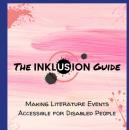


## THE PUBLISHING POST: ISSUE 68

## ONCE **ACQUISITIONS**











#### **CONTENTS**

- Maggie O'Farrell Announced as an Ambassador for Independent Bookshop Week Hay Festival and **Eurovision Partner** For Book Contest
- 3 Latest Acquisitions & Adaptations
- Partnership Publishing: Demystifying the **Publishing Process**
- April's Anticipated Reads
- 9 Audiobooks and International Women's Day
- Creating a Sense of Place Through Japanese Culture and Culinary Delights in How Kyoto Breaks Your Heart by Florentyna Leow
- BIPOC Authors in the Women's Prize 2023 Longlist
- 15 Highlights In The Charts
- 17 Celebrating International Women's Day: Upcoming **Books Written and** Translated by Women
- **Bookshops Across** the Globe
- Shuffling of the Shelves March Part Two 2023
- 23 Bologna Children's Book Fair 2023 Highlights

- Classic Celebration of Women
- Book Covers to Brighten Up Your Bookshelf this Spring
- Spotlight On: Pluto Press
- Industry Insights with Ivana Sanders
- **Job Opportunities**
- Noteworthy LGBTQIA+ Memoirs
- Campaign Spotlight: Clytemnestra by Costanza Casati
- Not to be Overlooked
- Panda Book Awards 2023 Winners Announced
- **Upcoming Publishing** Events
- Children's Book Recommendations for Middle Grade March & International Children's Book Day
  - Al Generated Books
- **Upskilling Tips:** Publishing in Ireland
- The Inklusion Guide: **Making Literature Events** Accessible for Disabled People

## THE PUBLISHING POST: ISSUE 68

#### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

As someone who was looking to get into publishing. I always found it hard to consistently keep up with what was happening in the industry. Remembering to visit separate websites, news sources, job portals and keep up with changes was quite challenging. I also know it can be difficult to find information. learn about trends in the industry, or about the specifics of roles that are not editorial.

The Publishing Post intends to provide all of this information and more to anyone wanting to learn about, or join, the publishing industry. We want to cover as much as we can for those. like us, who want to absorb as much of the industry as they can. The Publishing Post is a free resource that is encouraging, honest and

accessible to every single person who is considering publishing as a career.

The Publishing Post stands by the fact that 2023 is a time for breaking down barriers and encouraging diversity in the publishing industry. Learning about and being included in the industry should be for everyone.

The magazine is created by publishing hopefuls, for publishing hopefuls. Each and every person who works on the magazine each issue is dedicated to producing and educating fellow hopefuls with content that is informative and interesting.

Lastly, I just want to say a massive thank you to every single person who has supported, shared and

shouted about *The Publishing* Post since our first issue. On behalf of the whole team, we are so incredibly grateful and could not be more proud of the success.

Editor in Chief, Chelsea Graham

## STAY UP TO DATE

Catch up on our previous issues, highlighted articles and recommended events at www.thepublishingpost.com

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The Publishing Post

## Maggie O'Farrell Announced as an Ambassador for Independent Bookshop Week

By Hannah Collins

Independent Bookshop Week was launched in 2006 by the Booksellers Association as part of its 'Books Are My Bag' campaign: a series of events and strategies that aim to celebrate the many incredible bookshops across the UK and Ireland, Independent Bookshop Week celebrated its fifteenth birthday in June 2021. It is now sponsored by Hachette UK and has no plans of stopping in 2023. This yearly celebration of independent bookshops in the UK aims to highlight the integral role that indie bookstores play in their communities (which has become all the more clear to readers throughout the pandemic) and is set to be held between 17 and 24 June 2023.

This year, some big names including, *Hamnet* author Maggie O'Farrell, are appearing as ambassadors at bookshop events around the country as ambassadors of the event. Reverend Richard Coles (whose new novel *A Death in the Parish* is receiving a special indie bookshop edition which will be available exclusively from indie bookshops for the week) and Paterson Joseph are also featured as ambassadors.

More than 700 independent bookshops are confirmed to be taking part, the highest number ever to be involved in the event. Special initiatives that are taking place this year include indie bookshops working with local artists to create bespoke window art for Richard Osman's The Thursday Murder Club books, as well as the children's section of the event featuring the artwork of Cressida Cowell's How to Train Your Dragon in order to celebrate the popular series' twentieth anniversary. Alongside this. Bookshop Crawl UK will also be putting together an Oxford bookshop crawl on Saturday 24 June: an afternoon exploring Oxford and its bookshops.

It has always been important to support our indie stores. and Independent Bookshop Week is the perfect way to show your support. According to Books Are My Bag, indies are "staffed with book experts who are wildly passionate about reading and getting the right book into the right hands. Independent bookshops bring vitality to our high streets, work with local communities and champion reading for pleasure. Independent

bookshops generate local jobs and contribute to our local economy and local community. Independent bookshops have real passion, real people and real conversations." This idea is shared by many prolific authors, with Neil Gaiman saying of bookshops that "a town isn't a town without a bookstore" and Maya Angelou stating that "I always felt, if I can get to a library, I'll be OK."

Below are some suggestions from the Books Are My Bag website about how you and your loved ones can celebrate Independent Bookshop Week this year. First, you should find your local indie bookstore and then consider planning a bookshop crawl. You could share your book purchases on social media, tagging @booksaremybag and #IndieBookshopWeek.

Keep up to date with the campaign via the Books Are My Bag Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts.

Sign up to <u>Caboodle</u> to see what events and offers are available from your local bookshops.

## Hay Festival and Eurovision Partner For Book Contest

By Megan Whitlock

Eurovision fans across the country were thrilled when it was announced that the UK would be hosting the beloved song contest this year on behalf of Ukraine, after an amazing performance from Sam Ryder in 2022. However, the festivities have now extended into the book world too, with a major literary celebration, the Hay Festival, launching the 'European Book Contest' ahead of the big event in Liverpool this May.

According to the Eurovision website, the book contest is a "special project," designed to "explore and celebrate European literature" by creating a diverse reading list featuring books from participating countries. They invite fans to visit the Hay Festival website and submit their favourite fiction, with all genres and languages considered, from any of the thirty-seven countries competing in this year's Eurovision. It is also stipulated that the fiction must have been published since 1956, the year of the first Eurovision (hosted in the Swiss resort of Lugano).

The Hay Festival, which also takes place in May, will task a panel of expert judges to make a final selection of one book submission from each country, thus creating "an ambitious reading list of thirty-seven titles to inspire, examine and entertain."

However, just like the song contest, there must be a champion, which will be decided through discussion and debate with both the audience and experts, at a special Hay Festival event taking place on Friday 2 June; it is here the overall winner of the selection will be decided.

If this sounds up your street, there are additional incentives for participating: the website states that everyone who nominates a book will be entered into a prize draw. Goodies up for grabs include a bundle of some of the final selected titles and a free subscription to the Hay Player digital archive of content from the Hay Festival.

In a comment on the official Hay Festival website, Hay Festival CEO Julie Finch shared the following: "Sharing stories across borders has never felt more important. Alongside our ongoing partnership with Ukraine's largest book Festival, Lviv BookForum. this collaboration with the **Eurovision Song Contest** aims to celebrate the role of great literature in forging understanding and empathy globally. We are so looking forward to reading the titles that our international audience recommends and to showcasing them at our Festival in Wales this spring."

You can get involved and nominate your favourite piece of fiction on the Hay Festival's website here.

## Latest Acquisitions & Adaptations

By Georgie Cutler, Eva Lee, Emma Leask, Molly Pearce and Niamh Parr

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## **Acquisition News**

#### Beachy Books Acquires Cooper's New Real-Life inspired Historical Novel

Independent publisher Beachy Books has announced a new historical romance novel written by Heather Cooper, whose first book. Stealing Roses, and its sequel were published by Allison and Busby in 2019. Her newest novel, Arresting Beauty, is based on the true story of Mary Ryan, assistant to renowned Victorian photographer Julia Margaret Cameron. The story follows the development of their relationship, from their first meeting when Cameron found Ryan begging on Putney Heath when she was a young girl. This sweeping, powerful novel follows Julia's move to Freshwater on the Isle of Wight, and the life she and Mary share in navigating a time of fraught classism. The pair even coming across prominent figures from history such as Tennyson.



**Photo Credit: Michael Osborne** 

UK and Commonwealth rights to the novel were acquired by publisher Philip Bell, and the current projected release date for both the hardback and e-book is set for 30 September 2023.

#### The Borough Press Pre-empts De Robertis' Reimagining of Eros and Psyche Myth

Carolina De Robertis' newest novel, *The Palace of Eros*, has been preempted for publication in the UK by Suzie Dooré at The Borough Press. UK and Commonwealth rights (excluding Canada) were handled by Allison Malecha and Michelle Brower at Trellis Literary Management. Brower also handled North American rights, which were

acquired by Michelle Herrera Mulligan at Atria. Promising to be powerfully unique, *The* Palace of Eros is a retelling of the Greek myth of Eros and Psyche from a queer, genderfluid perspective. Subverting typical representations of Eros as a son of Aphrodite. De Robertis frames Eros rather as Aphrodite's daughter, born with the ability to change gender at will. When Psyche is offered to Eros in an attempt to appease the jealous Aphrodite, she is shocked to find that her prospective husband is in fact female. Following the traditional storyline of the myth, Eros will not permit Psyche to look at her face. Psyche, however - driven by a compelling combination of love and curiosity is determined to go to

dangerous lengths to catch sight of her new partner in the light. Publication of *The Palace of Eros* is currently set for summer 2024.

#### From Book to Screen

#### What to Watch?

#### **Shadow and Bone Season Two Comes to Netflix**

Shadow and Bone is set to return to Netflix for a second instalment of the hit series. Based on the Grisha series by Leigh Bardugo, Shadow and Bone follows Alina Starkov (Jessie Mei Li) as she discovers the power within her and what it could mean for the Grishaverse. Alongside the star-studded cast of season one, this series sees the introduction of two fanfavourite characters - Wylan Van Eck and Prince Nikolai Lantsov – played by Jack Wolfe and Patrick Gibson. You can stream the brandnew season of Shadow and Bone on Netflix from 16 March 2023.

#### In the Works

## Thrilling Adaptation Fool Me Once

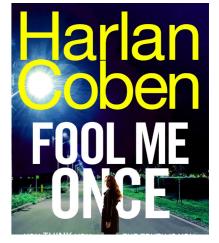
Netflix is set to adapt another New York Times bestselling novel: Fool Me Once by Harlan Coben. Known for his work in mystery and thrilling concepts, you may recognise other popular adaptations such as The Stranger or Hold Tight. This upcoming series follows ex-special ops pilot Maya Stern whose husband has been brutally murdered. She installs a camera for her two-year-old daughter while she works and sees the unthinkable as an intruder bargeS into her home – only to see her dead husband. The mystery and twists unfold as Maya digs her way through the secrets, truth and her past in a search for answers. A recent update announced a star-studded cast featuring Michelle Keegan as the lead alongside Adeel Akhtar, Dame Joanna Lumley and Emmett J Scanlan in supporting roles. So far, there is no news on the release date with the series still in the pre-production stages. Another thrilling series to watch out for coming out soon on Netflix.

## Happiness for Beginners Coming to Netflix

Happiness for Beginners is an upcoming Netflix film adaptation of Katherine Centre's romcom of the same name. This new film

will be written, directed and produced by Vicky Wright alongside involvement from Cranetown Media. who has worked with Netflix in the past, Happiness for Beginners will star The Office and The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt actress Ellie Kemper. The story follows recent divorcee Helen Carpenter as she is convinced by her younger brother to go on a wilderness survival course. What follows is a tale of self-discovery. as Helen uncovers the importance of vulnerability in finding who you truly are, and the beauty in becoming lost. The love interest of the film, Jake, will be played by Luke Grimes (Superstore, Crazy Rich Asians), alongside supporting actors Nico Santos and Blythe Danner. Filming for *Happiness for* Beginners took place in 2021 and is expected to reach Netflix in 2023.





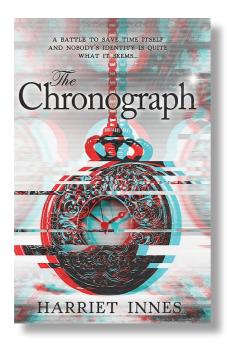
## Partnership Publishing: Demystifying the Publishing Process

By Emma Regan, Hayley Gray, Jordan Maxwell Ridgway and Laura Ingate

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This week, the Alternative Publishing team will be introducing an ambitious and spirited self-publishing company, Partnership Publishing, who aims to demystify the publishing process for new and aspiring authors. Partnership Publishing covers all of your self-publishing needs from taking your manuscript through each step towards publication (for example, editing, typesetting, proofreading, cover design, illustrations and marketing) to even helping you create a unique style or brand within the imprint of your choice.

