly fascinating tale, novelist Olivier Guez follows Mengele's trail after he left Europe and hid undercover, first in Buenos Aires and then quietly disappearing into the humid jungles of Brazil..."

The book is the third title released by the Verso Fiction imprint, which launched last year with Vigdis Hjorth's novel **WILL AND TESTAMENT (ARV OG MILJØ)** and short story collection **KITCHEN CURSE** by Eka Kurniawan.

WILL AND TESTAMENT starts as a classic story of inheritance, centred on two summer cabins on Hvaler. Two children have been looking after the place and their parents for many years. They are due to inherit the cabins. But there are two other children, who have partly broken away from the family. How do they fit into the inheritance dispute?

KITCHEN CURSE is Eka Kurniawan's first collection of short stories - Indonesian literature's characteristic form - to be translated into English. Dark, sexual, scatological, violent, and mordantly funny, these fractured fables span city and country, animal and human, myth and politics.

Film rights sold to Roberto Ando's **IL BAMBINO NASCOSTO** (The Hidden Child). The novel will be adapted in a feature film scheduled for 2021 (Film/tv company tbc)

Pitch: A solitary music professor in Naples finds a 10-year-old child hiding in his flat, and decides to save him from the criminal family he is trying to flee from. This is a decision that will change his life, as well as the child's, opening a new door on the possibility to care, love and be loved back.

Film/TV rights to Lucie Whitehouse's **CRITICAL INCIDENTS** optioned by ITV Studios

Pitch: Set in Birmingham. DI Robin Osborne has been dismissed from the London Met for misconduct. Desperate, she moves herself and teenage daughter Lennie back in with her parents in Birmingham, but becomes embroiled in a case involving the death of her best friend.

Film/TV rights to Santiago Lorenzo **LOS ASQUEROSOS** sold to Z Cinema (Spain)

Pitch: A bright yet anti-social young man whose attempts to make a life for himself are thwarted by his country's devastating economic crisis finds himself almost accidentally on the run from the police for murder. He sets up camp in an abandoned countryside house.

ALERTS

Dramedy

Mira has acquired publishing rights, in a very nice deal, in a two-book deal, for publication in fall 2020, to Holly Bourne's **PRETENDING** pitched for fans of Fleabag, about a woman attempting to date in the wake of a traumatic relationship, who pretends to be "the perfect girl" in an act of vengeance that goes awry when she finds herself emotionally compromised.

Thriller/ Crime/ Noir

Canelo has acquired UK publishing rights, in a two-book deal, for publication in spring 2020, to author of the **CHARLOTTE SAVAGE** series Mark Sennen's first two novels in the **HOLM & DASILVA** series, in which a former top army sniper and disgraced MI5 intelligence analyst try to hunt down the leader of a terrorist cell who may be receiving protection from within the highest political circles in the U.S. and the U.K.

The **CHARLOTTE SAVAGE** series follows the investigations of the brilliant British DI and her team.

Sourcebooks Landark has acquired publishing rights, at auction, in a two-book deal, for publication in spring 2021, to Ashley Winstead's **IN MY DREAMS I HOLD A KNIFE**, pitched for fans of Riley Sager, at their college's ten year reunion six friends are forced to confront the murder of their best friend ten years prior, uncovering their most closely-guarded secrets to find out which one of them actually killed her.

Kensington has acquired publishing rights, in a nice deal, in a three-book deal, to Kelly Garrett's **GROUNDS FOR MURDER**, the first in the **GROUND RULES SERIES**, in which a young woman's budding coffee cart business in a gentrifying Portland neighborhood is threatened when one of her first customers is found murdered in front of her food truck, and she must solve the case to save her business and herself.

Indie press Serpentine Books has bagged a "captivating" thriller from début writer Heather Barnett. Director Raquel Elias acquired world rights direct from the author for **ACTS OF KINDNESS**, slated for publication in March 2021.

"The novel follows newly divorced thirty-something Bella Black as she takes up a job at Acorn Consulting and its charitable foundation, the mysterious Organised Acts of Kindness Institute," reads the synopsis. "It becomes clear, however, that not everyone at the institute is benevolent, when the c.e.o. goes missing and systems are attacked. While attempting to discover who is behind

the sabotage, Bella grapples with her own sense of identity and growing feelings for two men: her enigmatic boss Ben, and witty colleague Rich."

Barnett, a comedy writer and head of marketing, kick-started her début with creative writing sessions at the Faber Academy and Arvon Foundation.

Elias said: "It blends a captivating storyline, compelling characters and a sideways look at life with elements of comedy and romance."

Tom Watson, the former deputy leader of the Labour Party, is making his fiction debut with a political thriller for Little, Brown with **THE HOUSE**.

Sphere Fiction publishing director Ed Wood, who signed the deal for world rights for Watson's début novel, said it would be "the political thriller of a generation". It is co-written with author Imogen Robertson.

Watson said: "My first novel with Imogen will explore the themes that lubricate our political system: ambition and failure, trust and betrayal. In a world where virtue is seen as a rare commodity, **THE HOUSE** will introduce you to the heroes and villains engaged in a struggle for fame, power and revenge."

"Tom Watson is one of the most significant, influential and deep-thinking politicians in this country," commented Wood. "His insights into the workings of politicians' minds and Parliament are eye-opening, dramatic and sometimes almost unbelievable, and his and Imogen's story is one that will hold an iron grip on readers and undoubtedly generate headlines. This will be the political thriller of a generation."

THE HOUSE will publish in autumn 2020.

Canongate has signed a mystery thriller by Peter Ackroyd, **MR CADMUS**.

Canongate will publish **MR CADMUS** in hardback on 1st October 2020.

Set in the idyllic English village of Little Camborne, the novel follows the story of two cousins, Miss Finch and Miss Swallow, whose normal, conventional life is being disrupted by the arrival Theodore Cadmus.

Ackroyd added: "In **MR CADMUS** I have moved from the city to the country, but I thoroughly enjoyed the intrigue and suspense it provoked."

History/ Narrative Non Fiction

Avid Reader Press has acquired publishing rights, for publication June 9, 2020, to Fox News anchor Chris Wallace's **COUNTDOWN 1945: THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF THE 116 DAYS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD**, an account of the secret meetings and events across the globe during the 116 days leading up to the world's first use of the atomic bomb in wartime—the American attack on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, written with Pulitzer-winning AP journalist Mitch Weiss.

Fidelis has acquired publishing rights, for publication in August 2020, to historian and author of **THE SPY WHO CHANGED HISTORY** Svetlana Lokhova's **THE SPIDER: STEFAN A. HALPER AND THE DARK WEB OF A COUP**, revealing the secrets behind the biggest political scandal in U.S. history.

THE SPY WHO CHANGED HISTORY tells the story of Stanislav Shumovsky, and his work in the US as an aviation spy during the 1930s which allowed the Soviet Union to become a military powerhouse.

Memoir/ Biography/ True Story

Norton has acquired publishing rights, at auction, to journalist Makana Eyre's **UNSILENCED: THE REMARKABLE STORY OF THE MAN WHO SAVED THE MUSIC OF THE HOLOCAUST**, an account of a young Polish Catholic, Aleksander Kulisiewicz, who, finding himself imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1940, begins to shed his prewar anti-Semitism, befriends an underground Jewish choir director, and saves over 600 songs composed in the camp, many of them by Jews who later perish.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt has acquired publishing rights, at auction, to Keren Blankfeld's **THE LOVERS OF AUSCHWITZ**, building on her viral NYT article about two Holocaust survivors, David Wisnia and Helen "Zippi" Spitzer, who fell in love in Auschwitz only to be separated upon liberation and embark on remarkable but separate postwar lives—before finding each other again more than 70 years later.

Ecco has acquired publishing rights, in a significant deal, in an exclusive submission, in a two-book deal, to author of **ALL THIS COULD BE YOURS** and **THE MIDDLESTEINS** Jami Attenberg's **A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD**, a memoir that traces her journey as a Gen X woman who has made unconventional choices in life and love, and how writing saved her, along with an untitled novel, following Helen Atsma.

In **ALL THIS COULD BE YOURS**, Victor is dying. It's fairly sudden and means his family is beginning to gather at his hospital bedside. They are his wife, Barbra, his daughter, Alex, absent son Gary, daughter-in-law, Twyla and two granddaughters. And the problem is that not one of them cares that this cruel, powerful, philandering man is passing away, but they can't talk about it either.

In **THE MIDDLESTEINS**, for more than thirty years, Edie and Richard Middlestein shared a solid family life together in the suburbs of Chicago. But now things are splintering apart, for one reason, it seems: Edie's enormous girth. She's obsessed with food--thinking about it, eating it--and if she doesn't stop, she won't have much longer to live. When Richard abandons his wife, it is up to the next generation to take control.

Bloomsbury has acquired publishing rights, at auction, to African-American self-taught artist and

Equal Justice Initiative honoree Winfred Rembert's **CHASING ME TO MY GRAVE**, a full-color memoir of the Jim Crow South chronicling in prose and painting Rembert's journey through cotton fields, juke joints, civil rights protests, survival of a near-lynching and years of incarceration and Georgia chain gangs to find epic love, raise eight children, and reinvent himself at 52 as an artist driven to preserve his memories of Black life in the segregated South by carving them on leather as a form of testimony for future generations, as told to Tufts philosopher Erin I. Kelly.

Gallery has acquired publishing rights, for publication in spring 2020, to trial lawyer who specializes in representing victims of violent and sexual crimes Bradley. Edwards, with Brittany Henderson's **RELENTLESS PURSUIT: MY FIGHT FOR THE VICTIMS OF JEFFREY EPSTEIN**, the story of the case against Jeffrey Epstein and the corrupt system that supported him, told in detail by the lawyer who has represented Epstein's victims for more than a decade.

Hachette Books has acquired publishing rights, in a good deal, at auction, to author of **ORIGINAL GANGSTAS** and **FENTANYL, INC** Ben Westhoff's **LITTLE BROTHER**, about his life-changing friendship with his "little brother" in the Big Brother, Big Sister program, and how a shocking murder forced the author to investigate his little brother and confront issues of race and poverty in St. Louis.

In **ORIGINAL GANGSTAS**, amid rising gang violence, the crack epidemic, and police brutality, a group of unlikely voices cut through the chaos of late 1980s Los Angeles and quickly redefined pop culture across the world: N.W.A.

FENTANYL, INC is the first deep-dive investigation of a hazardous and illicit industry that has created a worldwide epidemic, ravaging communities and overwhelming and confounding government agencies that are challenged to combat it.

Doubleday has acquired publishing rights, for publication in July 2020, to founder of the first organization in the United States committed to freeing the wrongly imprisoned, Jim McCloskey's **WHEN TRUTH IS ALL YOU HAVE: A MEMOIR OF FAITH, JUSTICE, AND FREEDOM FOR THE WRONGLY CONVICTED**, a story of devotion, doubt, triumphant success, and shattering failure by an unlikely hero, whose detective work and unflagging commitment to justice resulted in the freeing of 63 prisoners and incited a movement.

Prometheus has acquired publishing rights, in a nice deal, for publication in 2021, to William Hazelgrove's **ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY MINUTES: THE RACE TO SAVE THE RMS TITANIC**, the untold story of a network of wireless operators on land and sea who desperately sent messages back and forth across the dark frozen North Atlantic to mount a rescue mission, more than twenty-eight ships would be involved in the rescue of Titanic survivors along with four different countries.

For six figures, Bruce Nichols at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt bought Neal Thompson's nonfiction work **THE FIRST KENNEDYS**. The book, subtitled **An Immigrant Maid, Her Bartender Son, and the Humble Roots of a Dynasty**, chronicles the beginnings of the Kennedy family in America. The book begins with the family matriarch—an Irish immigrant named Bridget who arrived in Boston in

1849—and details how “this resilient widow and single mother of four rose from maid to hairdresser to business owner and entrepreneur, providing the Kennedy family its first steps toward legitimacy in America.” The book also offers a resonant rebuttal to current anti-immigrant sentiments. Thompson is a journalist and author whose previous books include the 2018 memoir **KICKFLIP BOYS** (Ecco).

KICKFLIP BOYS is the story of a father’s struggle to understand his willful skateboarder sons, challengers of authority and convention, to accept his role as a vulnerable “skate dad,” and to confront his fears that the boys are destined for an unconventional and potentially fraught future.

Children’s/ Young Adult

Putnam Children’s has acquired publishing rights, for publication in spring 2022, to Irene Latham and Charles Waters’s **AFRICAN TOWN**, a historical fiction novel-in-verse told in multiples voices chronicling the story of the last Africans brought illegally to America on board the slave ship Clotilda in 1860 and their struggle to maintain their lives, humanity, and culture while enduring capture, the Middle Passage, enslavement, and Emancipation, leading them to build their own community called Africatown, which exists to this day.

Sourcebooks Fire has acquired publishing rights, for publication in summer 2021, to Bryce Moore’s **MURDER CASTLE**, pitched as **STALKING JACK THE RIPPER** meets a YA **DEVIL IN THE WHITE CITY**, following a 16-year-old as she travels to Chicago during the 1893 World’s Fair to try and save her sister from a notorious mass murderer and his custom-built death trap.

STALKING JACK THE RIPPER by Kerri Maniscalco follows Audrey, 17 and a lord’s daughter, who leads a life of wealth and privilege but also a forbidden secret life. Against her father’s wishes, she often slips away to her uncle’s laboratory to study the practice of forensic medicine. It drags her into the investigation of a serial murderer.

THE DEVIL IN THE WHITE CITY by Erik Larson tells the true stories of two men: Daniel H. Burnham, the architect responsible for 1893 Chicago World Fair’s construction, and H.H. Holmes, a serial killer masquerading as a charming doctor.

Harper Children’s has acquired publishing rights, in a good deal, at auction, in a two-book deal, for publication in winter 2021, to Waka Brown’s **WHILE I WAS AWAY**, pitched as The Farewell meets **BROWN GIRL DREAMING**, following the author’s journey as a Japanese American who was sent to live in Japan with a grandmother she never knew and attend public school because her parents feared she was losing her culture.

BROWN GIRL DREAMING by Jacqueline Woodson is the story of the author, raised in South Carolina and New York, who always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s.