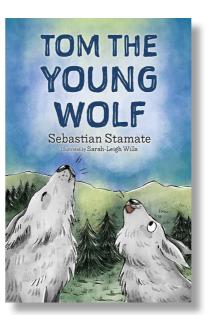
Partnership Publishing was created in 2003 as an authorfocused self-publishing company with four imprints that cover various genres as a means of providing authors with the best chance of success for their novels. These imprints include Daisa Publishing (memoirs, poetry, fiction and non-fiction); Enigma Press (adult fiction); Lotus Books (well-being, eco and non-fiction) and Magic Mouse Books (children's literature and picture books).



Within the process of Partnership Publishing. the team strives to be the safest pair of hands that can take an author's manuscript forwards within the mystical world of publishing and create a book that the author has always dreamed of. Likewise, Partnership Publishing aims to do so with a practice of mindfulness in every aspect of their process and also practise sustainable publishing to create ethical and holistic business choices.

Daisa Publishing focuses on producing books that cover a variety of genres, including memoirs, poetry, workbooks and reference books. They give the author full creative control from cover design through to final edits. Most recently, they published *The Chronograph* by Harriet Innes. In The Chronograph, protagonist Lorna is catapulted into the past to embark on a vital mission. As the fabric of time begins to fray, Lorna and friends are under pressure to save "the Chronograph" and time itself. Harriet Innes' debut novel is available to buy now.

Magic Mouse believes children's books should be inspirational, educational, motivational, magical and fun! They specifically focus on publishing children's books and also run a 'Beginner's Guide To Publishing' workshop which covers topics such as book development and marketing. Earlier this year, Magic Mouse published *Tom The Young Wolf* by Sebastian Stamate. The book is about



a daring adventurer who loves nothing more than bedtime, where he can explore his beloved stories. The book provides children with the building blocks for understanding topics such as grievance, loss, bullving and deforestation, all whilst entertaining its readers with the animal kingdom. Magic Mouse have a variety of children's books coming out this year including *Annabelle's* Rainbow, which is available for pre-order.

While Daisa Publishing and Magic Mouse publish various genres, Enigma Press and Lotus Books soley published fiction and non-fiction books. Enigma Press publishes adult fiction, including sub-genres such as romance, war, crime and whistle-blower books. The imprint welcomed itself into the world in November 2020, with its first release, *Two* 

Risky to Love by Lisa Jane Lordan, released thirteen days later. The book follows the passionate relationship between Lordan's two main characters. Kara Davis and Evan Hamilton, and has since received two followup books. Two Much Trouble and Two Much to Lose. Other authors published under Enigma Press are Lorraine Buxton with A Second Chance and Mayfield Book Corner and Fanica S. Stamate with Vaccine in Love.

Lotus Books focuses on health and well-being. spirituality and personal development. It started teasing its imprint in January 2021 and released its first book, Love, Comfort, Passion, Craving by Ruchita Green, a cookbook which celebrates everyday heritage recipes from Indian cuisine, a month later. Since then, it has gone on to release five more books with authors such as Daisy Morgan, Rachel Matthews, Irene Ward and Kefah Bates.

If you search for Partnership Publishing wherever you get your podcasts, you can find short Q&A discussions with some of their published authors, in which authors discuss their journeys through writing, editing and discovering which

publishing route worked for them. The latest episode covers Rachel Matthews' *The Mental Millionaire*, a work which explores trauma and self-sabotage, but ultimately how finding a creative outlet can lead to healing.

You can find out more about the latest news with the company on their Instagram page, including recent publications and events they're holding such as workshops.

Committed to combating climate change, the company is partnered with Ecologi to track their low carbon business and support reforestation projects. They have planted 1,300 trees so far and you can find out more about their work with Ecologi here.

Partnership Publishing is currently open for submissions. If you've written a book or are in the process of writing a book and would like to get in touch, you can email them at hello@ partnershippublishing.co.uk with a synopsis of your work, a paragraph describing your publishing goals and your contact details. According to their Instagram, they accept all genres.

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## PARTNERSHIP PUBLISHING

A Gateway to Success

## April's Anticipated Reads

By Anna Robinson, Jaime Butler, Maisy Twaddle and Georgia Wells

## To Battersea Park by Phillip Hensher

30 March, HarperCollins

Whilst COVID-19 may seem like another era and the regulations imposed on us an ever distant memory, one author chooses to remember. Phillip Hensher's *To Battersea Park* explores the notion of a busy city ground to a halt when social interaction is forbidden and how pockets of the city return to life when humanity disappears.

An order is issued and people may not meet, touch or speak to one another. Whilst inside, the true life of the city streets emerges. An underground river is found and an urban grove of pomeloes emerges. Inside the homes, human dramas play out in close quarters to neighbours. Abduction, violence and depression are witnessed from across the street or upstairs.

Written in four parts, this powerful novel explores the lived experience of a single place and time, stuck in limbo. The novel explores what brings people together through love, through aspirations and paused goals. Hensher writes about what we share even when we are separated: humanity, imagination and love.

## You Could Make This Place Beautiful by Maggie Smith

11 April, One Signal Publishers

In her upcoming memoir, Maggie Smith reminds readers how to find beauty even in the face of terrible darkness and loss. In her latest work. Smith doesn't hold back from using the same lovingly brutal honesty present in her poems. The memoir dives into personal heartbreak at the collapse of her marriage and of finding a way forward as a mother and as a woman. She's effortlessly able to fold her own personal experiences and reflections into broader topics of womanhood, familial gender roles, power and the patriarchy.

Follow Smith as she steps into her own power and freedom by grappling with big emotions that we all face: heartbreak, anger, empathy and more. Learn to love yourself and this world again, to have hope and to find meaning in living your own life with this breathtakingly unique upcoming memoir.

And if you can't wait until then, you can dive into Smith's poetry to pass the time. I recommend her poem 'Good Bones' from her collection of the same name, which just so happens to serve as the genesis of her memoir title. It's a poem I haven't stopped thinking about since reading and one that now has a permanent place on my own fridge.

## Atalanta by Jennifer Saint

13 April, Headline Publishing Group

From the author of *Ariadne* and *Elektra* comes the latest re-telling of Greek mythology. Jennifer Saint brings the formidable Atalanta and her adventures with the

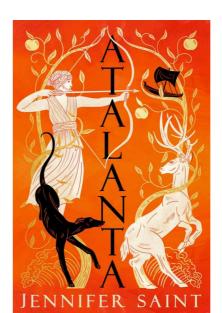
Argonauts into vivid life. Disappointed when a daughter is born to him, the King of Arcadia leaves the infant defenceless on a mountainside, left to the mercy of nature. The child is raised by a mother bear alongside her cubs under the protective eye of the goddess Artemis.

Determined to prove her worth alongside the heroes of Greece, Atalanta leaves her forest to join Jason and his band of Argonauts. Lushly evoking the magic of the myth, Saint brings Ancient Greece to life as Atalanta carves her own place with the legends in a world made for men.

## Homecoming by Kate Morton

13 April, Pan MacMillan

Kate Morton, author of bestseller *The Clockmaker's Daughter* returns with a story



packed with mystery, love and the resurrection of a cold case that had been left unsolved for over sixty years.

On a scorching hot Christmas Eve in 1959, South Australia, a local delivery man makes a horrifying discovery. The once peaceful town of Tambilla is now caught up in a whirlwind police investigation of one of the most confusing and twisted murder cases in South Australian history.

Current day: Jess, a journalist living in London for the last twenty years, finds herself being let go from her full-time job and struggling to make ends meet. A sudden phone call finds her returning to Sydney to help look after her grandmother Nora following a nasty fall.

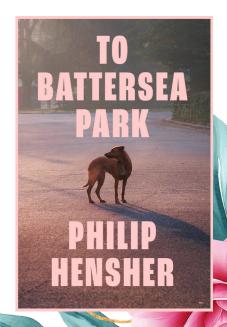
Whilst her grandmother recovers in hospital, Jess starts digging around the

house looking for something to entertain herself with. What she did not expect to find was a true crime book belonging to her grandmother telling the story of a long-buried tragedy.

A journalist without a job and a scandalous story unsolved, Jess jumps at the chance to turn her investigative eyes to her grandmother's book. As she skims the pages, she finds a shocking connection between her own family and the unsolved mystery.

Morton tells the tale of a mystery that spans generations and the lies that people will tell in order to protect the ones they love. Keep your eye out for this electrifying thriller in bookshops this April.





## Audiobooks and International Women's Day



By Cameron Phillips, Nuria Berbel Torres and Sarunicka Satkuruparan

In this issue we are celebrating International Women's Day by spotlighting our favourite audiobooks by female authors. The power of female voices has been constantly undermined and underutilised, but there is no question that women's voices, stories and perspectives hold the ability to transform how we view the world and the experiences we have in it.

#### Nuria's Pick: The Wolf Den, Narrated by Antonia Beamish

Set in Pompeii a couple of vears before the Mt. Vesuvius eruption, it reimagines the lives of women who have long been lost to history, their lives so full of misery and abuse but also resilience and sisterhood. There's heartache, vulgarity and romance in a nonconventional way. It follows Amara, once a dutiful and loved daughter, who was sold as a slave when her father's death plunged her family into poverty. She finds herself working in

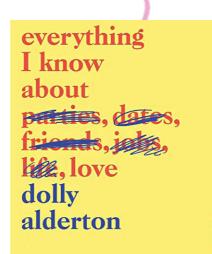
Pompeii's infamous brothel. slave to a despicable man, vet her spirit has not faltered: she quickly understands that everything in that city has a price and begins to craft a way in which she can reverse her fortune. But just how much is her freedom going to cost her?

The Wolf Den is book one of *The Wolf Den* trilogy. Amara's story is continued in book two, The House With the Golden Door and book three The Temple of Fortuna which will be published on 23 November this year. Antonia Beamish does a fantastic job narrating this story and transporting the reader to ancient Pompeii. This series focuses on love, resilience and strength which made it a great pick for Women's History month.

Cameron's Pick: A Vindication of the Rights of Women, Narrated by Fiona Shaw

I love history and whilst I never got to realise my lofty ambitions whilst studying it at university, it is why for this week's pick I am going with a stone cold classic. Marv Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Women is an essential, foundational book on women's rights and feminist theory. An extraordinary woman from an extraordinary family who lived an extraordinary life. Mary Wollstonecraft defied her contemporaries by saying that women could be far more than mere wives to their husbands and were essential to the running of the nation due to the role they played in the education of children. Something very interesting in her construction of the work. is the mixture of masculine and feminine language she uses. She describes her work as a "treatise" which is indicative of the maledominated field of philosophy, but also uses the pronouns "I" and "you" which are seen as very feminine and more importantly, personal. She combines the rational





rhetoric of philosophers with the provocative and inflammatory sensibility of her own fierce views, often aimed at Jean-Jacques Rousseau's contemporary writing on female education.

There are many controversial views upheld in the work and I'd highly recommend anyone interested in feminist theory to read it, as it is shockingly put together. I chose the version narrated by Fiona Shaw, who provides the narration with great depth and respect for the piece. You can tell that she has worked extensively in theatre and the performing arts and the book is that much better for it. This is especially true for the sections of the book where Wollstonecraft is at her blunt and witty best, where her own views clearly seep through her efforts of writing a treatise, as she'd call it. It is ground-breaking, brilliant and I'd highly recommend it for anyone. no matter their interests. See also her daughter Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. As I said, an extraordinary family.

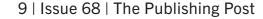
#### Sarunicka's Pick: Everything I Know About Love, Narrated by Dolly Alderton

Everything I Know About Love is a candid memoir, written and narrated by British-Canadian journalist and broadcaster Dolly Alderton. Dolly recounts her experiences of early adulthood - covering everything from heartaches

and humiliations to wrestling with self-sabotage and finding a job. It weaves together personal stories, satirical observations, a series of lists and other vignettes to provide a listen that is heartfelt, honest and filled with wit.

I wanted to recommend this listen for our International Women's Day issue because of the light it sheds on the power of female friendships. In a world which continues to profit off women being pitted against each other, it serves as a reminder of the immeasurable role other women play in our lives and the bond there is in sisterhood.