Scholastic has acquired publishing rights, for publication in summer 2021, to author of **TECHNICALLY, YOU STARTED IT** Lana Wood Johnson's **SPEAK FOR YOURSELF**, pitched as a **CYRANO** retelling told partly through chat transcripts, in which an aspiring tech genius tries to keep her academic competition team together by setting up her most valuable teammate with her archnemesis, only to realize she's falling for him herself.

In **TECHNICALLY, YOU STARTED IT**, when a guy named Martin Nathaniel Munroe II texts you, it should be obvious who you're talking to. Except there's two of them (it's a long story), and Haley thinks she's talking to the one she doesn't hate. As they become closer through texting, there's just one problem: Haley doesn't know who Martin is. And Martin doesn't know that Haley doesn't know.

Sci-Fi/ Fantasy

Orbit has acquired publishing rights, in a very nice deal, in a three-book deal, to Suyi Davies Okungbowa's **THE NAMELESS REPUBLIC**, a new epic fantasy trilogy, in which a clever but disillusioned scholar gets swept into a conspiracy far beyond his understanding and sets out on a journey that reveals histories violently suppressed and magic only found in lore.

Bonnier Books UK has signed a deal with Garth Nix for a new novel in the **OLD KINGDOM** series and his backlist, marking the first time the series will be housed under one roof in the UK.

The new novel in the YA **OLD KINGDOM** series, **TERCIEL AND ELINOR**, will be published in 2021, with a major sales, publicity and marketing campaign, alongside a rebrand for Nix and the **OLD KINGDOM** series. The series starts with the character of Sabriel, who has always lived outside the walls of the Old Kingdom, away from the random power of Free Magic, and away from the Dead who won't stay dead. But now her father, the Mage Abhorsen, is missing, and to find him she must cross back into that world.

The full list of acquired backlist and new titles across YA, teen and Middle Grade will be published under Bonnier Books UK imprints Hot Key Books and Piccadilly Press in 2020 and 2021 respectively.

Film and TV rights have also been secured by Herschend Entertainment Studios to seven-book series **THE KEYS TO THE KINGDOM**, chronicling the adventures of Arthur Penhaligon, an asthmatic 12-year-old boy who is chosen to become the Rightful Heir of the House, the center of the universe. Nix will serve as an executive producer alongside Julie Phillips, vice-president of Herschend Entertainment Studios.

Orbit has acquired publishing rights, in a very nice deal, in a pre-empt, in a three-book deal, for publication in fall 2020, to Essa Hansen's **NOPHEK GLOSS**, pitched for fans of **REVENGER** and **CHILDREN OF TIME** a space opera in which a young man seizes a starship with a soul of its own on a single-minded quest for revenge against the slavers who slaughtered his whole planet.

In **REVENGER** by Alastair Reynolds, the Ness sisters are skilled bone readers - the primary method

by which spaceships communicate with one another. They join the crew of a spaceship captained by Rackamore, looking for ancient technological artifacts. But one day the ship is attacked by an infamous space pirate, separating the sisters and leaving one adrift on a ship in empty space. In **CHILDREN OF TIME** by Adrian Tchaikovsky, the remnants of humanity leave a dying Earth for a terraformed new planet, only to discover that the world is now occupied by a new species.

Orbit has also acquired publishing rights, in a three-book deal, for publication in spring of 2021, to author of **EMPIRE OF SAND** and **REALM OF ASH** Tasha Suri's **THE JASMINE THRONE**, beginning a new trilogy set in a world inspired by the history and epics of India, in which a captive princess and a maidservant in possession of forbidden magic become unlikely allies on a dark journey to save their empire from the princess's traitor brother.

EMPIRE OF SAND and **REALM OF ASH** are part of the **BOOKS OF AMBHA** series, inspired by Mughal-Indian history. It tells the story of a nobleman's illegitimate daughter and a vow-bound mystic who both possess the rare ability to compel the dreams of sleeping gods.

Short Stories

Canongate has signed a two-book deal for Courttia Newland's first speculative fiction novel and short story collection.

Hannah Knowles, senior commissioning editor at Canongate, pre-empted world rights to **A RIVER CALLED TIME**, and a short story collection entitled **COSMOGRAMMA** in a deal. Canongate will publish **A RIVER CALLED TIME** on 6th August 2020, in hardback retailing, with **COSMOGRAMMA** following in 2021.

A RIVER CALLED TIME is the author's first speculative fiction novel and sees an alternative London, devastated by war and climate change and divided into a wealthy Inner City and poverty-stricken Outer City.

The synopsis reads: "A construction known as The Ark, built to save the lives of the many from pollution, rapidly became a refuge for the elite, the entrance closed without warning. Years later, a chance of survival within its confines is granted to a select few. Among their number is Markriss Denny, whose path is marred only by a closely guarded secret: his spirit can leave his body, allowing him to see and experience a world beyond his physical limitations. Inside the Ark, Denny learns of another with the same power, whose existence could spell catastrophe for humanity. He is forced into a desperate race to understand his abilities, and in doing so uncovers the truth about the Ark, himself and the people he thought he once knew."

COSMOGRAMMA is a "collection of speculative fiction short stories, featuring tales about an invasion of mysterious plants, two different-aged versions of a single self meeting, a circus of physically enhanced performers and a race of aquatic humanoids, "among other wild ricochets of the imagination", Canongate said.

BUZZ

THE LAST FLIGHT by Julie Clark

An agent is now out with this for film/TV rights, and the author just started conversations with interested parties

Translation rights sold: UK, Germany (at auction), Netherlands (at auction); Poland, Czech Republic, Russia, Korea (audio)

Pitch: In New York, Claire is married to Rory Cook, a violent, controlling, rich and powerful man. She's decided to leave him, and decides to swap identities with a woman she meets at the airport, Eva. Arriving at Eva's destination of California, she hears the other plane crashed

Lee Child, the pen name of James Dover Grant, brought a new coauthor into the fold with his latest contract. The four-book North American rights agreement was brokered by Lee Child's agent with Random House president and publisher Gina Centrello; it will see Child writing the next four installments in his bestselling **JACK REACHER** series with his brother, author Andrew Grant (**TOO CLOSE TO HOME**). The first book under the agreement, **THE SENTINEL**, will be published under the names Lee and Andrew Child, and is set for fall 2020. Random House said the **JACK REACHER** series has more than 100 million copies in print worldwide.

TOO CLOSE TO HOME is the second in the **PAUL MCGRATH** series, about an Army veteran and intelligence agent goes undercover as a janitor at a federal courthouse to pursue his own brand of justice.

Amazon Charts: Hunter tracks down the top spot

Cara Hunter's **ALL THE RAGE** (#4 in the **DETECTIVE FAWLEY** series, Penguin) has stormed into the Amazon Charts' Most-Sold: Fiction top spot, earning the "highly quotable" tag—readers highlighted passages more frequently in **ALL THE RAGE** than any other title. In this volume, a teenage girl is found wandering the outskirts of Oxford, dazed and distressed. She was grabbed off the street, a plastic bag pulled over her face, then driven to an isolated location where she was subjected to what sounds like an assault. Yet she refuses to press charges.

It knocked Andrzej Sapkowski's **THE LAST WISH** (Gollancz) into to second place, while Adele Parks' **LIES LIES LIES** (HQ) rose to join it in third. However, **THE LAST WISH** 's sequel **BLOOD OF ELVES** hit the top 20 for the first time.

THE LAST WISH

is a collection of short stories introducing Geralt of Rivia, to be followed by the first novel in the actual **WITCHER** series, **BLOOD OF ELVES**.

In Adele Parks' **LIES LIES LIES**, married couple Simon and Daisy can't agree on whether to keep trying for another child. Then Simon gets drunk and hits their daughter with the car, ending up in prison.

Terry Pratchett made his solo début on the Most-Sold: Fiction chart, with **DISCWORLD** title **MEN AT ARMS** (Transworld) barreling into 12th place. **DISCWORLD** is a comic fantasy book series set on the fictional Discworld, a flat disc balanced on the backs of four elephants which in turn stand on the back of a giant turtle, Great A'Tuin.

While the Harry Potter books once again dominated Most-Read: Fiction, **ALL THE RAGE** rose seven places to claim 11th.

PINCH OF NOM: Everyday Light (Bluebird) held the Most-Sold: Non-Fiction pole, as it clinched a fifth week in total in the Nielsen BookScan's UK Official Top 50 number one spot.

The Lisa Gray's **PI JESSICA SHAW** Series

Translation rights now sold, for Book 1, **THIN AIR**, in Sweden, Taiwan, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Sweden, Czech Republic, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Turkey

The novel is a Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, and Amazon Charts bestseller.

The series set around Los Angeles, California, and follows Private Investigator Jessica Shaw, who specialises in missing person cases.

THE PAPER PALACE, by Miranda Cowley Heller

Translation rights sold so far in UK (at auction), Germany (after an astonishing six-figure pre-empt) and Italy. Offers in Brazil, Spain, France, Netherlands and Hungary

US rights sold after a heated auction

Pitch: Set in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Elle is married with three children, holidaying in her family's summer camp, when she succumbs to desire and sleeps with her oldest friend, Jonas. The novel tracks Elle's early life, leading up to this point, and a secret she and Jonas share from the past.

Anna Dempsey, Kerry Hood and Iain Rowan have been nominated for the Costa Short Story Award 2019.

The prize-winner will be decided by the public vote and announced at the Costa Book Awards ceremony on 28th January. The winner receives £3,500, second place £1,000 and third place £500. Established in 2012, the award – run in association with the Costa Book Awards but judged independently of the main five-category system – is judged anonymously, without the name of the author being known throughout the process.

Dempsey is an American-born writer and teacher based in south-east London and she is in the running for **THE DEDICATED DANCERS OF THE GREATER OAKS COMMUNITY**. Currently completing her début YA novel, which is set in Florida, she has an MA in Children's Literature and Creative Writing from Goldsmiths College and an MA in Education from Touro College in NYC. Her short story is her first piece of short fiction. It follows a jaded New Yorker who heads south for the holidays and finds healing on the dance floor.

Hood is full-time writer based in Devon, who was highly commended for the 2017's Costa Short Story Award, and she is shortlisted for **THE DOG FRIEND OF DASTARDLY**, the story of Viv, on a visit to her dad, who must keep down all the Terrible Words. A dark, funny story set somewhere between hate and love. Also an English Literature graduate, Hood is starting a bleakly funny collection of stories and has also written 10 plays with residencies at the National Theatre, Traverse Theatre and RADA.

Rowan is a Sunderland-based author who wrote the crime novel **ONE OF US** (2012) and he competes with **BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAIN**. Rowan has already been shortlisted for both the Crime Writers' Association Début Dagger and for the 2017 Bath Novel Award, and in 2018 he won a Northern Writers' Award for his then novel-in-progress, **GOING UNDER**, which is now out on submission. He founded the Sunderland Festival of Creative Writing and the Sunderland writers' group Holmeside Writers too.

In **ONE OF US**, Anna fled her own country when the police murdered her brother and her father. When she used her medical school experience to treat a man with a gunshot wound, she thought it would be a way to a better life. But it leads to a world of people trafficking, prostitution, murder and the biggest decision of Anna's life.

In **BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAIN**, a troubled father walking in the hills with the son he adores faces an impossible decision.

Three additional stories were highly commended by judges: **NOT CONTAGIOUS** by Haleh Agar, "**[A GUIDE TO HOUSEHOLD INFESTATIONS** by Edward Hogan and **INSIDE THE BOX** by Lydia Vincent. The panel judges are Sarah Franklin, founder of Short Stories Aloud and senior lecturer in Publishing at Oxford Brookes University, Radio 2 Book Club producer Joe Haddow, literary agent Simon Trewin, and authors Adele Parks and Kit de Waal, the latter a finalist for the Costa Short Story Award in 2013.

Last year's winner of the prize was **BREATHING WATER** by Caroline Ward Vine, a former magazine publisher from Kent.

BOOKREPORT

COMEDY

MY TYPE ON PAPER by Chloe Seager (GB) - published by SCHOLASTIC , February 2020, 288 pages

[Comedy, Romantic Comedy](#)

[Location:](#) United Kingdom

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 0/3

This is extremely fun, silly nonsense, a perfect winter warmer.

Chloe Seager is a literary agent at the Madeleine Milburn Literary Agency and a writer. She previously published EDITING EMMA (HQ, 2017) and FRIENDSHIP FAILS OF EMMA NASH (HQ, 2018).

Maya is down in the dumps ... quite literally. She's just been pied off by her boyfriend before what was supposed to be their last romantic summer before heading off to Uni. Luckily help is at hand in the form of her friends, determined to hook her up with a fun summer romance, no strings attached. And with a summer job working at fancy new beach resort in town, how can she fail to meet the guy of her dreams? Hot weather, hot guys, hot summer romance... it's a dead cert. But with three perfect-on-paper guys to choose from, not to mention her snakey ex re-entering the picture, how will she know which guy to go for?

Report available

THE BENCH by Saskia Sarginson (GB) - published by Piatkus UK, March 2020, 368 pages

[Comedy, Romantic Comedy](#)

[Location:](#) United Kingdom, United States

[Epoch:](#) 20th century, 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2.29/3

Translation rights sold: Germany (in a five-figure pre-empt).

Pitched in comparison to ONE DAY and A STAR IS BORN

A highly satisfying love story set across decades. The concept is really simple but so well

done and the characters well-drawn.

Saskia Sarginson is a British writer. She was awarded a distinction in her MA in Creative Writing at Royal Holloway after a BA in English Literature from Cambridge University and a BA in Fashion Design & Communications. Before becoming a full-time author, her writing experience included being a health and beauty editor on women's magazines, a ghostwriter for the BBC and Harper Collins and copy-writing and script editing.

'We should have a plaque too,' he says. 'What would it say?'

I tilt my head. 'For Cat and Sam, who found each other and lost each other and found each other again,' I suggest.

It begins at the end.

It begins on a bench, on a heath, where a woman waits for a man.

Ten years ago, they made a pact: On this bench, on this day, they will end a love affair that's spanned three decades, or start again.

They should never have met. They should never have fallen in love. But they did, until a lie separated them for a lifetime.

Can they fix the mistake, forgive the lie, erase the years in-between?

Can what was lost ever truly be found?

Report available

THIS TIME NEXT YEAR by Sophie Cousens (GB) - TBP by ARROW PUBLISHING ,
October 2020, 360 pages

[Comedy, Romantic Comedy](#)

[Location:](#) United Kingdom

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2.29/3

Translation rights sold: US, Germany (6-fig pre-empt)

Pitched for fans of Josie Silver and Jojo Moyes.

Sophie Cousens worked as a TV producer in London for 12 years and now lives on the island of Jersey. She is the author of a commercial women's fiction novel HOW TO GET AHEAD IN TELEVISION.

Set in London. Minnie Cooper, a down-to-earth caterer, meets her birthday twin, the charming rich boy, Quinn Hamilton, on New Year's Eve 2019. They have absolutely nothing in common apart from both being born on New Year's Eve 1990, but somehow find themselves drawn together time and

time again.

Report available

SIGNES INTÉRIEURS DE RICHESSE by Rachel Vanier (FR) - published by NIL, March 2020, 350 pages

[Comedy](#)

[Location:](#) France, United States, Paris, New York

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Rachel Vanier is a French writer who was born in Budapest in 1988. She has worked in the world of innovation and start-ups. Her books include ÉCOSYSTÈME and HÔTEL INTERNATIONAL (2015).

Anita, single and struggling with money, decides to become a millionaire. A **BRIDGET JONES** set in the world of cryptocurrency.

Anita lives in a tiny apartment, works hard in an IT company for a very low salary, has only one good friend, Jo, at work, and dreams of Mr Right. One day she decides she wants to become one of the super-rich and she begins exploring the parallel world of crypto money. She fakes a job search and she gets in touch with Severn, a very handsome hacker specialized in cryptocurrency...

Report available

TODAY, TONIGHT, TOMORROW by Rachel Lynn Solomon (US) - TBP by Simon Pulse, June 2020, 332 pages

[Comedy, Romantic Comedy](#)

[Location:](#) United States

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Translation rights sold: France

Pitched as THE HATING GAME meets Nick and Norah's Infinita Playlist.

Rachel Lynn Solomon is an American writer, author of YOU'LL MISS ME WHEN I'M GONE.

She has written for newspapers, produced a radio show that aired in the middle of the night, and worked for NPR. Currently she works in the education field. She also works as a book coach.

Today, she hates him.

It's the last day of senior year. Rowan Roth and Neil McNair have been bitter rivals for all of high school, clashing on test scores, student council elections, and even gym class pull-up contests. While Rowan, who secretly wants to write romance novels, is anxious about the future, she'd love to beat her infuriating nemesis one last time.

Tonight, she puts up with him.

When Neil is named valedictorian, Rowan has only one chance at victory: Howl, a senior class game that takes them all over Seattle, a farewell tour of the city she loves. But after learning a group of seniors is out to get them, she and Neil reluctantly decide to team up until they're the last players left—and then they'll destroy each other.

As Rowan spends more time with Neil, she realizes he's much more than the awkward linguistics nerd she's sparred with for the past four years. And, perhaps, this boy she claims to despise might actually be the boy of her dreams.

Tomorrow...maybe she's already fallen for him.

Report available

DRAMEDY

STONE FRUIT by Lee Lai (AU) - TBP by BROW BOOKS, December 2021, 220 pages

Dramedy

Location: Australia

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.43/3

Translation rights sold: US (in a major auction), France (in a competitive auction), Australia

February 2020: Now sold in Spain to Dibbuks after a 3 way auction, Italy to Coconino Press, Sweden to Epix and Australia/NZ to Brow Books. Sold in the US to Fantagraphics and France to Sarbacane.

Debut graphic novel

STONE FRUIT follows queer couple Bron and Ray who ‘enjoy their role as the weirdo aunties for Ray’s niece Nessie’. The Australia publisher said: ‘STONE FRUIT is a story about a very particular kind of heartbreak—and the openings that emerge as a result ... As the intimacy between them breaks down, Ray and Bron are reminded of the family ties that have been left behind, and the painful self-growth of reconnection.’

Lee Lai lives and works between Montreal and Melbourne. She makes comics and illustrations, and facilitates collaborative mural workshops with teenagers.

STONE FRUIT is an ode to sisters’ love. Ray and Bron are a queer couple who frequently take care of Ray’s niece, Nessie, and find in this relationship a chance at family-making that gives them tremendous joy.

Both of them have fraught relationships with their own families and in particular with their sisters. Bron’s younger sister resents her for leaving their Christian family home five years prior, while Ray’s older sister, a working single parent, doesn’t quite grasp her queer relationship and is wary of Bron, who is trans, hanging out with Nessie.

The crumbling of the powerful love between Bron and Ray, which they had once interpreted as mutual salvation from families that did not accept them, offers a glimmer for each of them to reconnect with their own sisters. The emptiness left by the end of their relationship pushes them to find a love that is ultimately the most profound and rewarding there is but that often life can ruin.

At its heart, this is a book about how we take care of and hurt the people we love and how we build and rebuild despite trauma. A coming-of-age story about figuring out how to navigate a family unable to understand you for who you are, with the spectre of religion making everything all the more complicated. **STONE FRUIT** is an important book that will make many people feel seen.

Report available

RELATIVELY FAMOUS by Roger Averill (AU) - published by TRANSIT LOUNGE, April 2018, 304 pages

[Dramedy](#)

[Location:](#) Australia

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 0/3

Roger Averill is an Australian writer. His books include EXILE: The lives and hopes of Werner Pelz, the novel KEEPING FAITH, and a travel memoir, BOY HE CRY: An island odyssey. EXILE won the Western Australian Premier's Prize for Non-fiction in 2012 and was shortlisted for the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards.

Michael and Majorie Madigan refuse to be interviewed by biographer Sinclair Hughes for his new book Inside the Lion's Den: The Literary Life of Gilbert Madigan. This is not surprising as Gilbert is Marjorie's ex-husband and Michael's mostly absent father.

In Roger Averill's novel, **RELATIVELY FAMOUS**, Gilbert Madigan is Australia's first Booker Prize winner, a feted and much-lauded author that the U.K. and U.S. now like to call their own. Michael cannot escape his father's life and work, and at times his own life seems swallowed by it. His father's success is a source of undeniable pleasure but also of great turmoil. How does one live in the shadow of a famous relative who we never seem to be able to live up to?

In a world increasingly obsessed with fame and celebrity, this engrossing novel subtly explores notions of success, masculinity, betrayal and loss, and ultimately what it might mean to live a good life.

CADRÒ, SOGNANDO DI VOLARE by Fabio Genovesi (IT) - published by MONDADORI EDITORE, January 2020, 312 pages

[Dramedy](#)

Location: Italy, Tuscan seaside town; convent on the Apuan mountains, Cesenatico

Epoch: 20th century, 21st century, summer of 1998 / epilogue in 2004

Evaluation : 2/3

Translation rights sold: options in Germany, Greece, Albania, Korea, Israel

Fabio Genovesi is an Italian writer. His books include LIVE BAIT (2014), which has been translated into over ten languages, VERSILIA ROCK CITY, the memoir MORTE DEI MARMI (2012), and the Young Reader's Strega Prize winning-novel, CHI MANDA LE ONDE (2015).

Fabio is twenty-four years old and studies law, even though his heart isn't really in it. Like many other kids from his generation, he is prisoner of a life that isn't his own. And so, he drudgingly goes through the motions, until one day in 1998 when he is sent to the mountains to do community service as an alternative to the draft. He is assigned to a retirement home for old priests that is run by an eighty-year-old former missionary: he is a gruff and moody man who barely leaves his room having lost interest in everything; he is mean to everyone except for Gina, a girl who considered herself a hen. Nonetheless, Fabio and Don Basagni share something in common: their passion for cycling. They start watching the Giro d'Italia together, identifying in Marco Pantani the incarnation of a dream: a brave man, tormented and alone, facing colossal champions whose strength is caution and control during the race. Pantani instead doesn't plan ahead, he follows his instinct and exerts massive efforts that allow him to move the border: that "terrible border between possible and impossible, between what we would like to do and what we can do." Thanks to this marvelous madness, Fabio and Don Basagni will find in themselves the courage buried within them to question the solid, reliable existence they were accustomed to put up with.

Reports available

AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN by Rebecca King (GB) - on submission 331 pages

Dramedy

Location: France, Germany, Russia, United States, Paris

Epoch: 20th century, 1920s and later

Evaluation : 1.86/3

Based on the lives of real ballerinas Alexandra Danilova, Tamara Geva, Lidia Ivanova and George Balanchine.

Pitched for fans of Kate Atkinson, as well as THE DOLL FACTORY and THE FAMILIARS.

Debut novel

Rebecca King worked as a bookseller before reading English literature at the University of

Edinburgh. She is currently Sales and Marketing Manager at Darlington Hippodrome.

Inspired by real dancers, **AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN** follows four ballet dancers in Russia set against the backdrop of political upheaval - from empire, to revolution, and beyond.

AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN takes 1920s Russia as its setting, with four dancers at its heart as they vie for fame and fortune against a backdrop of the country's shift to Communism. Svetlana has always longed to dance, but her rich and powerful father would never let her consider a career as a ballerina - until society is upended and suddenly their fortunes change, sending her headlong into the world of the ballet and into the arms of Valentin, a brilliant choreographer who yearns for the freedom of Europe. Larisa and Olga grew up together at the State Ballet School. But Larisa's poor upbringing and Olga's wealthy one are now no more than distant memories, as Larisa's father rises through the ranks of the party, throwing her into the path of dangerous men. Olga has gone from everything to nothing, but her ambition, and her hidden love for Valentin, continue to drive her.

Inspired by the real dancers Alexandra Danilova, Tamara Geva, Lidia Ivanova and George Balanchine, this is a well-researched novel in which poverty, fame, and passion combine as the four dancers work together, fall in love, and compete with one another.

Reports available

ENVOLE-MOI by Sarah Barukh (FR) - published by ALBIN MICHEL, January 2020, 304 pages

[Dramedy](#)

[Location:](#) France, Nice, Paris

[Epoch:](#) 20th century, 21st century, 90s / nowadays

[Evaluation :](#) 2.14/3

Translation rights sold: Italy (option)

Sarah Barukh is a Parisian businesswoman. Her books include ELLE VOULAIT JUSTE MARCHER TOUT DROIT, which was translated in the US and other countries, and LE CAS ZÉRO, which is being adapted for TV.

After a decade of silence, Anaïs, 38 years old, receives a phone call from her best friend from high school, the beautiful, seductive, crazy Marie. Anaïs left Paris (where they both grew up, in the multicultural and problematic neighbourhood of the 19th arrondissement) to restart a life on the seaside, in Nice; she is undergoing the painful process of IVF and fears she will lose her partner if she cannot get pregnant. At this turning point in her existence, Marie's call opens up the Pandora's box of their shared past, and Anaïs gets dragged into a crazy road trip that will push her to confront

all her forgotten and hidden fears.

Report available

CRIME FICTION

THE HIDDEN GIRLS by Rebecca Whitney (GB) - TBP by Mantle, May 2020, 336 pages

Crime fiction, Psychological Thriller

Location: United Kingdom

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2/3

Translation rights sold: option in France

Pitched in comparison to Lisa Jewell, Ruth Ware and Louise Candlish.

Rebecca Whitney has a background in film and television production. She is the author of THE LIAR'S CHAIR (2015). She also writes features and tutors for both the Guardian Masterclasses and the Creative Writing Programme in Brighton.

For Ruth, a new mother recovering from postpartum psychosis, every day is difficult and, after months spent hearing voices in the walls and trusting no one, she's no longer confident in her own judgement. Neither, it seems, is anyone else.

So, when she hears a scream from the local petrol station one night, she initially decides it must be her mind playing tricks again. The police, too, are polite but firm: she must stop calling them every time she thinks she hears something. And her husband is frustrated: he'd hoped Ruth was getting better at last.

Ruth can't quite let it go... What if there was a scream? What if it was someone in trouble? Someone who needs Ruth's help?

Reports available

NERO COME LA NOTTE by Tullio Avoledo (IT) - published by MARSILIO EDITORI, January 2020, 524 pages

Crime fiction, Thriller

Location: Italy, city in the Italian North-East

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.14/3

Tullio Avoledo is an Italian writer. His first novel, L'ELENCO TELEFONICO DI ATLANTIDE (2003) turned into a best-seller and won the Fort Village Montblanc Award for the best debut writer. He won the prestigious Grinzane Award with this fourth book in 2006. BREVE STORIA DI LUNGI TRADIMENTI inspired a movie directed by Davide Marengo, released in 2013.

Stokar, an ex-cop with Nazi sympathies wakes up after almost getting killed in an abandoned building occupied by a motley community of migrants. As he's hired to work as their informal sheriff, a series of brutal homicides forces him to discover the obscure reality of his North-Eastern Italian city.

With the help of Albert, a young African geek, Nadia, a Romanian former judge with an obscure past, and Lorenzo, a left-wing journalist who is one of the few friends emerging from Stokar's past, the former cop is determined to find out the truth - both on the series of murders, and on the truth hidden behind his own trauma-induced memory loss.

Report available

THE TRAIL by Jack Butler (GB) - on submission 283 pages

Crime fiction, Psychological Thriller

Location: United Kingdom, Cotswolds, in the forest

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 1.86/3

Debut novel

Jack Butler is a crime and thriller editor at Amazon/Thomas & Mercer

In **THE TRAIL**, Jack Butler weaves the horror and scars of a cold case with a present-day race against time in a remote and dangerous landscape.

When Alice and her husband Jay arrive in Rock-on-Eye to spend the weekend with her sister Dee and brother-in-law Mark, at first, they love it. According to Dee, Mark spent summers in Rock as a child and has always wanted to go back. The lodge they're staying in is picture-perfect, the surrounding village and forest beautiful and wild.

But hours pass and they can't get in touch with them. And when they ask the concierge, they're

informed that Dee checked in a while ago, alone, and hasn't been seen since.

Then a note found in the Grays' empty room confirms Alice's worst fears. She instantly recognises Dee's writing. 'Help me'.