Ultimately, Everything I Know About Love is one woman's story of growing up and growing stronger whilst navigating all kinds of love along the way. It encompasses the struggles of early adulthood in all its messy, hopeful and wonderful uncertainty that anyone currently navigating their twenties can relate to. Dolly's narration showcases her genuineness and reiterates this message. All in all, this is a listen for those of you seeking some comfort in being a woman and young adult who is just figuring things out.



# Creating a Sense of Place Through Japanese Culture and Culinary Delights in *How Kyoto Breaks Your*Heart by Florentyna Leow

BY ELEANOR BOWSKILL, HANNAH MCWHINNIE, VICTORIA BROMLEY AND LILY BALDANZA

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How Kyoto Breaks
|Your Heart is an
authentic and heartfelt
collection about the
all-encompassing
nature of heartbreak.
Its delicate words
make the reader
nostalgic for the
memories of a
stranger.

Malaysia-born writer and translator Florentyna Leow lived in London and Kyoto before relocating to Tokyo. Fresh into her twenties, Leow was offered the chance to live and work alongside an old friend as a tour guide in Japan. Tasked with navigating cultural hotspots and cohabitation with her new companion, it soon becomes clear that this new place might not remain fruitful forever.

We were interested in Leow's writing process of unearthing such intimate emotions

balanced among more domestic experiences. Leow explained that as her day iob involves writing "in the realm of Japanrelated food and travel," she found writing this collection to be of a similar process, from transcribing interviews to research. With writing "a calling, not a choice." Leow said she'd been

said she'd been
"mulling over" the core
themes of the collection
for several years. She would
"jot down ideas" and put
them aside before the
"urge to create reared
its head again."

Despite having a clear vision for the collection, Leow admitted that "almost none of the essays turned out the



Photo credit: Emma Press Website

way I thought they might."
One of these drafts evolved into fragmented vignettes, which created a six-part narrative essay, "holding the book together." Leow even "binned two essays that weren't going anywhere." Interestingly, Leow explained how she "hadn't meant for the book to get quite

so personal." In search for inspiration, she began "rediscovering old messages, memories and photos" and went through "at least two boxes of tissues that month."

For Leow, the experience of moving cities was a catalyst for her increased sense of who she was. Now "a different person" than when she was in her twenties. she is more "forgiving and compassionate" towards herself. Her pull towards honest and vulnerable personal essays is "like a natural extension" of how she used to write as a teenager, and after reading a plethora of essay collections over the vears, she's "delighted to finally have one of [her] own to point to."

Rich in its commentary of dual consciousness. Leow states that she did "feel nervous" about this collection during her twenties but not so much in her early thirties, having "a stronger sense of self" than before. The concept of looking like you belong somewhere, whilst still getting to grips with the native language can create a sense of dual consciousness. stuck between the status of tourist and local. Yet, Leow explained that "there are so many ways to be an outsider" no matter where it is you go, that it all becomes a "moot" point. The sense of

a connection to both places ensured that Leow was "far more than a visitor" in her homes, but she "will always be an outsider" because she did not grow up in Japan.

With vivid descriptions of mouthwatering. sumptuous delicacies. Leow writes to provoke the senses. If she were to eat one meal to capture the memory of her time in Kyoto, she would revisit her 2016 birthday dinner. After a busy

day of tour-guiding, she ate "viscous, sludgy roux-based" curry rice with a few chunks of chicken and carrot, followed by a delicious dessert. Similar foods will forever transport her back to "that summer evening" in Kyoto.

The final essay in her collection, *Egg Love*, was a beautiful ode to platonic relationships, with the ritual of food preparation a source of comfort and a show of

HOW KYOTO
BREAKS YOUR
HEART
FLORENTYNA LEOW

affection. To Leow, food is a "love language", however, Leow believes this idea has "been written about to death" in the food writing world, and it has become difficult to write about cooking as "a labour of love" with originality.

# BIPOC Authors in the Women's Prize 2023 Longlist

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By Michelle Ye, Jia Wen Ho, Shaniah Shields and Leanne Francis

The prestigious Women's Prize 2023 features an abundance of originality and talent. The longlist has been described by Chair of Judges Louise Minchin as "a glorious celebration of the boundless imagination and creative ambition of women writers over the past year."

The shortlist will be announced on 26 April and the winner on 14 June.

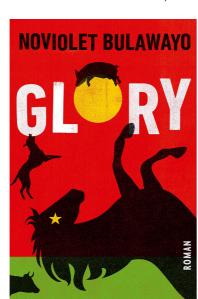
## **Glory** by NoViolet Bulawayo

From the brilliant mind of award-winning Zimbabwean author NoViolet Bulawayo comes her second novel Glory, a political satire with echoes of Animal Farm. Glory documents the "fall of an oppressive regime, and the chaos and opportunity that rise in its wake." Taking inspiration from the 2017 coup against Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, Bulawayo brings us a tale of tyranny through a chorus of animal voices. This riveting novel holds a mirror

up to a world that, much like ours, has been torn apart by greed – all while exhuming the smallest glimmer of hope.

## The Bandit Queens by Parini Shroff

In The Bandit Queens, a humorous, "razor-sharp" debut novel by Parini Shroff, we are introduced to Geeta, a young woman whose husband walks out on her. In a small Indian village where news travels fast,



rumours begin to spread that Geeta killed her own husband. Soon enough, women begin to consult her for advice on "husband disposal." What begins as a simple favour for one woman changes things for every woman in the village in this spirited dark comedy.

## Wandering Souls by Cecile Pin

In her debut, Wandering Souls, Cecile Pin shines a spotlight on those "who [have] been shuffled offstage," bolstering Southeast Asian voices in the UK literary scene. Inspired by her family history, the novel introduces siblings Anh, Thanh and Minh, who have fled from Vietnam to Britain. As orphaned refugees, the siblings are plunged into unceasing storms and forced to endure survivor's guilt while they carve their own paths in unwelcoming soil. The interwoven narratives come together not only to educate but also to explore the generations that exist within the individual.

## Memphis by Tara M. Stringfellow

Coming from a family of storytellers, Tara M. Stringfellow knew that it was her duty to make "tales sing." Memphis spans generations, tracing the ugly trauma and enduring beauty of a Southern Black family. The violent collisions plaguing Joan's life are tempered by the women in her family: grandmother Hazel, mother Miriam, her aunt and her sister. By painting their portraits, their unfaltering love and strength propels Joan in the direction of healing and hope. *Memphis* illuminates the rich mosaic of their lives, celebrating the vibrancy and complexity of Black women.

## I'm a Fan by Sheena Patel

I'm a Fan is Sheena Patel's searing debut, offering a critique of society, social media and human relationships. Following a single speaker, we get a frantically brutal examination of culture. obsession and how social media and politics feed into our self-image. Patel's narrative is exhilarating and visceral. Through the narrator's seemingly toxic relationship, she creates a platform wherein the reader is enveloped in a display of societal norms and patriarchy. This powerful



book has established Patel as an original talent and has also been longlisted for the 2023 Jhalak Prize.

## **Pod** by Laline Paull

Described by The Belfast Telegraph as "another conversation starter." Pod offers a timely commentary on the current ecological crisis. From the bestselling author of The Bees, this is the immersive tale of a troubled dolphin's terrifying quest. Paull continues to put our complex planet at the forefront of her stories. this time spotlighting the ocean and the harmony and tragedy of the pod. Told from the dolphin's point of view, the thought-provoking book explores themes of family, belonging and sacrifice, and is sure to stay with you long after you've finished reading.

## Fire Rush by Jacqueline Crooks

Crooks' mesmerising debut follows Yamaye who lives for the weekends where she can go raving at The Crypt, an underground club, with her friends. At the heart of this story is a musicality, a lyricism that permeates the prose.

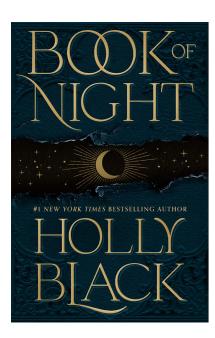
From the UK to Jamaica, Fire Rush is rich in plot and characterisation, with Bernardine Evaristo saying: "By the end of the novel, I felt charged and changed and already longed to reread it." Crooks depicts a sprawling narrative that navigates Black British Caribbean identity and the impact of police violence on Black communities, but ultimately leaves space for hope.



## Highlights In The Charts

## The Book of Night by Holly Black

REVIEW BY MADELEINE MCMANUS



Having missed *The Cruel Prince* hype train, this was my first time reading a book by author Holly Black and it proved to be a thrilling debut into the adult fiction world. I was enamoured with the base concept in this book that people's shadows can have their own identities and be influenced by magical forces. in both positive and negative ways. These shadows can be manipulated by "gloamists." They are the magicians of the world who can give shadows cosmetics like wings or horns; or make them perform dark crimes such as slipping through windows and doors to steal valued treasures or even allowing them to murder people if the shadow proves strong enough.

Charlie Hall is no gloamist and she instead manipulates people to get what she wants through her fiery personality and her taught criminal behaviours. Bartending and running from her past of being a con-artist, she finds the consequences of her previous criminal

actions continue to chase her. Readers get to know the depths of Charlie's background in crime through the chapters dedicated to her backstory and those who used to be closest to her.

Due to past betravals, her social circle is now small. But this doesn't stop the suspicions around her sister and her boyfriend. Her boyfriend, Vince, is someone who has had their shadow stolen, making Charlie question whether he has a soul – a common superstition about those without a shadow. Then there's her sister Posey, who is desperate to become a gloamist and we see her beginnings in the magical world through the arts of tarot and palm reading.

The Book of Night is a dark fantasy with many intriguing and unexpected twists, with the conclusion of the story making the anticipation of the next book in the series even stronger.

## What the Dead Know by Nghi Vo

REVIEW BY LAUREN FARDOE



What the Dead Know is a gripping short story depicting the false livelihoods of two protagonists, Vansyl and Maryse. Vo provides remarkable depth to her characters, bringing a tangible undercurrent of suspense in a small time frame.

Set in a magical alternate version of historical America, Vo establishes the presence of an enchanted supernatural with ease. Vasyl ("Doctor Janiv") plays the professor and Maryse plays the exotic medium initiated into an ancient religion that allows her to hover on the threshold of death, where she can hear the dead.

The palpable misogyny and colonial-era racism surrounding the people of colour throughout the novella provide a break back to reality away from the spiritual world. Refreshingly, the main characters utilise this to their advantage, helping

to sell their seance through capitalising off this existing prejudice.

The setting of the novella sets a tone of unease: an isolated girls' finishing school in rural America, in the midst of a biblically proportioned storm. What begins as their routine deception soon turns real and the medium, Maryse, discovers her life is endangered.

# Celebrating International Women's Day: Upcoming Books Written and Translated by Women

By Niina Bailey and Alice Reynolds

This week we are celebrating International Women's Day by showcasing some upcoming books written and translated by women.

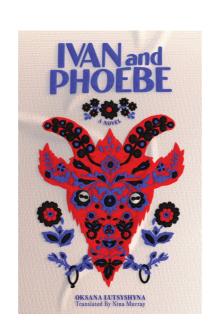
Indeed, it is still important to give these authors and translators a platform too, as though, according to the European Commission, women account for over 75% of independent language professionals and about 55% of language company employees, the language services industry is owned and operated by men.

In publishing, the picture looks positive in the UK: according to some recent research, women are publishing more than men, and make up 64% of the total publishing workforce (78% of editorial, 83% of marketing and 92% of publicity), though, gender imbalances worldwide remain that still need to be addressed. Thus. as a column dedicated to this very industry, we are keen and excited to share some of the work of these amazing female writers and translators and honour the women who have significantly changed (and still do!) the publishing industry.

Ivan and Phoebe
(Iβαμ i Φεδα) by
Oksana Lutsyshyna.
Translated by Nina
Murray, published
by DeepVellum in
June 2023.

Set in the last years of Soviet rule and the first years of Ukrainian independence, Ivan and Phoebe by Oksana Lutsyshya follows the lives of young people involved in the student protests in the Revolution on the Granite in 1990. The book shows the struggle of the characters navigating the right to express free speech and protest and the models of marriage and home life in cities of Uzhgorod, Kyiv and Lviv. Trauma after revolution is discussed, as, while Ivan struggles to talk about his trauma, Phoebe's monologues function as an insight into her pain.

The book won Ukraine's Taras Shevchenko National Prize for Literature in 2021, which is the country's highest state award for outstanding achievements in culture and arts. Oksana Lutsyshyna is a Ukrainian writer, literary scholar and lecturer in the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies at the University of Texas in Austin. This June, DeepVellum is publishing Nina Murray's translation.



What You Are Looking For is in the Library by Michiko Ayoama. Translated by Alison Watts. Published by Doubleday in 2023.

What You Are Looking For

is in the Library is a love letter to books, libraries and getting the perfect book recommendation. It follows Sayuri Komachi, a librarian in Tokyo. However, she is not just an ordinary librarian; she can read the souls of anyone who comes into her library. She can sense exactly what they are looking for in their lives and gives them the perfect book recommendation that will help them find it. The people who come into her library are all at a crossroads in their lives and the books Komachi recommends to them will change their lives. This book promises a cosy reading experience and is perfect for book lovers.

What You Are Looking For is in the Library has been very successful in Japan. It has become a bestseller and it was shortlisted for the Japan Bookseller's Award. It is being translated into fifteen languages. It has been compared to The Midnight Library and Before the Coffee

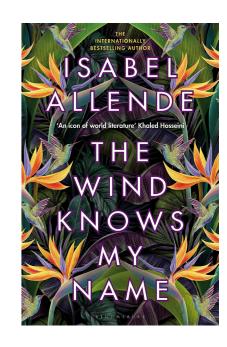
Gets Cold so if you enjoyed these books, this might be the book for you. I, for one, cannot wait to read it. It will be published on the 10 August.

The Wind Knows
My Name by Isabel
Allende. Translated
by Frances Riddle.
Published by
Bloomsbury in 2023.

The Wind Knows My Name is the newest book by Isabel Allende who has been described as "the world's most widely read Spanishlanguage author." It is told in two timelines, one starting in Vienna in 1938, and the other in Arizona in 2019. In 1938, six-year-old Samuel Adler's father disappears during Kristallnacht. Samuel's mother cannot guarantee his safety so she puts him on the last train transporting children out of Nazi-occupied Austria to England. He travels alone with almost nothing with him. Eighty years later, seven-yearold Anita Diaz and her mother flee danger in El Salvador to the United States. However. Anita gets sent to a border patrol facility in Arizona as a result of the new family separation policy. She tries to deal with her new reality by escaping to a magical

world in her imagination.
Meanwhile, a young social
worker is trying to find
Anita's mother.

The book intertwines these two timelines and follows Samuel and Anita as they search for their family and a home. It explores migration and belonging, which Allende has personal experience with as she had to flee Chile in 1973 after general Augusto Pinochet took over the country in a military coup. The Wind Knows My Name promises to be a hard hitting story that is still very much rooted in reality. It will be published on the 6 June.





By Holly Presswell, Christiana Jasutan and Tamara Yamamoto

Today the Bookshop team is taking you by the hand around the world... step by step... one bookshop at a time...

#### Shakespeare and Company, 37 Rue de la Bûcherie, 75005 Paris, France

Located in the heart of Paris, sitting opposite the Notre-Dame, is the Shakespeare and Company Bookshop. This famous bookshop was founded by American George Whitman and first opened its doors in 1951. Since then, the store has thrived in the literacy world. When the doors first opened, writers and intellectuals were invited in to sleep among the many books on benches that doubled up as beds. It is now estimated that over 30,000 writers and artists have stayed the night, including Ethan Hawke and David Rakoff. Every guest was asked to complete three things during their stay – read a book a day, help out around the shop and produce a onepage autobiography. Many of these autobiographies are now stored in the store

archives in their thousands. To add to this impressive résumé, the store launched the Paris Literary Prize to help unpublished writers around the world and is now working on setting up its lown publishing firm.

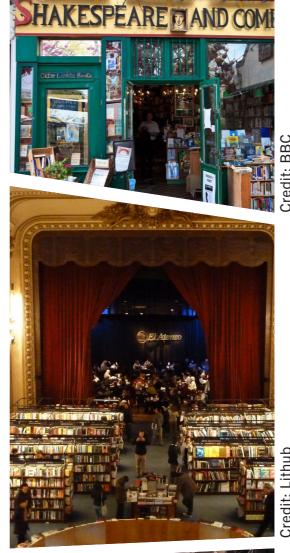
#### Dujiangyan Zhongshuge Bookstore, Sichuan

Located in Chengdu, China, is a book lover's dream. The architecture designed by X+Living is beautiful. The bookstore is located over two stories with a cathedral feel, with towering arches and columns, in the rooms due to the mirrored ceilings and polished black floor tiles which reflect the bookcases. The bookstore holds over 80,000 books from floor to ceiling, with light belts on each shelf to create the perfect light effect. Over the two floors, you can find a cafe, play area for the children and plenty of seating for people to sit,

read and work. "We needed to coordinate every part of the space to ensure that any functional item, whether it is a bookshelf or a desk, does not break away from the theme of the concept and at the same time has a sense of beauty," said Li Xiang, the founder of X+Living when asked about his design.

## Honesty Bookshop, Hay-on-Wye, Wales

This list wouldn't be complete without a bookshop from the famous Hav-on-Wye, the Welsh "town of books" and home to the Hay Literary Festival. With just over 1,400 residents, this little town in Wales has around forty bookshops; one of them is the Honesty Bookshop, which is an outdoor bookshop with no staff, open 24/7. This unmanned bookshop sells books for around £1 or less per book, and they take payment only by cash and trust their customers





to drop their payment in a box. The bookshop itself is in the Hay Castle grounds, and all payments made to the bookshop go to the Hay Castle Trust.

#### El Ateneo Grand Splendid, Buenos Aires

Formerly a 1050-person seating amphitheatre, El Ateneo Grand Splendid now houses more than 120,000 titles. Buenos Aires is dubbed as heaven for book lovers; in 2015, the Guardian listed that the country has twenty-five bookstores for every 100,000 people. El Ateneo Grand Splendid is also claimed to be the most beautiful bookshop in the world, which is hardly surprising considering the building is a beautifully preserved antique theatre. The building was originally opened in 1919, a centre of arts and culture, particularly famous for its tango performances. Now it has been refurbished and reopened as a bookstore, leaving some of its interior features behind. The stage remains alongside the thick red curtains that encased the stage; this space currently houses a comfortable cafe inside the bookshop. The theatre boxes remain untouched, a space for book lovers to lounge and read the books when the weather is bad outside. Sometimes a live pianist plays in the afternoons.

#### Boekhandel Dominicanen in Maastricht, the Netherlands

This extraordinary bookshop is located in a 13<sup>th</sup> century Dominican Church in Maastricht rich with history. In 1261, the Dominicans were given permission to establish a monastery in Maastricht. They constructed a monastery and a church that remained in the old Maasstad for five centuries. In 1794, the French army conquered the city, and in 1795, it was incorporated into the French Republic. This brought an end to the history of the religious mendicant order in Maastricht, and the church was then used by the French cavalry as horse stables. In the centuries that followed. the building served many purposes: from a depot for the city, concert hall (MSO), snake house, boxing stamp (Bep van Klaveren), to a (children's) carnival stamp.

After some intensive restoration of this special monument by the Architectural firm Merkx + Girod, it was turned into a bookshop in 2006. Upon entering, you will be amazed at the full height and sight of Gothic architecture alongside a herculean walk-in bookcase covering several floors. From the high vaulted ceilings and stunning wall paintings (including one even dating back all the way to 1337) to the gorgeous bookcase, this place is a must-visit.

## Shuffling of the Shelves – March Part Two 2023

By Lucy Shardlow and Melissa Tran

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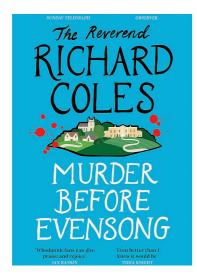
As this month draws to an end and spring (finally) arrives, the book charts continue to shift with the seasons.

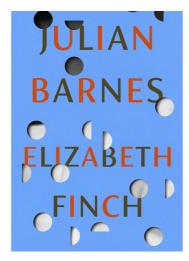
#### **WHSmith**

Kicking things off with a page-turning time-loop thriller, we have Gillian McAllister's Wrong Place Wrong Time taking the number two spot in the WHSmith chart. A tale of a mother who tries to prevent the murder her son has already committed as she wakes up each morning to find herself further back in the past. Can you stop a murder before it has even happened? Fans have been loving the originality and intensity of McAllister's latest thriller, making it the most talked about thriller of the year! Further down the charts, at number eleven. we have *Mother's Boy* by Patrick Gale. This beautifully crafted novel features war. the Cornish landscape and a tender relationship between a mother and her son. Gale has been described as a writer with heart, soul and naughty wit, creating a fictionalised biography that reimagines the life of poet Charles Causley.

#### **Waterstones**

At number three in the Waterstones chart is *Murder* Before Evensong by Reverend Richard Coles, following Canon Daniel Clement on his search for a murderer after his calm little village is thrown into chaos. With mystery, intrigue and two sausage dogs to keep you company, this is a novel perfect for fans of *The* Thursday Murder Club. This week's Waterstones chart places A Day of Fallen Night by Samantha Shannon at number five, an eagerly awaited seguel to The Priory of the Orange Tree. An epic fantasy novel with women at the forefront, Shannon writes about what happens when





the Dreadmount erupts, and our hero must rise up to protect humanity. Elizabeth Finch by Julian Barnes features lower down on the Waterstones chart, about a teacher named Elizabeth Finch who battles with ideas of philosophy, culture and evolution to come to terms with who she truly is. A thought-provoking novel by the very talented Barnes.

#### **Amazon**

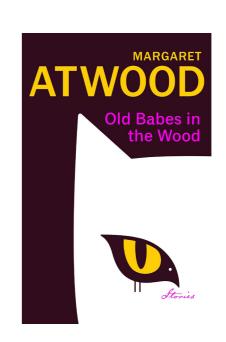
In the Amazon Most Wished For charts this week is *The Mother*, a brand-new novel up-all-night thriller from T.M. Logan. Ten years ago, Heather lost everything. Now, she will stop at nothing to clear her name and to get her family back. Many critics have named this as



a heart-stopping, twisting and unmissable thrill-ride! At number two is 23rd Midnight by James Patterson and Maxine Paetro: the newest edition to their Women's Murder Club series. **Detective Lindsay Boxer** put serial killer Evan Burke behind bars. Now, a new killer has recreated Burke's most infamous crimes and has disappeared without a trace. Not one to be missed, Patterson and Paetro combine cunning characters and shocking twists, to create an unputdownable crime thriller. Further down the charts is Margaret Atwood's Old Babes in the Wood, a deeply personal collection that follows a married couple as they travel the road together. This spellbinding collection of short fiction features beloved cats, a confused snail, George Orwell, and so much more! A dazzling collection written by one of the most gifted storytellers.

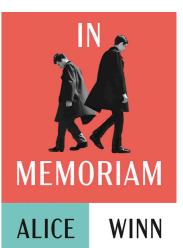
#### **Social Media**

Trending on social media this week, specifically on Bookstagram and BookTok is Sarah J. Maas who has just announced that her new book House of Flame and Shadow will be released in January 2024. This book will be number three in the Crescent City series. Following the huge success of the previous books in the series, House of Earth and Blood and House of Sky and Breath, fans now eagerly await the release of the next instalment. Sarah J. Maas is often on BookTok. and is most widely known for her previous series A Court of Thrones and Roses and Throne of Glass. The fantasy writer has a strong fan base and dedicated fans often rave about her books and characters online. House of Flame and Shadow is now available for pre-order at all major retailers.



#### Author of the Month

And finally, just weeks after the release of her debut novel In Memoriam. Alice Winn takes the spot as our Author of the Month for March. It is hard to believe that *In Memoriam* is Winn's debut novel with prose that is so moving and affecting; it is bound to take your breath away. Tracing the love story between two World War One soldiers. Winn brings to life the heart-breaking tragedies of war and the precious sanctuary that can be found in human connection. It's 1914, and the idea of war seems too far away for Henry Gaunt, Sidney Ellwood and the rest of their classmates who are safely secured in their idyllic boarding school. At seventeen, they are both too young to enlist, however, both are facing their own personal battles: their consuming infatuation for each other. Many critics are already obsessed with this heart-shattering love story as Winn offers a fresh look at a subject that many of us believe we know so well.