Soon, she discovers that Mark's childhood in Rock was far from idyllic. He's infamous with the locals, his name unearthing memories of a terrible crime long ago. Nobody has seen him since. But now he's back, and Dee is with him, taken and lost in the forest.

Pregnant detective Jules is on her way to the scene. Still, Alice and Jay can't wait, and decide to go into the forest to find Dee. But once they're lost in the thick of the trees, far from the village, it becomes clear just how dangerous Mark might be - and what else the woods have been hiding.

Reports available

DÖDSSYNDEN by Maria Grund (SE) - published by Modernista, March 2020, 448 pages

[Crime fiction, Detective novel](#)

[Location:](#) Sweden, on an island

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2.43/3

Feb 2020: There is serious movie interest

Translation rights sold: Netherlands (two-book deal, at a five-way auction), Germany (2-book 6 fig pre-empt), France (at auction), Finland. Offers in UK

We only have a partial. So far it is a well written crime novel, very filmic, with an effective and fascinatingly intense, gloomy story and atmosphere.

Debut novel

Maria Grund is a Swedish writer and screenwriter. She also has a Master of Fine Arts (University of New York). During her career she worked mainly in the film and media industry, including for many years as founder/editor of the British media company The Smalls.

A 14-year-old girl is found dead in a water-filled limestone quarry on an island in the Baltic Sea. Her wrists are cut and there is a rope in her hair. The number 26 is written on her one hip with a blue marker. No evidence is found around the quarry.

The next day the owner of an antiquarian bookstore is found dead on the other side of the island,

brutally killed with a knife. Apart from the stab wound, a series of injuries are visible along the victim's chest and throat - it looks like bite marks from large jaws. The girl's death is dismissed as a suicide, when police investigator Sanna Berling, together with her new colleague Eir Pedersen, starts investigating the antiquarian. But soon Sanna discovers a disturbing connection between this case and the fourteen-year-old girl.

It soon becomes clear that the two deaths are only the first in a series of violent murders. Seven children appear to hold the key to the gruesome truth - a truth that is becoming increasingly personal to Sanna, more personal than she could ever have imagined.

Reports available

PLAYDATE by Alex Dahl (NO) - TBP by HEAD OF ZEUS, July 2020, 400 pages

Crime fiction, Psychological Thriller

Location: France, Norway, Oslo suburbs

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.29/3

A strong, commercial hook, a dark and creepy case and a solid plot. One to read.

Alexandra Dahl is Norwegian-American and has an MA in Creative Writing from Bath Spa University. She has previously published two novels, THE BOY AT THE DOOR (2018) and THE HEART KEEPER (2019), both with Head of Zeus

Elisa Blix has it all. A satisfying career, a great husband, two beautiful children, and a nice house on the outskirts of Oslo. Until one day, when a seemingly ordinary occurrence turns into an extraordinary nightmare that will change the Blix family forever. Seven-year-old Lucia Blix goes home from school with her new friend Josie for a playdate. The next day, when Lucia's dad goes to pick her up, the house is empty. No furniture, no family, no Lucia.

A devastated family is left behind. The case is seemingly without leads.

Selma Eriksen is a young and driven journalist determined to solve the riddle of the Blix Case, the case she just can't let go of, even after eighteen months of no news. As she delves deeper into the history of Fredrik and Elisa Blix, a sinister web of lies and dark secrets begins to rise to the surface. Could they have done something so terrible that their daughter was taken for revenge? And if so, why won't they talk?

Meanwhile, for every day that passes, little Lucia Blix is becoming someone else...

Reports available

THE FALL by Lia Middleton (GB) - Michael Joseph, 448 pages

Crime fiction, Psychological Thriller

Location: United Kingdom

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.14/3

Pitched as Clare Mackintosh meets Gillian Macallister and Helen Fitzgerald's THE CRY.

UK rights sold in a six-figure, two-book deal at auction.

Debut novel.

Lia Middleton is a barrister. She worked in criminal law, and now advises clients on legal issues concerning prison and probation matters.

Divorced couple Naomi and Aiden have a four-year-old, Evelyn. She lives with Aiden and Naomi has rare access. She's asked to have Evelyn to stay the night and promised she's no longer taking her sleeping pills. But Naomi can't resist the pull of her sleeping pill. In the morning, Naomi finds Evelyn at the bottom of the stairs, dead and cold. She's pregnant and confident no one will believe that it was an accident and that she'll lose her new baby, too. She calls Aiden and tells him Evelyn has gone missing, then calls the police and goes to bury Evelyn in the woods, in a WWII bunker no one knows exists.

Aiden arrives, moments after the police, with his new wife, Helen, who used to be Naomi's best friend, but married Aiden the previous year.

Reports available

L'ANNÉE DU GEL by Agathe Portail (FR) - published by CALMANN-LEVY, January 2020, 416 pages

Crime fiction, Detective novel

Location: France

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2/3

Debut novel

Agathe Portail has a communication job in the wine-growing field. She lives in the Bordeaux region.

It is the summer of 2017, and the baker arrives early to deliver bread at Haut Méac, the ancient castle of the Mazet family. Bernard Mazet, a winemaker, and his wife Alexane have just started renting out some of their rooms through Airbnb to better sustain themselves, especially after the frost has damaged the year's harvest. But, as he wanders in the cold room of the castle's kitchen, the baker discovers the body of Clara, one of the guests who have arrived at Haut Méac two days before...

Report available

LE DON DE SKULLARS NEWTON by Jean-François Chabas (FR) - published by CALMANN-LEVY, January 2020, 378 pages

Crime fiction, Thriller

Location: Austria, Jamaica, Kingston, Austrian Alps; supernatural elements

Epoch: 21st century, supernatural elements

Evaluation : 2.14/3

Jean-François Chabas is a French writer. Since UNE MOITIÉ DE WASICUN published in 1995, he has written more than 60 books for various publishers. Besides his children's books, he has co-created comics with Hervé Blondon, David Sala, or Joanna Concejo.

The adventures of Skullars Newton, a Rastafari from the ghetto of Kingston in Jamaica, who has a special gift: he can see inside the mind and body of other people. Thus, he knows all the crimes of his old friend, Jay Jay who, now that he is a gangster, wants to eliminate him. For this reason, Skullars has to leave Jamaica and hide all around the world not to be found by private detectives hired by Jay Jay.

Report available

LA DEUXIÈME FEMME by Louise Mey (FR) - published by LE MASQUE, January 2020, 300 pages

Crime fiction, Psychological Thriller

Location: France

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2/3

Louise Mey is a French writer. Her books include LES RAVAGÉ(E)S.

Sandrine is a young single woman, highly unhappy. Her father was violent and abusive, her mother was weak, she lives alone, finds her appearance awful (too fat, too ugly), cuts herself... She is a mess, longing for a man who can love her. One day she sees on the TV news a man, Patrice Langlois, crying in front of the camera because his wife Caroline has disappeared. Sandrine is so moved by the man that she joins the public march in honour of Caroline and soon falls in love with Patrice. The man is very nice to her, and this is the first time in her life. Patrice courts her and very quickly asks her to move in with him and his little boy Mathias.

It is the beginning of a dream for Sandrine. She loves Patrice, she is soon attached to little Mathias, who is a shy and troubled kid, unable to talk. But then, from time to time, Patrice starts to get angry at her, to sometimes shout bad words at her, and to force her to have sex...

And one day Caroline, the first wife, comes back, having lost her memories of what happened to her.

Report available

MICTLAN by Sébastien Rutés (FR) - published by GALLIMARD, January 2020, 160 pages

Crime fiction, Noir

Location: United States, Mexico, unidentified country which recalls Mexico; magical realism elements

Epoch: 21st century, magical realism elements

Evaluation : 2/3

Sébastien Rutés is a French university lecturer and writer. He has written novels as well as several essays about Latin-American literature, noir fiction and intertextuality.

The novel is inspired by a real news item having taken place in Mexico, where a truck filled with unidentified corpses was found in a deserted area near Guadalajara; as morgues were full and there was no way to identify or store the corpses, the truck travelled for days before authorities could find a solution. The book is set in an unidentified country, which recalls Mexico. It is ruled by an authoritative Governor directly supported by a Commandant. Protagonists, whose names are not mentioned either, are "Old" and "Fat". Their job consists in driving a truck in which the Governor hides the corpses of those whose murder he has ordered, which he wants Old and Fat to finally get rid of...

Report available

THE OTHER YOU by Jon Stock (pseudonym: J. S. Monroe) (GB) - published by HEAD OF ZEUS, January 2020, 249 pages

Crime fiction, Psychological Thriller

Location: United Kingdom, Cornwall

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.14/3

Pitched for fans of J.P. Delaney and Louise Candlish.

JS Monroe (pseudonym of Jon Stock) read English at Cambridge, worked as a Foreign Correspondent in Delhi, and was the Weekend editor of the Daily Telegraph before becoming a full-time writer. He has previously published the thrillers FIND ME (2017) and FORGET MY NAME (2019).

Kate used to be good at recognising people. So good, she worked for the police, identifying criminals in crowds of thousands. But six months ago, a devastating car accident led to a brain injury. Now the woman who never forgot a face can barely recognise herself in the mirror.

At least she has Rob. Kate met him just after her accident, and he nursed her back to health in his high-tech modernist house on the Cornish coast. When she's with him, the nightmares of the accident fade, and she feels safe and loved.

Until, one day, she looks at Rob anew – and knows, with absolute certainty, that he has been replaced by an impostor. Is she right? Have her old recognition skills returned? Or is it all in her damaged mind?

Report available

YOUR SHADOW IS A MONDAY by Kim Jung-hyuk (KR) - CHANGBI, Korea,

Crime fiction, Noir

Location: South Korea, Norway

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.43/3

So far we only have a partial translation but the plot has a great concept at its heart and Gu Dongchi is an interesting, secretive character.

YOUR SHADOW IS MONDAY features many familiar conventions of the noir detective genre, but it is also an original Korean take on the themes. It is filled with strange, eccentric characters, and deals with such major contemporary issues as the redevelopment of old neighborhoods, oftentimes at the detriment of poor residents, the corruption of major corporations, and the dark side of the country's thriving entertainment industry.

Kim Jung-hyuk (born 1971) is a Korean writer, film critic, music columnist, and cartoonist. He has received the Dongin Literary Award and Lee Hyo-seok Literary Award. His books have been translated into English and French, among other languages.

Set in Seoul. Gu Dongchi has an office in a smelly old block of flats. There, he does his very private work as a deleter, getting rid of a person's social media and paperwork after they die. He only takes on clients who've been personally recommended to him by another client. It started with a novelist who didn't want any legacy left. Gu cleared every trace of that writer from the world, but he couldn't quite get rid of them all. He kept some notebooks and has them under lock and key. He considers secret things too precious to actually delete, so he half-deletes them and they exist only for him.

When one of his neighbours falls off the roof of their building in a suspected murder, Gu Dongchi gets involved quickly. The police officer investigating comes to understand what Gu does for a living and asks him to investigate the digital footprint of the murder victim. In amongst his files is a video recording of a very violent gang. It seems this is why the man was killed. The investigator asks Gu not to reveal the video until they can bring down the entire gang. When the investigating officer is killed, having become a client of Gu Dongchi, whom he has charged with destroying one particular photograph, Gu escapes to Norway. There, he finds the investigator's son and hands over a photograph the son does not want. Gu has changed his ways, potentially forever.

SUSPENSE

THIS TOWN SLEEPS by Dennis E. Staples (US) - published by COUNTERPOINT, March 2020, 224 pages

[Mystery, Suspense](#)

[Location:](#) United States, Minnesota; supernatural elements

[Epoch:](#) 21st century, supernatural elements

[Evaluation :](#) 2.29/3

Debut novel

Dennis E. Staples is an Ojibwe writer from Bemidji, Minnesota. He graduated from the Institute of American Indian Arts with an MFA in fiction. He is a graduate of the 2018 Clarion West Writers Workshop and a recipient of the Octavia E. Butler Memorial Scholarship. His work has appeared in Asimov's Science Fiction and Nightmare magazine. He is an enrolled member of the Red Lake Nation.

Set on a reservation in far northern Minnesota, **THIS TOWN SLEEPS** explores the many ways history, culture, landscape, and lineage shape our lives, our understanding of the world we inhabit, and the stories we tell ourselves to make sense of it all.

On an Ojibwe reservation called Languille Lake, within the small town of Geshig at the hub of the rez, two men enter into a secret romance. Marion Lafournier, a mid-twenties gay Ojibwe man, begins a relationship with his former classmate Shannon, a heavily closeted white man. While Marion is far more open about his sexuality, neither is immune to the realities of the lives of gay men in small towns and closed societies.

One night, while roaming the dark streets of Geshig, Marion unknowingly brings back to life the spirit of a dog long buried in the elementary school playground. The mysterious revenant leads him to the grave of Kayden Kelliher, an Ojibwe basketball star who was murdered at the young age of seventeen and whose presence still lingers in the memories of the townsfolk. While investigating the fallen hero's death, Marion discovers family connections and an old Ojibwe legend that may be the secret to unravelling the mystery he has found himself in.

Report available

YAS by Eduardo de los Santos (ES) - published by ALFAGUARA, January 2020, 304 pages

[Mystery, Suspense](#)

[Location:](#) Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, United States, Madrid

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Debut novel

In 2017, the author won a scholarship in Cordoba, where he spent eight months writing this novel, as a member of the XVI edition of the Fundación Antonio Gala para Jóvenes Creadores, a foundation which promotes the creation of young artists and writers.

Eduardo de los Santos is a Spanish writer. He has worked in a bookshop in Madrid since 2014 and some of his short stories have been awarded and featured in different anthologies.

YAS begins in 2019, when a young journalist and frustrated poet called Manuel Valero gets out of bed in the middle of the night to wander the streets of Madrid, leaving behind his sleeping girlfriend, Irene. Valero is supposed to be interviewing a poet called Leonardo Espacio the following day, but is considering missing the interview because the two men have a history: six years earlier Espacio ran off to New York with Valero's then-girlfriend, a Spanish jazz singer and trumpet player called Tania Almada. Valero's main reason for even considering the interview is that Espacio's latest collection of poems is called Yas, which was also the name of a song sung only once by Almada while on tour in the USA, shortly before she mysteriously vanished. Although never recorded, Yas has subsequently attained a mythical status in the jazz world, and Valero is hoping that Espacio might be able to shed some light on Almada's disappearance.