## Bologna Children's Book Fair 2023 Highlights

By Aimee Haldron, Holly Allwright and Rosie Pinder

Having just run its 60<sup>th</sup> year, Bologna Children's Book Fair is a staple of the publishing calendar. Each year, over 1,400 exhibitors and over 30,000 visitors flock to the event to experience everything Children's Publishing. This year, the fair ran from 6 March to 9 March and as always, was full of great panels as well as being the hub for new publishing deals. We've highlighted some of the great things that happened at the fair.

## **Events highlights**

# Censorship of Books: What is the State of Children's Book Banning Around the World and What is Being Done?

Censoring of books has always happened and the goal is always the same: to control, redact and censor what children are reading these days. Following the recent controversy surrounding the Roald Dahl classics being rewritten for a modern audience, this panel included a whole host of participants including David Levithan, who is —

according to PEN America – the eleventh most censored author in America.

## Italian Excellence. Illustrations for Italo Calvino

As a tribute to this incredible author and journalist on what would have been his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, this event celebrates his life's work. Calvino was known for beginning the writing process of every book he wrote with a single image and then building the narrative from there. This exhibit brought in artists from across the globe to create illustrations from Calvino's books. Now that the Book Fair has finished,

this exhibition begins a tour to showcase Calvino's writing alongside these new illustrations at Italian Cultural Institutes across the world.

#### **PublisHer**

PublisHer was an initiative created in 2019 as a reaction to the ongoing gender disparity in the industry. It aims to give an environment in which the women in publishing can collaborate and turn to each other for ideas and support. This year, especially as the fair falls on International Women's Day, PublisHer was given an area where it held many events showcasing the powerful women of children's

publishing with the highlight being the panel with Italian Children's Laureate, Susanna Mattiangeli.

## BolognaBookPlus

BBPlus, an extension of the Bologna Children's Book Fair which takes place alongside it, was also a big feature this year. Entering its third year, BBPlus takes the fair into the general publishing space, therefore, widening its reach. This year, it featured an exhibition space and many training events on the role of rights, literary agents and scouting among many others. For the first time. BBPlus also nominated a market of honour, which for 2023 was Greece.

## Deals/Trends Highlights

## Macmillan Children's Books Signs Six-Figure Deal with Camilla Reid

World rights were acquired for a range of books written by author and Nosy Crow co-founder Camilla Reid that will launch in Spring 2024 followed by further titles in 2025. MCB said the books will combine novelty elements, striking artwork by a range of illustrators and Reid's "unique authorial voice."

the success of this new series, inviting existing and prospective publishers. The event even featured a lifesized Bluey mascot!



#### Graphic Novels Getting a lot of Attention

One of the big trends of this fair was graphic novels with international publishers keen to expand on the growing popularity of this medium. Bloomsbury's middle-grade graphic novel *Pablo and Splash* by Sheena Dempsey and Michael Rosen's and Daniel Egnéus' picture book, *The Big Dreaming* are key examples that were getting a lot of interest.

## **Bluey Summit**

International publishers continue to come on board for Ladybird's Bluey books following the huge roll-out and success of the TV show. Penguin Random House held its first-ever Bluey Summit at the fair to celebrate

## Moomin Partnership with the US

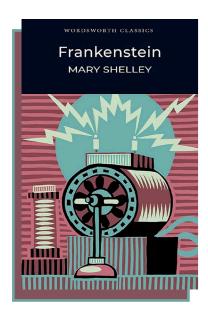
The Moomin stand was particularly impressive at this year's book fair following the brand's recently announced partnership with Barnes and Noble in the US. This marks the brand's first major step into the US market highlighting its continued growth as it heads towards its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025.

These are just a few snapshots from the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2023 that we thought were particularly exciting. It was great that this year things were back in full swing after a reduced fair last year following the continued impact of COVID-19. The fair is a fantastic platform to showcase the diversity and creativity of the children's book industry and offers a great indication of what is to come in the year ahead across children's publishing on the international stage.

## Classic Celebration of Women

By Megan Powell and Magali Prel

In honour of International Women's Day earlier this month, the classics team wanted to showcase some of their favourite and most influential female writers of classic literature. From Mary Shelley to Octavia E. Butler, these women have significantly impacted the world of literature with their tales. All have their own distinct styles, but their common denominator is how impactful and important their works have been to classic literature. With genres ranging from gothic fantasy to science fiction, these women have been major figures in re-inventing the genre and creating revolutionary novels with themes such as abuse of power, discrimination, greed or revenge.



# The God of Small Things ARUNDHATI ROY A masterpiece, utterly exceptional in cyery way MARPERS OF THE

## **Mary Shelley**

Born on 30 August 1797, Mary Shelley was an English novelist, notably known for her work Frankenstein which was considered to be one of the first works of science fiction. However, Shelley's novel overlapped with themes from the gothic genre, with elements such as the sublime spread across the pages of her novel. At age eighteen, she wrote Frankenstein, a tale about a scientist's thirst for knowledge turned into an important morale of taking responsibility for one's actions.

Shelley's life is reflected in some parts of *Frankenstein*: her miserable marriage to Percy Bysshe Shelley is reflected in the character of Victor Frankenstein, who mirrored many of Percy's personality traits and behaviours. Furthermore, the creation of Frankenstein's Monster is also indicative of Shelley's wish for a successful childbirth, as most of her children died at birth or in early infancy.

#### **Arundhati Roy**

Arundhati Roy is an Indian author best known for her novel *The God of Small Things*, an influential, semi-autobiographical modern classic about fraternal twins whose lives are destroyed by the "Love Laws" prevalent in 1960s India. The novel demonstrates how seemingly insignificant events can actually have a wider impact on one's life.

While The God of Small Things is a work of fiction, many believe that it contains autobiographical elements. Some of these similarities between the novel and Rov's own life include her Syrian Christian and Hindu lineage, the divorce of her parents when she was a young girl and her education in architectural school. The novel portrays the injustices that Indian society (at the time) placed upon its people for being born under different circumstances and discusses important themes, such as love and sexuality, social class, betrayal and family.

## **Angela Carter**

Angela Carter is a powerful author, poet, journalist and feminist. Through her mastery. Carter weaves intricate themes of magic and realism to often present her "radical libertarian feminism." Adopting this narrative style boldly allows Carter to critique the patriarchy and conventional gender roles that have oppressed women throughout history. Throughout her life, Carter was surrounded by forward thinkers, her father was a journalist and her grandmother was a suffragist. There is no doubt in understanding the radical narrative style of Carter and how inspiringly bold she is in her feminist writing.

Her most notable work is *The Bloody Chamber*, published in 1979. This novel retells (or perhaps updates) famous fairy tales through a contemporary feminist perspective. This anthology of short stories really captures the essence of Carter and is a must read.

#### Octavia E. Butler

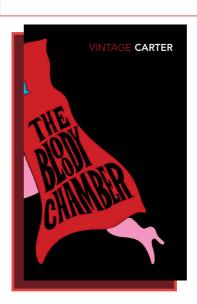
Born in California, Octavia E. Butler pioneered the way for female African American writers in the science fiction genre. Butler was the first to successfully publish her science fiction novel Kindred that weaves the sci-fi element of time travel with slave narratives. Through Butler's skilful and powerful writing, the novel focuses on imperative themes of race and gender, to name a few. Her subsequent novels also explore these crucial social themes of racial injustice, women's rights and global warming. She is an inspiration and was deservedly awarded the MacArthur Fellowship, the Hugo award and Nebula award.

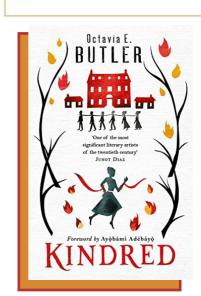
Her novels are essential reading and are often used as a stable piece on the literary curriculum. It is clear to understand why Butler's work is so important, inspiring and should continually be celebrated.

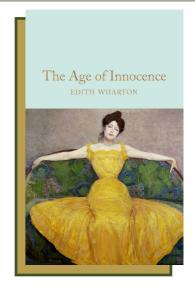
#### **Edith Wharton**

Edith Wharton was born in 1862 to a high society family in New York. Her prestigious family meant that Wharton was able to travel frequently, and was able to become fluent in many languages. Her experiences in upper class society and as a debutante lent its way to informing her work, exposing the truths and repression of the Gilded Age in these social circles. The themes of her novels often reflect this quest for moral freedom. independence and sexuality. She skilfully uses setting and location to place her social themes at the forefront of her novels.

She wrote extensively, her repertoire including fifteen novels, eighty-five short stories, seven novellas and a large amount of poetry. Edith Wharton is most famous for her novel *The Age of Innocence*, which earned her the Pulitzer Prize Award in 1921. She was the first woman to achieve this and was later inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.







## Book Covers to Brighten Up Your Bookshelf this Spring



By Abbie Wright, Megan Coote, Juliette Tulloch and Laura Wallace

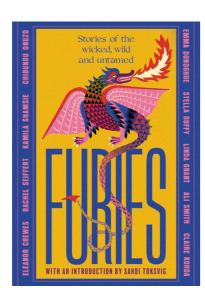
Spring has finally arrived and the change of season seems like a great time to treat yourselves to a new, entertaining novel. Our team has found some books with covers that perfectly capture this colourful season through vibrant colours, floral symbolism and bold style. So, whether you're going on a picnic, visiting a new town or simply having a night in in the spring weather, here are some books that you are sure to enjoy.

## Furies: The Virago Book of Wild Women by Fifteen Authors

"DRAGON. TYGRESS.
SHE-DEVIL. HUSSY. SIREN.
WENCH. HARRIDAN.
MUCKRAKER. SPITFIRE.
VITUPERATOR. CHURAIL.
TERMAGANT. FURY.
WARRIOR. VIRAGO."

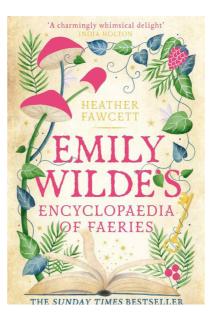
Looking for an anthology of stories to pick up and put down when you please? Furies: The Virago Book of Wild Women by fifteen bestselling authors landed this month as part of the celebrations for Virago's 50th anniversary, to much excitement and acclaim. Contributing authors include Kamila Shamsie, Ali Smith, Margaret Attwood, Chibundu Onuzu, Stella Duffy and many more. The anthology seeks to reclaim the words from traditional stories of abuse and misogyny, transforming them instead into original stories that are empowering and fierce, taking inspiration from a word that represents

Virago. The cover is true to its contents, using a bold colour palette and the image of a dragon to hone in on the fantastical and powerful words used by its authors, whilst adding a retro undertone that resonates with the founding of Virago in the 1970s. The placement of the authors around the edges and on the spine illustrates that this is a one-of-a-kind anthology that brings together bestselling authors and illuminates each one's unique writing at the same time.



## Emily Wilde's Encyclopaedia of Faeries by Heather Fawcett

If you are looking for a new book with a colourful cover to add to your shelves this spring and love a story with a touch of magic. look no further than this gorgeous edition of Emily Wildes Encyclopaedia of Faeries written by Heather Fawcett. The cover design, by illustrator Bex Parkin, is enchanting and captures the essence of Fawcett's novel. Parkin is known for her love of colourful wildlife and botanicals with a vibrant colour palette and her style carries through clearly with this design – from the vibrant green foliage to the bright pink berries and toadstools. The greenery and touches of gold glitter creates the sensation of walking through an enchanted forest, giving the cover a fresh spring feel. You can find more of Bex Parkin's illustrations here.



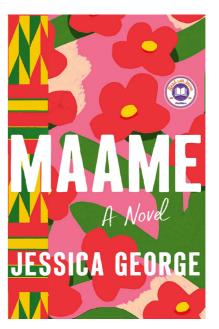
## Maame by Jessica George

The vibrant display of colours on the cover of Jessica George's novel Maame immediately invites the reader to pick this as their springtime read. The flowers on the front cover, mixed with the reds, yellows and greens of the background creates an aesthetic display for any bookshelf. The cover immediately evokes feelings of springtime, with the flowers and colour palette alluding to a sense of growth and a return to brighter days.

Beyond the cover, George's novel is one that resonates with the idea of growth, a classic theme of spring. The story is about Maddie, a woman living in London while struggling with her identity and family relationships. Her mother spends most of her time in Ghana, while Maddie

must take care of her father who suffers with Parkinson's. Maddie must navigate her life while keeping hold of the relationships closest to her. The novel is a heartwarming tale of culture, love and change through the lens of a strong female protagonist. Both the book's cover and the contents of the novel make this new story the perfect springtime read.