Report available

DRAMA

SCHATTENSEITE by Jonas Ems (DE) - published by Plötz & Betzholz, November 2019, 352 pages

Drama

Location: Germany

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 0/3

In the vein of "13 Reasons Why" and "Gossip Girl".

This is timely and topical. Only recently, hackers released personal data of countless celebrities. Cyberbullying and hacker attacks are a growing threat, especially for young people. Blind trust in the Internet is dangerous, when cloud synchronizations store our personal photos and videos, when passwords and website history are recorded in the browser and all social media platforms have access to our personal data.

Jonas Ems' previous bestselling title DIE ANDERE VERBINDUNG (THE OTHER CONNECTION) was optioned by a German production company in 2019.

Jonas Ems is an all-rounder. With 2.5 million subscribers on his YouTube channel he is one of Germany's most popular YouTubers. His books PEINLICH FÜR DIE WELT and DIE ANDERE VERBINDUNG both hit the Spiegel bestseller list. Ems is an actor, writes screenplays for short films and appeared in the movie "Das schönste Mädchen der Welt".

It is the year 2020. Corvin, Nola and Seymon are about to take their Abitur exams. They lead ordinary teenage lives attending high school in a quiet village. What matters are friends, family, school, party, blogging, studying, browsing, sports, relationships, traveling, sex, liking and sharing. Until the Dark Site changes everything. A website that drops all of one's personal information in an instant. Every bit of intimate information and every well-kept secret are suddenly accessible and visible to everyone. Corvin is the first amongst his friends and fellow students who is hit by the site. Yesterday he was the inconspicuous nerd, today he consumes transport porn, works as a software hacker and has taken a picture of his penis every day since the age of 14. Little by little the site hits more and more students. The pressure grows on everyone. One day Nola's and Seymon's Dark Site is also published. The days of truth begin and everyone - even the headmaster of their school - appear in a different light. Nobody knows who is behind the Dark Site, or how it works. All attempts to take the site down, fail. Instead, more private data emerges - chat progressions, screenshots, nude photos. No one is safe anymore and everyone must live with the consequences of any information unknowingly posted on the net. With the Dark Site leaks, students have to learn that in times of cloud synchronization and server-based online messaging their secrets are not safe. The protected life as they knew it is over and they are experiencing firsthand what it means when everybody knows everything about you. Who is behind the site? And what does that have to do with the recent death of fellow student Linus?

LES AMISTATS TRAÏDES by David Nel-lo (ES) - published by ENCICLOPEDIA CATALANA, February 2020, 240 pages

Drama

Location: Spain, Switzerland, Barcelona; supernatural elements

Epoch: 21st century, contemporary, with flashbacks; supernatural elements

Evaluation : 2.14/3

Winner of the 2019 Sant Jordi prize

Translation rights sold: Spain (Castilian)

David Nel-lo is a Catalan writer, translator and musician. With more than 40 books published, he has a long list of awards. In 2017, he made a great leap in his adult readership production and received the Prudenci Bertrana award for MELISSA & NICOLE.

Would you pay the highest price to get literary success? A new take on the myth of Faustus.

Salvador Togores, a man in his 50's, has just lost his father and leaves for a translators residence in Switzerland. There he meets enigmatic Markus Bachtel, a well-known writer who had disappeared from the public eye for years. Bachtel had been a close friend of the Togores, especially his dead father. The encounter between the two men will eventually lead to Bachtel's revelation in the details of his escape, as well as an explanation of why he lost touch with the Togores family.

Full synopsis

BOULDER by Eva Baltasar (ES) - published by LITERATURA RANDOM HOUSE, March 2020, 120 pages

Drama

Location: Iceland, Reykjavik

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 0/3

Translation rights sold: Spain (Castilian), France

After the successful PERMAGEL (Permafrost), BOULDER is the second novel in the triptych where Eva Baltasar explores the voice, life and body of three women.

Eva Baltasar is a Spanish writer. She is the author of 10 poetry books, and some of them have received very prestigious awards. PERMAGEL was her first narrative work; it has received the Catalan Booksellers Award 2018. In its 10th edition in Catalan, it has almost 15.000 copies sold.

The protagonist of **BOULDER** makes a living as a cook in an old merchant ship. She believes it is the perfect situation: loneliness, a cabin for herself, the ocean, some port in which to meet women from time to time and hours to face the emptiness, to feel the force of provisionality. Until one day she meets a woman with whom she falls in love and decides to leave the sea and go to live with her in Iceland. After a while she finds herself involved in assisted pregnancy and the education of a child.

What has motherhood done with the woman she once met in a bar in Patagonia?

What will she do in the single-family house in Reykjavik where she feels caged like an animal?

Everything will change except her nickname, Boulder: those huge isolated stones in the middle of the landscape, exposed to everything without anyone knowing where they come from or why they are there.

Report available

REAL DIFFERENCES by S. L. Lim (SG) - published by TRANSIT LOUNGE, January 2019, 288 pages

[Drama](#)

[Location:](#) Australia

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 0/3

S. L. Lim was born in Singapore, moved to Sydney at the age of one, and has spent a good part of her life toggling back and forth between the two places. At university she edited the undergraduate magazine 'Tharunka', igniting blood feuds and running exposes of dodgy student societies. After dropping out of law school she graduated with an economics degree and lived the life of a suit for a while before going freelance. Her manuscript REVENGE to be

published by Transit Lounge in 2020 was longlisted for the 2017 Epigram Fiction Prize.

Middle-class, clever and white, Nick is a child of privilege while his best friend Andie is the daughter of Indo-Chinese refugees. Despite their very different backgrounds, they share a conviction they can change the world for the better.

At the outset, Nick is pushing papers in a dead-end job while Andie is embarking on a secular crusade against world poverty. This generates conflict with her white husband Benjamin, who feels that Australians should come first. Meanwhile, Andie's cousin, the teenage Tony is burdened by his parents' traumatic past and impossible expectations. To their dismay, he finds solace in radical faith.

S. L. Lim acutely captures the dreams and disaffections of a millennial generation.

REAL DIFFERENCES is an emotionally resonant novel about idealism, ethical ambition, and love. It ultimately asks us the most important question of all: What is our life for?

DRIFTING by Priya Hein (MU) - on submission 150 pages

Drama

Location: Mauritius

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2/3

Debut adult novel.

Priya Hein is a Mauritian writer. She has published several children's books in English, French, Mauritian Creole, Rodriguan Creole and German. She was selected for the University of Iowa's International Writing Program as one of two female emerging writers for Mauritius. Her writing has been published in anthologies, literary journals, magazines and school textbooks. She was nominated by the National Library of Mauritius for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.

Set in London and Mauritius. All her life Anita has felt at the mercy of the male gaze, especially the white male gaze. When her English husband, Paul, betrays her by embarking on an affair with her niece, Nisha, she begins to question her place in society.

Heartbroken by Paul's betrayal, Anita seeks solace in her mother's house in Mauritius. There she recalls the early days of her love affair with Paul but also the abuses she has suffered over the years at the hands of other men: the flasher in the bushes when she was a child, the overbearing law professor who saw her as just another student to abuse.

Whilst on the beach she befriends a small girl called Lea who is there with her father Sven, who also starts spending time with Anita. Her mother disapproves of this new friendship, seeing it as yet

another example of a white man taking advantage. When news reaches Anita that Nisha is pregnant she considers taking her own life but is pulled back from the brink by the memory of her beloved father.

A MAP OF THE DAMAGE by Sophia Tobin (GB) - TBP by SIMON & SCHUSTER, April 2020, 432 pages

Drama

Location: United Kingdom, London, Hertfordshire

Epoch: 19th century, 20th century, The 1840s - the 1940s

Evaluation : 2.29/3

A gripping story of mystery and love over two different generations, pitched for fans of Tracy Chevalier.

Sophia Tobin has previously published THE SILVERSMITH'S WIFE (Simon & Schuster, 2014), which was shortlisted for the Lucy Cavendish College Fiction Prize. She also works as a librarian and archivist.

London, 1941. Livy makes her way through Blitz-torn London to the Mirrmakers' Club, the only place that makes her feels safe, where she finds herself drawn into the mystery of a missing diamond, and torn between two men with competing claims on her.

London, 1841. Charlotte is helped from the scene of an accident by a man who shows her a building he is working on, and whose kindness unlocks a hope she has long kept buried. But that man is not her husband.

Two women, a century apart, united by one place: the Mirrmakers' Club. A building which holds echoes of past loves and hates, and hides the darkest of secrets in its foundations.

Reports available

IL TRENO DI CRISTALLO by Nicola Lecca (IT) - published by MONDADORI EDITORE, January 2020, 252 pages

Drama

Location: Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Slovakia, United Kingdom, Zagreb, Broadstairs, Hamburg, Prague

Epoch: 20th century, 21st century, 1993

Evaluation : 2/3

Nicola Lecca is an Italian author. He received the Hemmingway Prize at 27. His 1999 debut collection of short stories CONCERTI SENZA ORCHESTRA was a finalist in the Strega Prize and the Chiara Prize and winner of the Rhegium Julii Prize for debut work and the Basilicata Literary Prize. In 2013 he won the Fenice-Europe Prize with the novel LA PIRAMIDE DEL CAFFÈ.

Broadstairs is a charming town on the English coast where Aaron works as an apprentice in the historic ice-cream shop Morelli. He lives in symbiosis with Anja, his depressed and over-protective mother who hides his father's identity and tells him nothing about Zagreb, the city they fled when he was just a little boy. Luckily, his best friend Gennarino is a volcano of joy, colouring the greyness of Anja's melancholy with his optimism.

As for Aaron, he has learned to be happy with little. All he needs is the flavour of tangerine ice cream, his lonely walks by the steep cliffs overlooking the sea, and the conversations with Crystal, the girl he loves. They met each other online and their relationship has been going on for just over a year, but it is only virtual. Every time he tries to arrange a meeting in real life, she finds a thousand excuses to postpone. And yet, Aaron prefers her incomplete presence to the pain of being alone.

Until an unexpected event changes everything. Aaron receives a letter from a notary in Croatia informing him about the death of his father, whose identity was kept hidden from him his entire life. Furthermore, the missive also invites him to Zagreb to attend the reading of the deceased's last will and testament, annexing an interrail ticket to cover the journey.

Ill-equipped and unprepared for life, Aaron faces his little Odyssey in search of truth with courage. He travels from the United Kingdom to Zagreb passing through Hamburg, Prague, Ljubljana, Bratislava, and Szentgotthárd, finally confronting the world. He will face challenges, risks, and temptations, as well as unexpected encounters and immense beauty.

Reports available

KOKKÁL by Halldór Laxness Halldórsson (pseudonym: Dóri DNA) (IS) - published by Bjartur, October 2019, 336 pages

Drama

Location: Iceland, United States, Chicago

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.14/3

CUCKOLD, which is the author's first novel, went straight to the bestseller lists. On the Eymundsson bookseller list in 2019 Cuckold was #7 in hardcover fiction (after Arnaldur, Yrsa, Ragnar Jonasson, Olaf Olafsson and two other experienced and popular authors). On the Publishers' Association besetseller list, it was #15 of all titles in 2019 and #7 in Icelandic fiction.

5,000 copies sold in hardcover in Iceland (equivalent to 100,000 copies in the UK).

The book starts when Össi, a young and handsome guy in the advertising business, invites his girlfriend to Chicago. The trip is meant to be luxurious and memorable. We find them in a hotel room after a great night out partying. Össi is sitting in a chair, watching his beautiful girlfriend and a black guy who are about to go to bed together. Then we go back in his life - how did he get there with his girlfriend - and where do they go from there. It's a modern novel in which you laugh and you cry, and may be offended - but it's a book you won't forget.

Report available

CHASING THE LIGHT by Liz Kessler (GB) - SIMON & SCHUSTER, 203 pages

Drama

Location: Austria, Poland

Epoch: 20th century, World War II

Evaluation : 2/3

Liz Kessler is a British writer. She is the author of the multi-copy bestselling middle-grade series EMILY WINDSNAP, and the YA novels READ ME LIKE A BOOK and HAUNT ME.

Leo, Max and Elsa are three eight-year-old children living in Vienna in 1936. As the years progress, their paths diverge, leading them on different lives through World War II: Elsa's parents tell her that they are leaving Vienna and going to Czechoslovakia, because it is not safe in the city any more for Jews. In Vienna, Max's father forbids him to spend time with Leo, or any other Jews. In fact, Leo and other Jewish children are thrown out of school and must adhere to lots of new laws forbidding

them from doing certain things.

Report available

THE TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF GEORGIANA E. by Lex Croucher (GB) - on submission401 pages

[Drama](#)

[Location:](#) United Kingdom

[Epoch:](#) 19th century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Lex Croucher is a YouTube vlogger and podcast host who covers topics from beauty and books to feminism and animal rights. Her YouTube videos have reached over 15 million people and she has over 100,000 Twitter followers. She co-hosts the podcast Make Out With Him, which covers relationships, sex and friendships, with a focus on empowerment, consent and education. She co-founded the Women on YouTube panel at VidCon.

Set in early 19th century England. Middle-class Georgiana Ellers has moved to a new town to live with her boring aunt and uncle. At a particularly dull party, she meets the enigmatic Frances Campbell who lives a life Georgiana could never have imagined. Frances and her rich, wild crowd of friends adopt Georgiana as one of their own. Georgiana begins attending drink- and drug-fuelled lunches hosted by Frances and is introduced to her odd set of friends, Cecily, James, Jonathan, Jane, and Christopher. When they attend a country fair, Georgiana realises that Frances has problems of her own – her father is physically abusive, and Frances and Jane are attracted to each other, which is considered taboo. In addition, Frances is trying to get engaged to a rich boy called Jeremiah who is also part of the group.