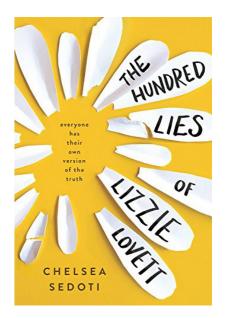
Click <u>here</u> for this particular cover of the incredible debut novel.



## The Hundred Lies of Lizzie Lovett by Chelsea Sedoti

The Hundred Lies of Lizzie Lovett by Chelsea Sedoti is a pretty YA (Young Adult) addition to your bookshelf this spring. The sunny yellow of the cover with the white petals of a beautiful spring flower appear to represent a

cheerful springtime read. On looking more closely, though, something unusual can be seen in the petals. They are made of paper. They are fragmented. This simple and effective cover design represents that things are not always as they seem — one of the central themes of the book. Themes of mental health. including loneliness and insecurity, are pronounced with a unique narration. Lovett is a twenty-oneyear-old who disappears from a campsite one night, something that doesn't happen in the quiet town in which she lived. Hawthorn. a seventeen-year-old from the same town, becomes obsessed with Lizzie's disappearance. As Hawthorn searches for the truth about what happened. she ultimately finds her own truths.





## Spotlight On: Pluto Press

By Mollie Gregory-Clark and Zoe Maple

Based in London, Pluto Press is a radical and political publisher. Established in 1969, this independent press is one of the world's oldest radical publishers and has been home to well-renowned political writers such as Karl Marx and bell hooks. With its publications ranging from treatises on current affairs and political theory to discussions on gender, race and class. Pluto Press prides itself on being firmly anticapitalist, internationalist and politically independent. Their books have been the recipients of numerous accolades, including The Palestine Book Award, **CHOICE** Outstanding Academic Book Prize and The Frantz Fanon Lifetime Achievement Award.

#### **Recent Releases**

Greater than the Sum Of Our Parts: Feminism, Inter/ Nationalism and Palestine by Nadia Elia

In this powerful book, Palestinian activist Nadia Elia breaks down Zionism, exploring environmental

destruction, hyper-militarism, incarceration and gendered violence. Elia offers up her analysis of how Palestine's freedom is connected with other freedom struggles. She argues that Palestine's fate is dependent on the solidarity and interconnectedness of other communities covering race, gender, indigenous and LGBTQIA+ communities. She also presents an intersectional feminist understanding of the Israeli apartheid. Both informative and hopeful, Elia brings to light the role of the Palestinian youth, diaspora and women in the global struggle against white racism, capitalism and colonialism.

After the Postcolonial Caribbean by Brian Meeks

Despite the Caribbean's previous optimism for postcolonial life, expectations of what Caribbean independence could amount to were not met. As the possibility of radical change appears slim, Brian Meeks makes a case for re-establishing the previous optimism held

by the Caribbean people; for him, this optimism is essential for the development of progressive movements in the region. In the first part part of his book, Meeks presents an autobiographical account of his memories and experiences of radical politics in the Caribbean. whilst also exploring the decades following the end of colonialism. Part two. titled Imagining, offers up a new theoretical framework, inspired by Edna Manley, George Lamming and Stuart Hall. Meeks hopes that this could be the beginning of new movements of political resistance and change. Covering a range of topics, including political theory. economy and pop culture, Brian Meels discusses the meaning of social transformation with the avoidance of pessimism and hopelessness.

Stopping Oil: Climate Justice and Hope by Sophie Bond, Amanda Thomas and Gradon Diprose

In Stopping Oil: Climate
Justice and Hope,
geographers Sophie Bond,

Amanda Thomas and Gradon Diprose document how a climate justice campaign in Aotearoa (the current Māori-language name for New Zealand) became politicised. Following the country's pursuit of deepsea oil, a range of "Oil Free" groups came together in a powerful climate justice campaign. However, as their influence grew so did the state's tactics to silence them, employing a range of methods from surveillance and delegitimising media representations to statesanctioned violence. The authors provide a compelling analysis of climate justice and progressive change, discussing the impact of power relations on the possibilities and constraints for change.

#### **Notable Releases**

Ain't I a Woman by bell hooks

In this ground-breaking work of feminist history and theory, bell hooks examines the various forms of oppression that Black women have faced since the 17th century to the present day. Intertwined with moving personal accounts, bell hooks criticises the failure of many middle-class white feminists to address issues of race and class within their movements. She also challenges the notion that gender and race are two separate issues, instead suggesting that the struggles to end sexism and racism are inextricably linked.

This classic study from one of our most influential cultural critics is as pertinent to today's society as it was upon its initial publication nearly thirty years ago.

Culture of Terrorism by Noam Chomsky

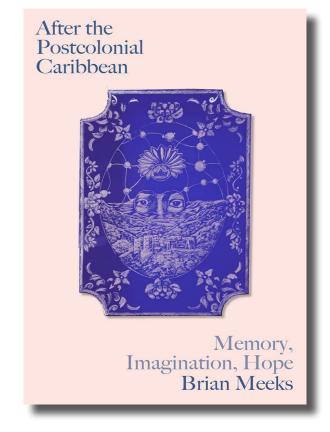
In his scathing critique of US political culture, Chomsky dissects the events of the 1986 Iran-Contra scandal. The scandal involved US government officials secretly facilitating the sale of arms to Iran, which was the subject of an arms embargo, with the purpose of using the proceeds to fund a right-wing rebel group in Nicaragua. Chomsky points to these "acts of supreme"

state terror" as symptoms of the wider issue of the Western imperial project, encouraging Americans to pursue integrity instead.

Frantz Fanon: Philosopher of the Barricades by Peter Hudis

Frantz Fanon was an African-Caribbean psychiatrist, philosopher and activist who brought his interests in psychology and philosophy directly to bear on such issues

as mutual recognition, democratic participation and political sovereignty. His works, notably *The* Wretched of the Earth and Black Skin, White Masks, have been hugely influential in the fields of post-colonial studies, critical theory and post-Marxism. In this brilliant critical biography, Peter Hudis chronicles Fanon's extraordinary life, from his upbringing in Martinique to his contributions to the anticolonial struggle in Algeria, countering the monolithic assumption that Fanon's contribution to modern thought is defined by the advocacy of violence.



29 | Issue 68 | The Publishing Post

## **Industry Insights with Ivana Sanders**

By Georgie Graham, Leyla Mehmet, Karoline Tübben and Aimee Whittle

## This week, we are delighted to have had the opportunity to interview Ivana Sanders, the Founder and Editor-in-Chief at Aesthetic Press.

Please could you tell us about your publishing journey? How did you get into the industry, and how did it lead you to where you are now?

I started working in publishing as a hobby, doing book reviews for indie authors and for publishers on my social media platforms. From there I started to notice that my following was building. I was also learning about different freelance avenues in the #WritingCommunity, so I started offering a range of freelance services including creating book cover designs and book trailers. I also offered editing services and interviewed authors on Instagram Live. I also became a host for *Horror Tree* magazine and was a volunteer for #DVPit. I did most of this for fun as I really enjoy helping authors navigate the publishing industry.

I wanted to begin curating short stories from several authors to organise themed anthologies - which I loved! This was how I realised that I had developed both a large enough community and the necessary skills to run my own publishing company; from then Aesthetic Press was born!

Tell us a bit about Aesthetic Press. What was it like to set up your own publishing company?

Aesthetic Press is an independent digital-first, dark fiction publisher which focuses on curating a diverse collection of thriller, mystery, suspense and horror novels.

Setting up Aesthetic Press was really easy for me because I was already doing everything that Aesthetic Press does as a whole when I was previously offering freelance services. It was just about bringing it altogether! Marketing is the biggest hurdle to overcome every day. Maintaining visibility and trying to stand out whilst being challenged by changing algorithms has been the toughest part of the job. I am continuously navigating how to best promote our authors globally. Recently,

I attempted to launch an extension of Aesthetic Press; a book tour company called Forever Forbidden Tours. It didn't work out. Failures are as much part of the job as successes. I will try to launch Forever Forbidden Tours again in the future! Thankfully, the Aesthetic Press YouTube series that I hired a host for did launch successfully!

What does a typical day of work look like for you?

Unfortunately, working on my day job...haha! This includes:

Reading queries and participating in pitch events.

Creating marketing and promo posts, ads, and trailers for our released and soon to be released books.

Editing early drafts of the books we have recently signed.

Creating sample book covers for our authors to choose from.

Gathering hosts for our book tours.

Send out review copies for puff quotes (one-line reviews from other published authors that print on the front cover on new books).

Can you tell us about a project or title that you're most excited about?

Aesthetic Press has already published many books that are the first books in a variety of series, so I am excited to publish the next installments of our authors' series soon!

What has been the highlight of your publishing career so far?

Publishing books that are well received and helping to make authors' dreams come

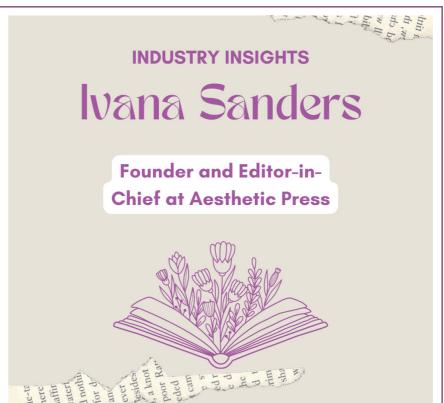
true! Entertaining our readers with books they love. What more could we want, right?

If you had one piece of advice for people looking to get into publishing, what would it be?

Patience. Lots of it.

It has taken me over eight years to get where I am and I still have many more goals I want to pursue and achieve. It all takes a lot of time. Publishing is an industry that involves a lot of slow growth. It is a journey, but a really fulfilling one.

Seek out new opportunities and don't be afraid be different. Try to think outside the box, and always try new things. Learn from your peers in your chosen genre because what works for one genre will not work for another. Know your audience. Build your digital presence. Work together and be kind. Make friends in the industry as it's all about who you know! Continue learning and growing. Expand where and when you can.



Follow Us:

Twitter: @AestheticPress1

Instagram: @ AestheticPressBooks

## Job Opportunities

By Sheridan Pena, Penny Ruddock and Aimee Whittle

## ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD

#### Sales, Marketing and Rights Assistant at Rowman & Littlefield

Closing Date: 31 March 2023

**Salary:** £21,000 - £23,000

Location: Remote within the UK with flexible working hours

A US-based publishing house, Rowman & Littlefield, is looking for someone to join their International Sales, Marketing and Rights department. This assistant position will provide support, and help build connections between Rowman & Littlefield's US and UK partner and customers.

The Sales, Marketing and Rights Assistant will report to the Director. A list of primary responsibilities is as follows: answering customer enquiries over the phone and through email, managing the production and distribution of sales materials, reviewing author contracts, handling rights requests, assisting with the creation and implementation of marketing materials and attending literary events as needed.

An ideal skillset for this role includes a great eye for detail, being an exceptional communicator, working well in a team, excellent IT capabilities, familiarity with Microsoft Office and possessing a warm and friendly demeanor. An interest in the book market is preferred, but prior experience in publishing is not required. For more information and how to apply, click <a href="https://example.com/here">here</a>.



THE DEBORAH ROGERS FOUNDATION

#### Part-time Freelance Administrator at The Deborah Rogers Foundation

Closing Date: 31 March 2023

Salary: £30,000 - £40,000, dependent on experience

**Location:** London

Already got some experience under your belt? Then this could be for you!

The Deborah Rogers
Foundation is seeking to
recruit a part-time freelance
administrator for its DRF
Writers Award — awarded
every two years — and
the annual David Miller
Internship Programme.

As part of the job, you'll be liaising and communicating between the DRF Board and its main partners including judges, writers, partner organisations, literary agents and publishers across the **DRF Writers Award and David** Miller Internship Programme. One of your main roles will be administering and co-ordinating the intern programmes, including recruitment, plan schedules, travel arrangements and accommodations if needed. You'll also get to organise award events and parties, including guest list, venue and catering!

The successful candidate will be highly organised, have strong communication and interpersonal skills, a keen eye for detail and will be positive and self-starting in their approach to their work. Ideal candidates will have an interest in reading and publishing, along with some previous experience in the book industry. Find out how to apply here.





#### **Editorial and Rights Intern at Canongate**

Closing Date: 2 April 2023

Salary: £23,650

Location: Edinburgh

Looking for experience in the world of publishing? Look no further! Canongate books is searching for an intern to support both their Editorial (three-and-a-half days per week) and Rights (one-and-a-half days per week) departments and learn how these teams work within a publishing house.

This internship is full-time, with hybrid working available, reporting to the Head of Editorial Management and is based in Edinburgh.

Amongst other things, you will gain an understanding of how a commercial book publisher operates — particularly how Editorial buys and produces books and how important Rights sales are to the profitability of a book. You'll learn how international rights are sold

and the stages of pitching, negotiating and reaching a deal — and the importance of communication with potential publishers and with authors and agents throughout the process. You'll even get to learn how a book is put together, including stages of editing, drafting prelims, typesetting, proofreading and getting ready to print!

You do not need to have worked in publishing before, but good organisational skills, attention to detail and a love of reading are essential! You should also be able to respond flexibly to a busy workload and multiple deadlines and possess IT skills such as a working knowledge of Microsoft Office (especially Word, Outlook and Excel). Find out more here!



Hurst Publishers are looking for a new Publicity Assistant to join their team full-time, helping to promote all their trade and academic books. This is an exciting opportunity where you will take on many roles such as organising events and managing social media. Hurst's books are regularly featured in many well-known news outlets, so they run a very busy publicity department. This role would require you to pitch to various media outlets and draft press releases, liaising with other departments in the company.

A successful candidate will be up to date with current affairs and trends, have a genuine interest in the books produced and have excellent organisational and attention-to-detail skills. Whilst publishing experience is always appreciated — it is not necessary for this role! Find out more here.

## **Publicity Assistant** at Hurst Publishers

Closing Date: 10 April 2023

**Salary:** £23,000 - £25,000

**Location:** London, hybrid work option available

Working in publishing and publicity—what could be better? If these are two fields that interest you, then we've got a job opportunity for you!



The Publishing Post | Issue 68 | 34

33 | Issue 68 | The Publishing Post

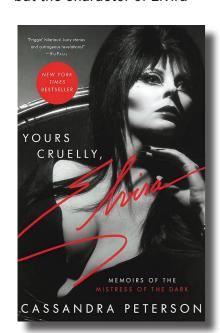
## Noteworthy LGBTQIA+ Memoirs

By Becca Binnie, Carly Bennett and Rhys Wright

Valuable education and understanding comes from listening to people's own stories and experiences. We have listed merely a few of the powerful, inspiring and moving LGBTQIA+ memoirs that readers can learn from and engage with. In listening to someone's personal voice, we can hope to grow, empathise and celebrate all communities, including the LGBTQIA+.

## Yours Cruelly, Elvira by Cassandra Peterson

The much-loved queer icon has made a decadesspanning career out of satirising the male gaze, but the character of Elvira



does little to scratch the surface of Peterson's fascinating, turbulent life.

Born in rural Kansas in the 1950s, Peterson grew up a long way from the glitz of Las Vegas and LA, the former of which she began performing in when she was only seventeen, crossing paths with the likes of Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis Jr. From travelling through Europe as the lead singer of a pop group to working as an improv comedian in LA, readers would not be remiss to think Peterson really might have seen and done it all.

Of course, Yours Cruelly, Elvira charts the exciting career trajectory that led to the creation of Elvira, who we all know and love. But Peterson also details her memories of the AIDS crisis and the friends she lost throughout the epidemic, the sexual harassment and assault she faced as a young actress in Hollywood, and her later-in-life coming out journey. Frank, witty and queer on every level, Yours Cruelly, Elvira tells the story not only of a queer woman's vibrant life but of an instantly recognisable character who is truly an icon of the queer community.

## **README.txt** by Chelsea Manning



Having risked her own freedom to expose classified documents detailing American military activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, Chelsea Manning continues her fight for transparency and freedom of information by writing her own story in her memoir, README.txt.

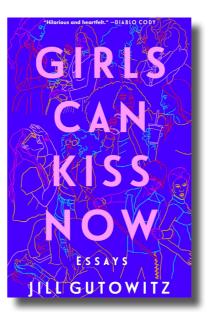
Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in 2022, *README*. *txt* chronicles Manning's life from her difficult childhood in rural Oklahoma until her release from military prison in 2017. Manning's life story is a searing indictment of the American military and government, as well

as the hostility faced by trans people interacting with these institutions. Covering everything from her experience as a closeted trans woman in the military during the time of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy to the constant obstacles she faced in attempting to transition in military prison, Manning holds nothing back.

During her initial time in jail, Manning was prevented from speaking publicly on her trial, becoming "a symbol, a silent film actor onto whom people projected their love and their hate, their politics and their fear." *README.txt* sees her officially put her own story on the record, in her own words.

## Girls Can Kiss Now by Jill Gutowitz

Jill Gutowitz's memoir was published last March and named one of the Most Anticipated Books of 2022 by Vogue, BuzzFeed, Bustle, Marie Claire, Harper's



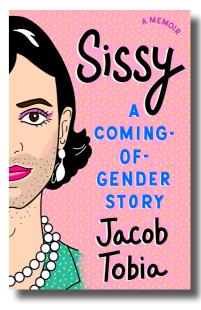
Bazaar, Electric Lit, Thrillist, Glamour, CNN and Shondaland.

The sharp-witted collection of personal essays discusses the evolution of lesbian culture, queer relationships and the online sphere. Gutowitz writes on the impact pop culture has always had on her life, from her pivotal Orange Is The New Black inspired exploration of sexuality, to her run in with the FBI after a Game of Thrones fuelled tweet. This memoir highlights the vital mainstreaming of lesbian culture and evaluates how pop culture distracts, informs and disappoints us. Gutowitz examines her own experiences with self-worth. relationships and her path to constructing identity.

This set of personal, funny and thought-provoking essays encapsulates and helps readers understand a refreshing and upwards shift in pop culture towards an optimistic and queer future.

#### Sissy: A Coming-Of-Gender Story by Jacob Tobia

Jacobs Tobia's 2019 release shares the story of their life and exploration of gender, from their Methodist upbringing and struggles to fit into the stereotypical "masculine" path that had been laid out for them, to their time at Duke University and eventual journey to reclaim the label of "Sissy." Throughout Sissy, Tobia reflects on their childhood



spent in North Carolina, the college essay that gained them acceptance to multiple Ivy League schools, years of activism and an invitation to the White House to meet with Obama (one of my favourite passages of the book!).

Delving into gender stereotypes and urging the reader to leave everything they thought they knew about gender at the door, *Sissy* is a bold, touching and at times hilarious story of self-acceptance and breaking down gender binaries. Trans joy is something we always need more of in literature and the latter half of Tobia's memoir has it in spades.

Timely and full of shrewd observations, *Sissy: A Coming-Of-Gender Story* shies away from functioning as a "Trans 101" guide and keeps the focus on Tobia's personal experiences as a non-binary person in today's America.

## Campaign Spotlight: Clytemnestra by Costanza Casati

By Amy Greensmith, Danielle Hernandez, Emily Lavin and Georgia Rees

Costanza Casati's debut novel, published on 2 March, offers a fresh perspective on one of the most notorious women in Greek mythology: Queen Clytemnestra. As the sister to Helen of Troy, Clytemnestra's story has long been overshadowed by the traditionally maledominated narrative of the Troian War. However, in this retelling, Casati skilfully centres Clytemnestra's character, providing readers with an insightful and compelling account of the events that shaped her into Greek mythology's greatest heroine.

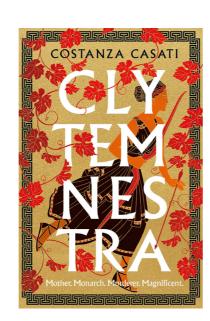
Clytemnestra is part of a current trend of classic myths being reclaimed and reimagined, focusing on the once overlooked, maligned or villainised female characters. It joins the ranks of popular feminist retellings like *Ariadne*, *Circe* and A Thousand Ships. Even before its release, the novel was steadily generating buzz and anticipation, and it has not disappointed. Within just one week of publication, it secured the number three spot on The Sunday Times' hardback fiction bestsellers

list. It has also garnered attention from prominent publications, featuring in "the best books to look out for in March," list on Waterstones' Blog and Cosmopolitan's "The best books to look forward to in 2023." With its unique perspective, Clytemnestra is establishing itself as a must-read for fans of Greek mythology.

## **Digital Marketing**

Drawing largely on influencer and social media promotion, Clytemnestra's digital marketing campaign has masterfully generated excitement for Casati's debut. On 28 September 2022, with an Instagram post consisting of a cover reveal and promotional video, Michael Joseph launched the novel's social media campaign. This post not only displayed Clytemnestra's lustrous gold cover and rose-red sprayed edges, it also drew attention to the themes of retribution and reclamation present within Casati's retelling. On Twitter, Michael Joseph has made a

particular effort to capture and post moments from Casati's impressive tour of Waterstones locations throughout England. Michael Joseph also engages with Twitter users who have posted their responses to the novel, thus encouraging more readers to share their opinions online. In their social media posts. the publisher remembers to appeal to their target audience by emphasising the powerfully feminist nature of this book. Casati has supported the digital marketing campaign by promoting the novel on



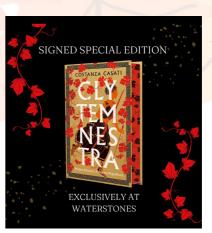
her own social media platforms. This method affords potential readers the unique opportunity to make a personal connection with both the novel and its author.

Clytemnestra's marketing team understands astute influencer marketing tactics can help to drive book sales. In recent weeks, copies of the novel have been sent to various BookTokers and Bookstagrammers. In addition to relaying the novel's merits, book influencers have posted their reactions to the beautiful promotional boxes sent by Michael Joseph.

With such a compelling digital marketing campaign, it is no surprise that *Clytemnestra* has entered bestseller lists and earned a place as one of 2023's most anticipated debuts. Of course, this marketing campaign is not limited to the digital realm. *Clytemnestra*'s marketing team have crafted an equally impressive range of in-person events to further promote the novel.

#### **Book Events**

While creating a buzz with their digital marketing, Michael Joseph also decided to take the excitement to real life with an impressive array of book events. Kicking things off at Cheltenham Literary Festival in October of last year. The marketing



team worked hard to build word of mouth buzz around this feminist retelling, encouraging Casati to meet people and sign early advanced reader copies. It might have even been at this festival, and during other collaborative meetings with booksellers, that the details of a book tour were conceptualised.

During the pandemic book tours seemed a thing of the past, and indeed the journey back has been challenging for many marketing teams. However, Michael Joseph and Costanza Casati have managed to pull off a spectacular trip touring Waterstones bookshops in different cities around England as she promotes her debut novel. The In Conversation series in partnership with Waterstones also stars a carefully selected group of guest interviewers, including other talented authors in the popular Greek mythology genre such as Claire North and Elodie Harper. And of course, each event offered

the Waterstones special editions, available to be signed and personalised by the author. With a beautiful gold cover, sprayed edges and decorative end pages, who could resist peeking inside to meet the equally electrifying story?

The marketing team have continued to promote this book with author interviews, podcast episodes (such as Apple's A Novel Evening) and ongoing support at book events. Most recently, the Feminist Book Society held a Big Feminist Book Party where Clytemnestra was given space to showcase alongside other fabulous feminist books being published this year. Such a commanding presence in bookstores and book events has no doubt contributed to the strong position this book now holds in the bestseller list.





## Not to be Overlooked

By Nayisha Patel and Gurnish Kaur

Not To Be Overlooked introduces a variety of wonderful but lesser-known books to assist readers in finding their next great reads.

This week's column covers a review of *A Pho Love Story* by Loan Le and *These are the Words* by Nikita Gill.

## A Pho Love Story by Loan Le

A Pho Love Story is a heart-warming and delightful romance novel that explores the relationship between two Vietnamese-American teenagers, Bao Nguyen and Linh Mai. The novel centres around their family-owned pho restaurants and the longstanding feud between their families, as well as their personal struggles to navigate their cultural identity and pursue their dreams.

The characters in *A Pho Love Story* are well-developed and relatable. Bao and Linh are both ambitious and passionate about their future careers, but they also face familial pressure and cultural expectations that make their journeys difficult. The author does an excellent job of capturing the nuances of Vietnamese-American culture and the challenges

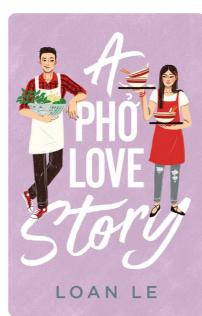
that come with navigating the intersection of two different worlds.