Report available

I MIGLIORI ANNI by Cinzia Giorgio (IT) - published by NEWTON COMPTON, January 2020, 320 pages

[Drama](#)

Location: France, Italy, Southern Italy, Bari, Paris, Rome

Epoch: 20th century, World War II, 1933 / between 1943 and 1948 / 1975 / 2005

Evaluation : 1.71/3

A nice romantic story, in the vein of some of the old-fashioned books mentioned by the protagonist - LIALA, or GONE WITH THE WIND - that could work for a TV/cinema adaptation, especially with its focus on the environment of Southern Italy and a region - Basilicata - which hasn't been as much on the radars as Sicily or Puglia.

Cinzia Giorgio is an Italian writer and professor. She wrote a play inspired by her first novel, SOTTO IL FIUME in 2007. Her books include the LE RAGAZZE DI JANE AUSTEN series. In 2011 she was selected for the Mondadori Mystery Award Premio Tedeschi with the novel L'ENIGMA BOTTICELLI.

Matilde Carbiana is almost 50 years old, it is April 5, 1975, the day of her birthday, and she is waiting for her husband in a café: together, they have to go to the hospital where their daughter Eleonora is about to give birth to their first granddaughter. Her husband is late, so Matilde melancholically gets lost in her childhood memories. Matilde, daughter of Fausto and Rosa Maria, has always been a determined and self-confident girl, as well as beautiful and cultured. Matilde and her family live in Venosa, and the girl just convinced her father to let her go and study in Bari.

Thus, in the autumn of 1943 - while Italy is divided between the South liberated by the Allies and the North still in the hands of the Nazis - Matilde and her brother Alfonso go to Bari where they stay at Mrs. Nereide's house: Nereide has hosted other students, namely Mauro and two brothers, Saverio and Gregorio. As soon as she arrives in Bari, Matilde impresses the imperturbable Gregorio, and the two begin to have conversations habitually, in particular about books and literature. Matilde and Gregorio start having feelings for each other, but the war still rages on and their love story will have a thousand obstacles.

Reports available

THE GOLDEN RULE by Amanda Craig (GB) - TBP by LITTLE, BROWN BOOK GROUP, June 2020, 400 pages

Drama

Location: United Kingdom, London, Cornwall

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2/3

Translation rights sold: Italy

The Times - Books for 2020

Sunday Times - Books to look out for in 2020

Observer - Fiction to look out for in 2020

New Statesman - Books for 2020

Financial Times - Books for 2020

Amanda Craig is a British novelist, short-story writer and critic. Her books HEARTS AND

MINDS - which was long-listed for the Orange Prize for Fiction 2010 and has been optioned for development as a TV drama series by Hat Trick for Channel 4 - and THE LIE OF THE LAND, which was a BBC Radio 4 Book At Bedtime and is being developed for TV serialisation.

A novel taking inspiration from both the classic Hitchcock film, Strangers on a Train and the myth of Beauty of the Beast, exploring the layers within marriages and the lies and anger that ensue once they break down.

When Hannah is invited into the First-Class carriage of the London to Penzance train by Jinni, she walks into a spider's web. Now a poor young single mother, Hannah once escaped Cornwall to go to university. But once she married Jake and had his child, her dreams were crushed into bitter disillusion. Her husband has left her for Eve, rich and childless, and Hannah has been surviving by becoming a cleaner in London. Jinni is equally angry and bitter, and in the course of their journey the two women agree to murder each other's husbands. After all, they are strangers on a train - who could possibly connect them?

But when Hannah goes to Jinni's husband's home the next night, she finds Stan, a huge, hairy, ugly drunk who has his own problems - not least the care of a half-ruined house and garden. He claims Jinni is a very different person to the one who has persuaded Hannah to commit a terrible crime. Who is telling the truth - and who is the real victim?

Report available

AWAY WITH THE PENGUINS by Hazel Prior (GB) - published by Berkley , March 2020, 288 pages

[Drama](#)

[Location:](#) Antarctica, United Kingdom

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Translation rights sold: US. option in Croatia, Czech republic, Germany, Israël, Sweden, Serbia, Slovenia

Hazel Prior has worked as a harp-player, teaching English as a foreign language and acting. She has won nine prizes in national writing competitions and has had a number of short stories published in literary magazines. She previously published ELLIE AND THE HARPMAKER

Veronica McCreedy lives in a mansion by the sea. She loves a nice cup of Darjeeling tea whilst

watching a good wildlife documentary. And she's never seen without her ruby-red lipstick. Although these days Veronica is rarely seen by anyone because, at 85, her days are spent mostly at home, alone. She can be found either collecting litter from the beach ('people who litter the countryside should be shot'), trying to locate her glasses ('someone must have moved them') or shouting instructions to her assistant, Eileen ('Eileen, door!'). Veronica doesn't have family or friends nearby. Not that she knows about, anyway . . . And she has no idea where she's going to leave her considerable wealth when she dies. But today . . . today Veronica is going to make a decision that will change all of this.

Report available

NON SUPERARE LE DOSI CONSIGLIATE by Costanza Rizzacasa (IT) - published by GUANDA, January 2020, 272 pages

[Drama](#)

[Location:](#) Italy, United States

[Epoch:](#) 20th century, 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2.14/3

Debut novel

Costanza Rizzacasa is an Italian writer and journalist. She graduated in creative writing from Columbia University in New York. She writes the anyBody column, Ogni corpo vale (Every body is worthy).

"Have you ever been so fat that you can't tie your shoes? That you can't find shoes, or bras, socks, panties that fit you?" "To many," the narrator writes, "my story will seem disgusting." Continually addressing and interrogating her reader, Costanza Rizzacasa unpacks the main connotations of shame - shame about ourselves, our bodies, our parents. She does so from an intimate perspective, while framing her own life journey between Italy and the US, two cultures both far removed from each other, and, in her story, in conversation. She examines a series of memories that repeats cyclically and tackles the themes of binge eating, bulimia, anorexia and obesity. The book points to the coexistence of these diseases in the same person. And, more importantly, it makes us understand the chain of responsibility: Matilde, for instance, had a mother who encouraged her to puke after eating, who addressed her in derogatory terms, and a father who would disappear for days at a time. All up to the point in which, at 40, Matilde is ready to rethink her life: from a place of healing, she can look back to when she was 18 and extremely thin as well as to when she was 130kg.

Report available

BREAKDOW (WORKING TITLE) by Cathy Sweeney (IE) - Weidenfeld,

Drama

Location: Ireland

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 0/3

UK rights sold in a two-book deal at auction, with a debut short stories collection, MODERN TIMES.

Cathy Sweeney is an Irish writer. She has published short stories and poetry in *The Stinging Fly*, *Southword*, *The Dublin Review*, *Icarus*, *Meridian*, *The Tangerine* and in the 2015 anthology *Young Irelanders*, published by New Island Press, as well as the 2018 volume of *Winter Papers*.

The novel will explore themes of late capitalist melancholy, consumerism, love, environmental destruction, and the anger of the middle-aged, hanging on the story of an educated Dublin woman who has lived her life in accordance with the expectations of society.

AFTERLIFE by Julia Alvarez (DO) - TBP by Algonquin, April 2020, 272 pages

Drama

Location: United States, Vermont

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.43/3

Translation rights sold: North America (Spanish)

A Most-Anticipated Book of the Year: O, The Oprah Magazine *The New York Times* Vogue *Bustle* BuzzFeed *The Millions* The Lily *Goodreads* Library Journal *LitHub* Electric Literature

"A gorgeously intimate portrait of an immigrant writer and recent widow carving out hope in the face of personal and political grief." —O, The Oprah Magazine

Julia Alvarez left the Dominican Republic for the United States in 1960 at the age of ten. Her works include novels, books of nonfiction, collections of poetry, and books for children and

young adults. Her work has garnered wide recognition, including a Latina Leader Award in Literature from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, the Hispanic Heritage Award in Literature, the Woman of the Year by Latina magazine, and inclusion in the New York Public Library's program "The Hand of the Poet: Original Manuscripts by 100 Masters, from John Donne to Julia Alvarez." **IN THE TIME OF THE BUTTERFLIES**, with over one million copies in print, was selected by the National Endowment for the Arts for its national Big Read program, and in 2013 President Obama awarded Alvarez the National Medal of Arts in recognition of her extraordinary storytelling.

One of the best chroniclers of sisterhood returns with a funny, moving novel of loss and love. The main character is Antonia Vega, who, as the story begins, is stunned with grief. A year before, she and her husband, Sam, were driving separately to a restaurant dinner near their Vermont home to celebrate her retirement when he suffered a fatal aneurysm. Bereft of a beloved spouse and done with a rewarding career as a college professor and novelist, she's adrift and "has withdrawn from every narrative, including the ones she makes up for sale." Then need comes knocking in the form of an undocumented Mexican worker at her neighbor's dairy farm. Antonia emigrated long ago from the Dominican Republic, and young Mario seeks her help (and translation skills) in reuniting with his fiancée, Estela, who is also undocumented and stranded in Colorado. Antonia is hesitant. Sam, a doctor who was widely beloved for his volunteer work and empathy, would have done all he could, she knows: "He was the bold one. She, the reluctant activist...." In the meantime, Antonia sets off to celebrate her 66th birthday with her three sisters. The two younger ones, Tilly and Mona, are as contentious and loving as ever, Tilly a font of oddly apropos malapropisms such as "That bitch was like a wolf in cheap clothing!" But all of them are worried about their oldest sister, Izzy, a retired therapist who recently has been behaving erratically. When her phone goes dead and she fails to arrive for the party, the other sisters swing into action. Izzy's fate will take surprising turns, as will the relationship between Mario and Estela, as Antonia tries to figure out what she can do for all of them and for herself.

Report available

THE PAPER PALACE by Miranda Cowley Heller (US) - published by RIVERHEAD, January 2020, 493 pages

[Drama](#)

[Location:](#) United States

[Epoch:](#) 20th century, 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2.43/3

The agent has now an offer in for film/TV and is expecting more.

Translation rights sold: UK (at a 6-way auction), Germany (after an astonishing six-figure pre-empt), Italy (at auction), France (at auction), Romania, Netherlands, Sweden, Croatia, Israël,

Lithuania, Norway, Serbia. Offers in Brazil,, Spain, France, Hungary (auction on going)

US rights sold after a heated 8-way auction

Pitched for fans of Ann Patchett and James Salter, in the setting of Adrienne Brodeur's WILD GAME, with the crimes and misdemeanors of Big Little Lies.

A strong debut. It has a quiet, slow-burning power to it and is very much about desire and legacy handed down from mother to daughter.

Debut novel.

The novel opens at 6:30 am, present day. Elle, a fifty-something happily married mother of three, wakes at dawn and heads down to the pond for her morning swim. She is staying at her mother's summer camp, nicknamed "The Paper Palace", on a fresh-water pond in the Back Woods of Cape Cod. As Elle plunges naked into the bracing water, she thinks about what she has done the night before: how, in the middle of her mother's dinner party, she and her oldest friend Jonas crept out the back door into the darkness and had frantic sex for the first time while their spouses chatted away inside. Over the next 24 hours Elle has to decide between the life she has made with her genuinely beloved husband, Peter, and the life she always imagined she would have had with Jonas, if only they hadn't had to carry the shame of a tragic event from their youth.

Interspersed with the day of Elle's big decision is the tapestry of her life as a young girl, leading up to this point in her life.

Report available

LA FANTASIA by Loris Chavanette (FR) - published by ALBIN MICHEL, January 2020, 288 pages

[Drama](#)

[Location:](#) Algeria, France, Montpellier

[Epoch:](#) 20th century, 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Debut novel

Loris Chavanette is a French historian, specialised in the French Revolution, the Terror and the First French Empire. His history books include WATERLOO, acteurs, historiens, écrivains (2015) and QUATRE-VINGT-QUINZE, la Terreur en procès (2017, awarded the Prix de la Fondation Stéphane Bern - Institut de France).

Mariane, an old lady living in Montpellier (south of France) feels the end coming closer and decides

to confess to her grandson, Antoine, the secrets of her past before dying. She was born in Algeria, where her family used to live when it was a French colony. Her father is very strict with her but when she turns 18 she succeeds in going out alone for a ball. Here she meets a young French soldier who will become her husband. They have three children but they are not happy, and one day Mariane has an encounter that will change her life...

Short report available

ACTRESS by Anne Enright (IE) - published by JONATHAN CAPE, February 2020, 216 pages

Drama

Location: Ireland, United Kingdom, United States, London; New York; Hollywood.

Epoch: 20th century, 21st century

Evaluation : 2.29/3

Translation rights sold: US, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Italy. Option in Brazil, France, , Portugal, Sweden

This is intense and engrossing, with beautiful female characters. Katherine O'Dell is a glorious creation, she's feisty, exciting, challenging and very glamorous, but also a touch disappointed with not having made more of her fame and talent. Norah might seem much more ordinary, but actually she is no less interesting than her mother, in the way she lives, her marriage and her relationships. The novel touches on all sorts of issues, like consent, misogyny and the trials of fame, but it's also a story about family and the affection between a mother and daughter.

The Dublin-based writer's next book is billed by Cape as "a brilliant and moving novel about fame, sexual power, and a daughter's search to understand her mother's hidden truths". It features "the glamour of post-war America and the shabbiness of 1970s Dublin" and offers "a scintillating examination of the corrosive nature of celebrity".

Anne Enright is an Irish writer. She has published several novels, including THE GATHERING, which was the Irish Novel of the Year and won the Irish Fiction Award and the 2007 Man Booker Prize, and THE FORGOTTEN WALTZ, which was awarded the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction. In 2015 she was appointed the first Laureate for Irish Fiction.

Katherine O'Dell is an Irish theater legend. As her daughter, Norah, retraces her mother's celebrated career and bohemian life, she delves into long-kept secrets, both her mother's and her own.

Katherine began her career on Ireland's bus-and-truck circuit before making it to London's West End, Broadway, and finally Hollywood. Every moment of her life is a performance, with young Norah standing in the wings. But the mother-daughter romance cannot survive Katherine's past or the world's damage. With age, alcohol, and dimming stardom, Katherine's grip on reality grows fitful. Fueled by a proud and long-simmering rage, she commits a bizarre crime.

As Norah's role gradually changes to Katherine's protector, caregiver, and finally legacy-keeper, she revisits her mother's life of fiercely kept secrets; and Norah reveals in turn the secrets of her own sexual and emotional coming-of-age story. Her narrative is shaped by three braided searches for her father's identity; for her mother's motive in donning a Chanel suit one morning and shooting a TV producer in the foot; and her own search for a husband, family, and work she loves.

Bringing to life two generations of women with difficult sexual histories, both assaulted and silenced, both finding or failing to find their powers of recovery, **ACTRESS** touches a raw and timely nerve.

Reports available.

THE COCONUT CHILDREN by Vivian Pham (AU) - published by VINTAGE PRH, March 2020, 304 pages

[Drama](#)

[Location:](#) Australia

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Australian rights acquired at a 5-way auction.

Vivian Pham is a Vietnamese-Australian fiction writer, closet poet, amateur screenwriter, and university student. In 2018 and 2019, she attended the International Congress of Youth Voices and shared a stage with incongruously successful writers and activists like Dave Eggers, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Rep. John Lewis and Khaled Hosseini. She is currently completing a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Philosophy.

Life in a rough neighbourhood demands too much too young. But Sonny wouldn't really know. In fact, she couldn't be more removed from the trouble that stirs just outside her bedroom window. Watching the world from afar, she lives in second-hand romance novels and fleeting crushes. Everything changes with the return of Vince, a boy who became a legend after he was hauled away in handcuffs at fourteen.

Sonny and Vince have always known each other. It took two years of juvenile prison, an overbearing mother and a porn stash for them to finally meet again. With all that happened in-between, childhood seems so long ago. But as friendship blossoms between the two, they stumble upon their younger selves.

While it can be hard to find poetry in the drug-addicted pulse of a displaced community, there is hope, beauty and tenderness to be found.

THE COCONUT CHILDREN is a tale of coming of age, growing apart from parents, and coming to terms with who we are instead of how others see us. It is an urgent, moving and wise debut from a young and gifted storyteller.

Report available

FACTUAL

HO TORNAREM A FER by Jordi Cuixart (ES) - published by UDL, June 2019, 64 pages

Factual, Memoirs

Location: Spain, Catalonia

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 0/3

3 editions in Catalan, with 25.000 copies sold

Jordi Cuixart is a Spanish businessman, politician and cultural activist from Catalonia. He is the president of Òmnium Cultural, a non-profit cultural organisation founded in 1961 with more than 160,000 members in Catalonia. As part of his role in the pro-independence demonstrations prior to the Catalan independence referendum of 2017, he has been imprisoned since October 2017 under charges of sedition and violent rebellion brought by the Spanish prosecutor's office.

A book written from jail by Jordi Cuixart, who has made his imprisonment a tool to denounce repression and defend human rights.

WE'LL DO IT AGAIN is a personal and collective manifesto, vital and political, meditated after more than 20 months in prison and 52 sessions at the Democracy Judgment of the Supreme Court. An emotional manifesto but rigorous, direct and brave, which leads us to lose our fear and conscientiously exercise the fundamental freedoms threatened in Catalonia and throughout the world.

It invites us not to faint, to protest, to listen... and to the permanent nonviolent mobilization. Because when injustice is the law, civil disobedience is a right.

When you have been robbed of freedom as a result of an injustice, what do you have left? You have the possibility of obeying your conscience and not falling into resignation or frustration. Neither as a person nor as a people. Jordi Cuixart, the president of Òmnium Cultural, has decided to transform the sadness of a cell into the best expression of the shared struggle for self-determination and human rights.

So that our children can live in a fairer and freer country, we will do it again.

With a foreword by Jamila Raqib, Executive Director of the Albert Einstein Institution in the United States, founded in 1983 by Gene Sharp and dedicated to promoting the study and use of nonviolent action.

MIJN NAAM IS SELMA by Selma Van de Perre (NL) - published by Thomas Rapp, January 2020, 256 pages

Factual, Memoirs

Location: Netherlands, United Kingdom

Epoch: 20th century, World War II

Evaluation : 0/3

Translation rights sold: US (pre-empt, in a six-figure deal), UK (pre-empt), Germany, Italy, Israël, Poland, Finland

For six figures, Scribner's Valerie Steiker nabbed North American rights to this WWII memoir by Selma van de Perre, a Dutch resistance fighter and concentration camp survivor. The book sold in a number of foreign rights deals. Released on January 9 2020 in the Netherlands, the book has, to date, sold in Germany, Italy, and the U.K.

#1 on the Dutch bestseller list (January 2020)

The 97-year-old author became a journalist after the war and has worked for the BBC and as a foreign correspondent for a Dutch television station. In 1983 she won the Dutch Resistance Commemoration Cross. She lives in London.

Selma was seventeen when WWII broke out. Until then, being Jewish had never played a large role in her life, however it suddenly became a question of life or death. Though she was summoned to register for a work camp in 1942, she managed to evade it. She joined the resistance: under the pseudonym Margareta van der Kuit, Marga for short, she forged documents and delivered them throughout the entire country. She escaped the Nazis on multiple occasions, but in July of 1944 she was betrayed and transported via Camp Vught to Ravensbrück. Unlike her sister and parents, she survived the horrors of the camp. During that time no one knew that she was Jewish, and no one knew her real name. It was only after the war that she dared say it again: My name is Selma.

VÆNGJABYTUR VONARINNAR by Margret Dagmar Ericsdottir (IS) - published by Bjartur, October 2019, 389 pages

Factual, Memoirs

Location: Iceland, United States, Austin, Texas

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 0/3

In Iceland the book immediately became a hit and a runaway bestseller.

The author is a close friend to Kate Winslet, and together they have initiated The Golden Hat foundation, working for to improve lives for children with autism. Kate Winslet is available to help promote this book- which profit will exclusively go to the (expensive) treatments and special schools Dagmar has her son attend.

Margret Dagmar Ericsdottir is Icelandic. She produced the documentary The Sunshine Boy about autism and her son Keli Thorsteinsson. That film was originally only meant to be a short informative program for Icelandic TV but spiralled into a major international documentary project, with international recognition and distribution. Following the making of The Sunshine Boy the family relocated to Austin, Texas where Keli got admitted to regular school to obtain regular academic education. He graduated from High School in 2019 with high marks. Shortly after relocating to the US, Margret co-founded The Golden Hat Foundation, along with the Oscar winning actress Kate Winslet. In 2012 Margret and Kate along with Keli, co-authored and published the book THE GOLDEN HAT: Talking back to Autism to throw light on the plight of autistic non-verbal individuals and to raise awareness of how crucial communication is for us all.

I AM REAL by Icelandic Margret Dagmar Ericsdottir tells her story of having a severely disabled child.

This is a dramatic and difficult story, but is also full of hope, joy and humorous situations. The book recounts in a very heartfelt manner how deep a mother's love for her offspring is and it shows that no power on earth is a match for the determination and strong headedness rooted in the care of a mother. After the first few years that brought the family to the brink of destruction, there is finally a let-up and things start to move in the right direction. We learn how Margret is able to turn an adverse situation to her advantage and completely change the outlook and quality of life for her son.

At age three and a half Margret's son Keli was diagnosed autistic and severely developmentally disabled. That was reaffirmed when he was 7 years old, and then the family was told he had the mental acuity of a two-year-old and that was as far as they could expect him to develop. Keli could not speak and had a severe form of autism. He had limited motor skills and body awareness, but again Margret refused to give up. She set out on a journey to educate others about autism. She quit her job and started production of a documentary about the condition. Through that project she discovered a place in Austin, Texas, where Keli could be taught communication using the alphabet. At the age of ten, he finally found his voice. The first sentence he wrote was "I am real." They discover that he has an affinity for music, is brilliant at math and likes sushi! Turning their world upside down, this wonderful discovery makes the family move to Texas, USA where Keli gets a proper education and a totally new outlook on life. He is no longer considered intellectually challenged and he can work on his passion for music and writing.

It is a book about triumph, determination and love. It is about how you deal with challenges that life

throws your way, both the sweet and the sour and so it appeals to everyone, since we all have our share of the hard knocks of life. It demonstrates the importance of having the right attitude to make the best out of every situation. It shows that with determination and positive attitude of never giving up and to refuse defeat, you can turn any situation around and make that "mission impossible" possible.

LANGUAGES OF LOSS by Sasha Bates (GB) - TBP by Yellow Kite , April 2020, 272 pages

[Factual, Memoirs](#)

[Location:](#) United Kingdom

[Epoch:](#) 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2/3

Sasha Bates is a qualified psychotherapist specialising in embodied psychotherapy, trauma and self-regulation. She teaches workshops on subjects such as self-care for therapists, and how yoga can help those with PTSD. She has an MA and an advanced diploma in integrative psychotherapy and has 6 years of experience working with clients in private practice. Her first career was in the TV industry, where she spent 18 years writing, directing and producing for the BBC and C4.

One person, two perspectives on grief. Plunged unexpectedly into widowhood at just 49 years old, psychotherapist Sasha Bates describes in searing honesty the agonisingly raw feelings unleashed by the loss of her husband and best friend, Bill. At the same time, she attempts to keep her therapist hat in place and create some perspective from psychoanalytic theory. From the depths of her confusion she gropes for ways to manage and bear the pain - by looking back at all that she has learnt from psychotherapeutic research, and from accepted grief theories, to help her make sense of her altered reality.

Sasha layers her own experience with insights into psychotherapeutic theory, offering raw, moving, as-it-happens descriptions of how grief feels from the inside, alongside the theories that her training taught her about this heart-rending process - hence the dual narrative, or languages (plural) of loss. From Freud, through traditional grief experts Kübler-Ross and Worden; via attachment theory and recent neuroscientific discoveries; and finally on to more contemporary grief approaches such as Continuing Bonds and Dual Process Theory, Sasha questions how well being a psychotherapist has equipped her for surviving the lived experience.

LANGUAGES OF LOSS starts a necessary conversation about death and loss. It breaks down taboos and tries to find humour and light amidst the depressing, bewildering reality. It is an essential companion to help support readers through the agony of those early months, giving permission for all the feelings, and offering various methods of living with them. This book's

overriding message is that everyone's experience of grief is different, but knowing more about the theory, and learning a new vocabulary, while not necessarily easing the grief, can help you feel less alone, and at some point enable you to reflect back and see how far you have come.

THE GIRL FROM NOWHERE by Eliska Tanzer (GB) - published by Mirror Books, February 2020, 336 pages

Factual, Memoirs

Location: United Kingdom

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.71/3

Debut

"This will be one of the most talked about books of 2020" said the publisher.

This is as dark as it is intense. A powerful and moving story of survival.

Pitched in comparison to EDUCATED by Tara Westover and SHAME by Jasvinder Sanghera.

Eliska Tanzer is a Romani gypsy immigrant living in England.

Born in a Romani ghetto, Eliska Tanzer has only one dream - to go to school.
But education isn't for gypsy girls...

Her only chance of survival in this mysterious, vibrant and vicious community is to join the family prostitution ring.

Eliska dreams of more, and is determined to escape.

This is her unflinching account of overcoming poverty and persecution, as she fights to find her place in the world as an educated woman.

Report available

LE FUGITIF (PREV. LA CHUTE) by Régis Arnaud and Yann Rousseau (FR) -

published by STOCK, February 2020, 280 pages

Factual, Investigation

Location: France, Japan, Lebanon

Epoch: 20th century, 21st century

Evaluation : 0/3

Translation rights sold: Japan

First print of 40 000 copies. In the nonfiction bestseller list in France (February 2020)

Producers have already shown interest in adapting the book into a fictional TV series.

Régis Arnaud is a French journalist. He has lived in Japan since 1995, and has been a correspondent for Le Figaro and Challenges since 2002.

Yann Rousseau has been a correspondent in Japan for Les Échos since 2010.

An exceptional investigation into Carlos Ghosn: the truth about his downfall and escape.

As the all-powerful head of the car industry's Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi alliance, for twenty years Carlos Ghosn personified globalisation, good fortune and success. Having headed up Nissan, Renault then Mitsubishi Motors, he was at the peak of his career when, on 19th November 2018, his most ardent supporters threw him in prison in front of the international media. Under investigation in four cases, the hot-desker is now out on bail. Banned from seeing his nearest and dearest or from travelling freely, he lives under surveillance while awaiting a lengthy trial with an apparently prefigured outcome.

Régis Arnaud and Yann Rousseau have thoroughly explored Ghosn's life from his cell in Tokyo to the benches of the private school he attended in Beirut. They've met the key players in his exceptional trajectory - schoolfriends, loyal supporters, sworn enemies, investigators, business contacts and ministers - and had access to unpublished documents to draw up their portrait of Carlos Ghosn.

Régis Arnaud and Yann Rousseau are correspondents in Japan for Le Figaro and Les Échos, respectively. Well versed in the arcana of Japanese economics and the Ghosn clan, they carried out a grass-roots investigation that no other journalist has succeeded in completing, and have established the truth about events sending shockwaves through the international automobile industry.

HISTORICAL

TUNNEL 29 by Helena Merriman (GB) - TBP by HODDER & STOUGHTON, August 2021,

Historical

Location: Germany

Epoch: 20th century

Evaluation : 2.71/3

Film/TV offers

The author presented and produced Tunnel 29, BBC Radio 4's new podcast.

The book will enlarge on the podcast, using thousands of pages of Stasi documents and hundreds of hours of interviews with surviving participants.

The podcast has been downloaded over 3 million times. It consists of ten episodes, which can be found here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0009jkb/episodes/player>, and an article about the story can be found here: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/extra/Od4dL9Lip2/tunnel_29.

While the podcast was timed to mark the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the book's publication will coincide with the 60th anniversary of its construction.

Helena Merriman is a broadcast journalist. She is also the co-creator of British Podcast Award-winning series The Inquiry, and previously worked as a reporter for the BBC in the Middle East.

In 1961, student Joachim Rudolph had escaped from East Berlin after the city was cut in half overnight by the Berlin Wall. When friends asked for his help in building a tunnel to help others escape from East Berlin and the Stasi secret police, he agreed. They planned maps, choosing to dig under the busy Bernauer Strasse so as to avoid the city's water table. They found a factory owner who allowed them to use his cellar as a starting place for the tunnel, and planned to open it out at a friend's flat in the East. They found other students to help them dig, stole some tools from a cemetery, and got to work.

A US TV producer, Reuven Frank, offered to pay the men in exchange for the right to film their escape attempt – a new way to report on what was happening. When they broke through to East Berlin, however, there were agents there waiting for them. Though the tunnelers escaped, the people they were intending to free were taken prisoner. Undeterred, the group started again, creating a new tunnel. This time, they were successful in helping several people escape, including Eveline, who Joachim would later go on to marry.

THE SECRET HISTORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA'S POLICE STATE by Martyn Whittock
(GB) - TBP by Robinson, June 2020, 336 pages

Historical

Location: Russia

Epoch: 20th century

Evaluation : 0/3

Martyn Whittock is a lecturer in local history and has written numerous textbooks for the educational market and also books for adult readers, including on Viking and Anglo-Saxon history. He has been a consultant for the BBC, English Heritage and the National Trust and has written for Medieval History magazine and archaeological journals.

A history of Soviet Russia's policing, and of the combination of cruelty, co-operation and compromise required to build and run a one-party state. The author argues that the police state which emerged in the USSR (in which dissent, both real and imaginary, was undoubtedly policed, threatened and ruthlessly eliminated) was more than just the product of the arrests, interrogations, executions and imprisonments carried out by the secret police. The USSR was also made possible by a battle for hearts and minds which led millions of people to feel that they really had benefited from the system and had a stake in the new society.

This is an examination of the Russian Revolution and the one-party state of the USSR. The book focuses on the role of repression, terror and the political police in making the Soviet regime possible and sustaining it from 1917 to 1991, while also challenging popular misconceptions and myths about the USSR. The author examines the complexity and history of building and maintaining a one-party state through repression and brutality; but also through harnessing idealism, compromise and co-operation.

BIOPICS

ELIOT AMONG THE WOMEN by Lyndall Gordon (ZA) - TBP by VIRAGO, December 2022,

Biopics

Location: United Kingdom, United States

Epoch: 19th century, 20th century

Evaluation : 0/3

Translation rights sold: US

T. S. Eliot is very much in the news following the release, at Princeton, of a cache of letters written by the poet to his friend and confidante Emily Hale. The pre-eminent T. S. Eliot biographer Lyndall Gordon is currently at Princeton studying the letters, as part of the preparation for this book, forthcoming in 2022, the centenary of *The Waste Land*.

Lyndall Gordon has published many biographies. She is the Winner of the Cheltenham Prize and the James Tait Black Prize. She has been longlisted for the Samuel Johnson Prize, and shortlisted for the Duff Cooper Prize and the Comisso Prize in Italy for her *Emily Dickinson biography, LIVES LIKE LOADED GUNS*.

This new biography of T.S. Eliot will approach Eliot through the observations of five women who were close to him and who in some cases entered his work. Whilst the letters to Emily Hale will lead the project, his relationships with other women who were close to him - extending also to his first wife, Vivienne Haigh Wood, companion Mary Trevelyan, and second wife Valerie Fletcher, as well as his mother, and first publisher Virginia Woolf - will also be explored in the book.

Lyndall Gordon's earlier exploration of T. S. Eliot - **THE IMPERFECT LIFE OF T. S. ELIOT** - is a seminal study of one of the most celebrated and influential 20th-century poets. Originally published in 1998, a revised edition was released in 2012.

T. S. Eliot once spoke of a lifetime burning in every moment. He had the mind to conceive a perfect life, and he also had the honesty to admit he could not meet it. This biography explores the divide between saint and sinner in the greatest poet of the twentieth century. The aim is to view Eliot from the vantage point of the twenty-first century, with a keener sense of his strangeness, his prejudice, and extremism, not to reduce Eliot to the level of others in his extremist century, but to follow the trials of a searcher whose flaws and doubts speak to all of us whose lives are imperfect.

'He was a man of extremes whose deep flaws and high virtues were interfused,' writes Lyndall Gordon in this perceptive and innovative biography of the great poet.

LA CHUTE by Jacques Ravenne (FR) - published by PERRIN, January 2020, 240 pages

Biopics

Location: France

Epoch: 18th century

Evaluation : 2.14/3

French writer Jacques Ravenne is the pseudonym of a high-ranking French Freemason with intimate knowledge of the history and culture of the Order. The series with hero Commissioner Marcas that he created with journalist Eric Giacometti has sold over 2 million copies all over the world.

In this historical thriller, Jacques Ravenne focuses on the last three days of Maximilien de Robespierre's leadership and life. The novel opens on 28 July 1794, when the bodies of twenty-two men executed by guillotine, including Robespierre's, are thrown into a mass grave. The narration then moves back to the 26th of July, when Robespierre, after having remained silent for weeks, delivers a long speech at the Convention; it follows chronologically from there, illustrating the chain of events which eventually led to Robespierre's arrest and death, and describing the tensions and conflicts that ravaged the French Republic during those three crucial days.

A ROOM MADE OF LEAVES by Kate Grenville (AU) - TBP by THE TEXT PUBLISHING COMPANY, July 2020, 328 pages

Biopics

Location: Australia, United Kingdom, Sydney, Devon

Epoch: 18th century, 19th century, 1766

Evaluation : 2/3

Translation rights sold: UK. Option in France, Norway, Spain, Estonia

A woman tells the 'true story' of her life in 19thc Australia. Based on a real woman's life, Grenville speculates on what the actuality was to bring us a real person in three dimensions.

It feels totally filmic in a 'The Piano' kind of way.

Kate Grenville has previously published two works of non-fiction and several novels,

including **THE IDEA OF PERFECTION**, which won the Orange Prize for 1999, and **THE SECRET RIVER**, which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2005. In 2017 she was awarded the Australia Council Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature.

This novel takes as its starting point the story of Australian pastoralist and merchant Elizabeth Macarthur in the infant colony of Sydney, but breaks it open into a playful dance of possibilities. At its centre is a remarkable woman, an Elizabeth Macarthur of spirit, cunning and sly wit.

Raised by a widowed mother and doting grandfather on a sheep farm in Devon, young Elizabeth is headstrong, independent and curious about the world. In one moment of reckless rebellion against the expectations of society, she finds herself pregnant and forced to marry Captain Macarthur. Trapped in a loveless marriage, Elizabeth travels with her husband and young son to the settlement at Sydney Cove.

In the book's introduction, Kate Grenville describes discovering a box containing some old papers: a diary written by Elizabeth, the widow of John Macarthur, soldier, entrepreneur and rogue, in the first years of the colony of Australia. Subsequently, **A ROOM MADE OF LEAVES** walks a tightrope between the true and the invented.

Elizabeth Macarthur tells an explosive story that is like the dark side of a Jane Austen novel - what it really means to marry a stranger, and to find a way to steal power in a world that gives a woman none.

Reports available

EPICS

HER LAST FLIGHT by Beatriz Williams (US) - TBP by WILLIAM MORROW & CO, June 2020, 400 pages

[Epics, Saga](#)

[Location:](#) Spain, United States, Hawai

[Epoch:](#) 20th century, 21st century

[Evaluation :](#) 2.14/3

Translation rights sold: Option in France, Germany, Hungary, Croatia, Lithuania, Serbia

Beatriz Williams previously published THE SUMMER WIVES and THE GOLDEN HOUR, both New York Times bestsellers.

In 1947, photographer and war correspondent Janey Everett arrives at a remote surfing village on the Hawaiian island of Kauai to research a planned biography of forgotten aviation pioneer Sam Mallory, who joined the loyalist forces in the Spanish Civil War and never returned. Obsessed with Sam's fate, Janey has tracked down Irene Lindquist, the owner of a local island-hopping airline, whom she believes might actually be the legendary Irene Foster, Mallory's onetime student and flying partner. Foster's disappearance during a round-the-world flight in 1937 remains one of the world's greatest unsolved mysteries.

At first, the flinty Mrs. Lindquist denies any connection to Foster. But Janey informs her that the wreck of Sam Mallory's airplane has recently been discovered in a Spanish desert, and piece by piece, the details of Foster's extraordinary life emerge: from the beginnings of her flying career in Southern California, to her complicated, passionate relationship with Mallory, to the collapse of her marriage to her aggressive career manager, the publishing scion George Morrow.

As Irene spins her tale to its searing conclusion, Janey's past gathers its own power. The duel between the two women takes a heartstopping turn. To whom does Mallory rightfully belong? Can we ever come to terms with the loss of those we love, and the lives we might have lived?

Report available

SCI-FI

THE WILD UNKNOWN by Jordan Sullivan (US) - on submission157 pages

Dystopia, Sci-Fi

Epoch: dystopia

Evaluation : 2/3

On select submission in the US, and on submission in the UK

Debut novel

Jordan Sullivan is originally from Houston, Texas. As an artist he has been included in solo and group exhibitions throughout the world. He has published over 30 zines and artist books, many of which are held in various museum libraries, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and his work has been featured in The New Yorker, The Paris Review, Dazed, L'Officiel and Elephant.

The novel follows an unnamed man and woman - a young couple expecting a child - in a world only slightly different from our own. While we are perpetually on the brink of environmental and political disaster, **THE WILD UNKNOWN** takes place after a catastrophe of some kind - man-made or natural, it isn't wholly clear - has already happened. Landscapes on the horizon appear beautiful but are only holograms; women are allowed to bear children but not to raise them; children grow up in group homes and if they escape are hunted down by armed officials in helicopters.

We follow the man and woman through this disturbing, grey landscape, in which it isn't clear what is real and what is only an illusion.

Report available

ADVENTURE

MISS BENSON'S BEETLE by Rachel Joyce (GB) - TBP by KNOPF DOUBLEDAY, May 2020, 304 pages

Adventure

Location: France, New Caledonia

Epoch: 20th century, The 1950s

Evaluation : 1.86/3

"Inspired by **BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID** and **THELMA AND LOUISE**" said the agent.

Rachel Joyce is a British author. She has written plays for BBC Radio Four, and jointly won the 2007 Tinniswood Award for her TO BE A PILGRIM. Her debut novel, THE UNLIKELY PILGRIMAGE OF HAROLD FRY, was on the longlist for the 2012 Man Booker Prize. She was awarded the "New Writer of the Year" award by the National Book Awards for the same novel.

It is 1950. In a devastating moment of clarity, Margery Benson abandons her dead-end job and advertises for an assistant to accompany her on an expedition. She is going to travel to the other side of the world to search for a beetle that may or may not exist.

Enid Pretty, in her unlikely pink travel suit, is not the companion Margery had in mind. And yet together they will be drawn into an adventure that will exceed every expectation. They will risk everything, break all the rules, and at the top of a red mountain, discover their best selves.

This is a story that is less about what can be found than the belief it might be found; it is an intoxicating adventure story but it is also about what it means to be a woman and a tender exploration of a friendship that defies all boundaries.

Reports available

EIGHTY DAYS TO ELSEWHERE by K. C. Dyer (CA) - TBP by Berkley , August 2020, 450 pages

Adventure

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.14/3

Pitched as “The Amazing Race” meets AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS

US rights sold in a 6-figure deal

K. C. Dyer lives in Canada and is director of the Surrey International Writers’ Conference. She has published several titles for adults and teens.

Born and raised in New York City, Ramona Keene dreams of attending photography school and traveling to Paris, but her reality never quite catches up with her imagination. Instead, she works at her uncles’ quaint bookstore, where the tea is plentiful and all the adventures are between the covers of secondhand books. But when the new landlord arrives with his Evil Nephew in tow, Romy’s quiet life comes crashing down. He plans to triple the rent, something her uncles can’t afford.

In order to earn the money to help save the bookstore, Romy applies for a job at ExLibris Expeditions, a company that re-creates literary journeys. Romy snags the oddest internship ever: retrace Phileas Fogg’s journey from Jules Verne’s *Around the World in 80 Days* and plan a suitable, contemporary adventure for a client. The task is close to impossible; sticking to the original route means no commercial aircraft permitted, and she’s got a lot less than eighty days to work with. Shaking off her fear of leaving home, Romy takes on the challenge, only to discover she’s got competition. Worse, Dominic Madison turns out to be the – unfortunately hot – nephew of her family’s worst enemy.

Can Romy win the race and circle the globe in time to save the bookstore? And what happens when she starts to fall for the very person who may just be the death of her dreams?

Report available

ROAD MOVIE

LULU TOUT SIMPLEMENT by Hervé Bellec (FR) - published by PRESSES DE LA CITE, February 2020, 320 pages

Road Movie

Location: France, Orleans

Epoch: 21st century

Evaluation : 2.14/3

Hervé Bellec is a French teacher and writer. He has published around 20 books, including LA NUIT BLANCHE (2000), winner of the prix Édouard-et-Tristan-Corbière.

Ludivine has a weird job: she goes on religious pilgrimages upon request by her clients, who pay for her to be there and seek forgiveness on their behalf. Baptiste, a musician, suffers from burn-out and is going to Santiago de Compostela upon his daughters' suggestion. The two casually meet in Brittany, and Baptiste changes his plan to follow the 40-something woman on a journey that will change his life.

Report available

SHORT STORIES

MODERN TIMES by Cathy Sweeney (IE) - published by The Stinging Fly Press, March 2020, 95 pages

[Short stories](#)

[Epoch](#): 21st century

[Evaluation](#) : 2.14/3

UK rights sold in a two-book deal at auction with a debut novel, which is provisionally entitled BREAKDOWN

Pitched in comparison to Samuel Beckett, Lydia Davis and Angela Carter.

Debut

Cathy Sweeney is an Irish writer. She has published short stories and poetry in The Stinging Fly, Southword, The Dublin Review, Icarus, Meridian, The Tangerine and in the 2015 anthology Young Irelanders, published by New Island Press, as well as the 2018 volume of Winter Papers.

A collection of short stories which draw on the peculiarities of modern life and technology, blending them with fairy tale tropes and plotlines in a magical realist style. In the first story, a woman takes her husband's penis to work in her lunchbox every day; they eventually divorce, but he finds he misses their little routine.

In another, a woman leaves her husband for a wolf, only to be ostracised by the village, and her children and grandchildren forced to make up the story of Little Red Riding Hood to save their family's reputation.

In one story, a palace building gets sick, and the rot seems to spread to the whole society, while elsewhere a woman rears a child that gets older, but never ages, and in the world of another story everyone begins turning blue.