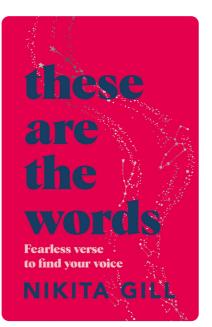
One of the most striking aspects of the novel is the vivid and evocative descriptions of food. As Bao and Linh work in their respective family's pho restaurants, the reader is treated to mouth-watering descriptions of the fragrant and flavourful dishes. The food also serves as a metaphor for the complex relationships between the characters and the traditions that bind them together. The romance between Bao and Linh is sweet and charming, and their banter is delightful. However, their relationship is not without its obstacles, as they must navigate the deepseated animosity between their families and confront their own fears and doubts.

I liked how Le explained the significance and the reasons why immigrant parents are so determined that their children choose a particular career path over others. Vietnamese-North Americans will likely relate to this story the most because it is filled with Vietnamese words and family experiences. There is a valid reason why this story is longer than the average young adult (YA) book. Le provides the

background information required for Bao and Linh's adventures throughout the book. This has elements of a YA romance, but it's not a fully developed romance narrative if that's what you're looking for. I wholeheartedly recommend this book since it deals with subjects like following your aspirations, discovering who you are, and juggling your past with the expectations of your family.

Overall, A Pho Love Story is a beautifully written and engaging novel that will leave readers feeling satisfied and uplifted. Loan Le's debut novel is a triumph, and she is sure to become a prominent voice in the world of contemporary romance.





## These are The Words by Nikita Gill

In light of International Women's Day, I have chosen to highlight the works of British-Indian Poet, Nikita Gill, Shortlisted for the Goodreads Choice Awards twice, Nikita Gill has published eight volumes of poetry. I have chosen to focus on Gill's debut YA poetry collection, These are The Words. This poetry collection is beautifully crafted and explores the love of womanhood, sisterhood, girlhood and the overall togetherness that women feel for each other.

Nikita Gill's poetry is simplistically layered. She uses the cycle of seasons, astrology and the gift of nature to express the feeling of losing love, her sexuality and being a woman. I personally love the use of nature symbolism in poetry.

Nikita Gill also touches on being a South Asian girl in a society that criticises the colour of your skin but also has deep-rooted love fabricated in culture and family. While reading this collection of poems I found myself resonating with poems such as "An Ode To The Aunties," "The Lesson" and "Your Name" deeply. A line from "Your Name" that will stick with me forever and that I think anyone with an ethnic name should hear is:

Your name is still a spell before he spoke it

Even after him,

All you must do

Is pronounce it with magic

Gill's poetry is accessible and definitely fits into the YA category. Her words are powerful yet delicate. The themes of love, heartbreak and womanhood are strong. These are The Words is a collection of poems that spread the energy of an older sister. Gill's poetry takes you on a journey to a safe and vulnerable place. It is important for young women to read Gill's poetry because she writes what she wished someone would have told her. Gill writes for girlhood and her words give an empowering energy that sometimes we forget.

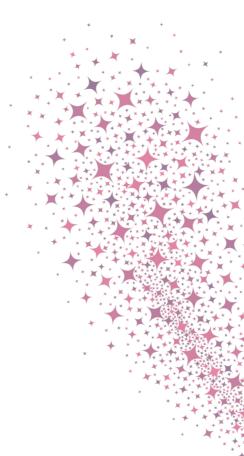
She explores different types of love whether they be romantic, platonic, friendship or self-love.

One line that sums up the feeling of Nikita Gill's poetry is:

You'll know it is love, the way

your heart knows the moon

These are The Words is the "Hymn for The Girls that Come After Us."



## Panda Book Awards 2023 Winners Announced

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By Brodie Mckenzie, Grace Briggs-Jones, Anna-Maria Poku and Clara Garnier-Barsanti

Implemented in 2008 by librarian Nadine Dewit Rosevear, the Panda Book Awards aims to reunite students, librarians, teachers for debates and recommendations; and to celebrate the joy of reading topped by the adorable logo of a panda bear holding a book: how not to love it? The shortlisted titles meet selection criteria that focus on diversity, social justice and inclusion, with a special emphasis on titles that feature Asian settings, characters or creators. Through the network of the participating international schools in China, students vote for their favourite book published in the last two years. The award is split into six categories, detailed below:

#### **Early Years**

For children between three and four, the Early Years category awards picture books. We Want A Dog is the new gold nugget by

Lo Cole, an internationally awarded author-illustrator. The minimalist drawings with an eye-catching palette take you into the story, and the twenty-seven scenes displaying all types of dogs with their antics that will keep you entertained and laughing. The final plot-twist makes it all adorable and we dare say...tail-wagging! We Want A Dog is the perfect winner of the Panda Book prize to share a fun and loving moment with our children.

## Younger

The Younger category awards titles which are aimed at young readers aged four to six. *Magic Candies* was announced the winner among the list of incredible books shortlisted in the category, which was made up of ten titles total. *Magic Candies* is a quirky picture book all about finding one's voice, and is written and illustrated by award-winning author Baek Hee-na.

#### Middle Novel

There are eight titles in the Middle Novel category, which awards books aimed at children aged between seven and ten. Topics covered include bullying, family and the importance of animal conservation. The winner this year is Cheryl Bardoe's stunning *Bei Bei Goes Home: A Panda Story*, which is made up of striking nature photographs and details international collaboration and conservation efforts.

## **Middle Graphic Novels**

With only four graphic novels competing for best Middle Reader Graphic Novel steered towards seven to eleven-year-olds, there were some interesting nominees. Jukebox by Nidini Chanani, a colourful time-travelling musical tale about family and courage; Living With Viola by Rosena Fung, an exploration of mental-health, cultural differences and the trials of middle school; Allergic

by Megan Wagner Lloyd, a coming-of-age story about a girl with severe allergies trying to find the perfect pet: and the winner. City of Dragons: The Awakening Storm by Jaimal Yogis & Vivian Truong, a story about a girl named Grace who moves to Hong Kong with her mom and gets put in a boarding school only to be given a dragon egg by an old woman which hatches. With evil forces at play. Grace must protect her dragon from mysterious forces whilst trying to understand the dragon's immense power. An edgeof-your-seat Marvel-esque graphic novel that is packed with action and a worthy winner!

#### Older

Nominees from the Older category cover a wide breadth of genre and important topics by both new, budding authors and well-established, awardwinning ones. Books in this category are aimed at children aged between eleven and fourteen. Those on the shortlist included Soul Lanterns by Shaw Kuzki and Temple Alley Summer by Sachiko Kashiwaba. Soul Lanterns is a haunting, poignant story which has been coined as "gutwrenching" (School Library Journal). The story details an age-appropriate account of Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, and its devastating consequences. Temple Alley Summer is of a different genre, covering a magical,

fantastical adventure with ghosts, a black cat and plenty of mystery. The winning novel is *Welcome to Dweeb Club* by Betsy Uhrig, which tells the fascinating story of a school club whose members stumble upon video footage of their future selves...

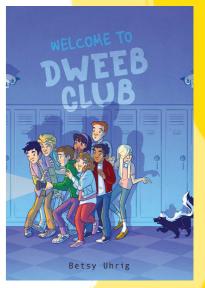
#### Mature

There were some brilliant books included in the Mature category, aimed at ages fifteen to eighteen, from How We Fall Apart by Katie Zhao to She Who Came With The Sun by Shelley Parker Chan: there was a lot of competition. The book that came out on top is Sarah Suk's Made in Korea. Suk's debut novel. Made in Korea is a romantic comedy about two competing entrepreneurial Korean American teens with lots of high school drama and touching moments. With the two protagonists butting heads and navigating the world of high school busines, s they both grow as individuals having faced some not-so-good decision making and familial pressures.

Every adult that loves to read was once a child who discovered that joy with a magical first encounter: such prizes allow children to rejoice, share, discover books, but also to celebrate with an award the creative spirits behind these works. Congratulations to all the winners!







## **Upcoming Publishing Events**

By Erin Evett, Maria Sadek and Sophie Dickinson

## In Conversation with Emmanuel Asuquo, HarperCollins Offices, London

29 March, 6pm-9pm

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to visit the HarperCollins Headquarters in London to join Emmanuel Asuguo, a well-known TV Financial Advisor and now author, to discuss his new book Get Your Money Right. This intimate book signing will explore Asuquo's childhood, his rise in financial advisory and his eventual move to becoming an author, as well as valuable tips and pieces of advice to help you better manage your money in these current times. If you're a fan of ITV's This Money, Watchdog, or The Jeremy Vine Show, you may recognise Asuquo for his financial expertise that he often shares on screen and should not pass up this opportunity to learn more about his life and new book. To find out more information, click here.

SYP Scotland 2023 Skill Seekers: Navigating the Rollercoaster World of Publishing Conference, Edinburgh Central Hall, and online

1 April, 9am-5pm

Join the Scotland SYP team for their annual spring skillseekers conference! This event is for people working in, or seeking a role in books and magazines. There are various talks throughout the day with topics including professional development. promotions and pay rises, and knowledge sessions on podcasts and audiobooks. Free digital only tickets are available for those who have been impacted by the cost of living crisis or who are from under-represented backgrounds. A full list, and tickets to the event, can be found here.

## Talk with Meg Clothier and Book Signing

2 April, 11am

Meet Meg Clothier in Waterstones, Taunton as she discusses and signs copies of her latest book, The Book of Eve. Inspured by the Voynich manuscript, it promises to be an enthralling read with themes of dark academia and feminist historical fiction. Tea and coffee will be available duirng the event. For more information, click here.

## Max Porter in conversation with Matthew Herbert

3 April, 6:30pm

Max Porter will be discussing his latest novel, *Shy*, which follows a troubled boy who is caught between the ghosts of his past and his uncertain future. He will be in conversation with Matthew Herbert, whose new book, *The Music, an Album in Words,* is all about the music of our world. For more information and ticket prices, click here.

## Meet Hayley Morris at Waterstones Manchester Arndale

3 April, 12:30pm-1:30pm

Don't miss out on the chance to meet TikTok sensation and hilarious comedian Hayley Morris as she signs copies of her bestselling book, *Me Vs Brain*. Full of cringeworthy but relatable content, *Me Vs Brain* showcases Morris' most humiliating moments as a chronic overthinker as she sets out to reassure everyone that they aren't alone in their most awkward moments. For more information, click here.

#### Max Porter Shy with Eliza Clark, Blackwells, Broad Street Oxford

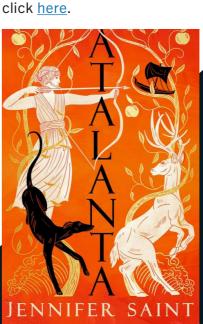
4 April, 7pm-8pm

Max Porter, author of *Grief* is The Thing With Feathers, joins Eliza Clark, author of Boy Parts, to discuss his new novel, Shy. Shy is a novel about guilt, boyhood, rage and imagination. It focuses on a few strange hours in the life of a troubled teenage boy escaping Last Chance, a home for disturbed young men. Porter is a multiple prize winning author for his previous novels, and Eliza Clark's next novel, Penance, is due to be published this July. For more information and tickets, click here.

## An Evening with Vaseem Khan, Woking Library

6 April, 6pm

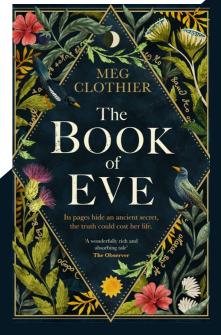
Hosted by Surrey Libraries, ioin best-selling crime fiction author Vaseem Khan as he discusses his range of fascinating novels. Khan's important work explores places like 1950s India, just a few years after independence, shining a light on events such as Gandhi's assassination and depicting a history that is often not explored in books. His series follows Inspector Persis Wadia, India's first female police detective. The first novel Midnight at Malabar House has won the Crime Writers' Association Historical Dagger and was shortlisted for the Theakston's Old Peculiar Crime Novel of the Year award. If you are a fan of cryptic puzzles and hidden clues in detective novels, make sure you visit Woking library to learn more about Khan and his work. To buy tickets and to find out more.



## An Evening of Retellings: Jennifer Saint and Laura Shepperson

12 April, 6pm-7:30pm

Join Jennifer Saint and Laura Shepperson in Waterstones. Cambridge as they discuss their new Greek mythology retellings. Saint will be talking about Atalanta, a feminist retelling about the only female Argonaut and her adventures, including the famous quest for the Golden Fleece. Shepperson's new novel, The Heroines, follows Phaedra, wife of Theseus, who accuses her stepson Hippolytus of rape. Both retellings promise to be deeply engaging, raising questions that are still relevant to us today. For more information and ticket prices, click here.

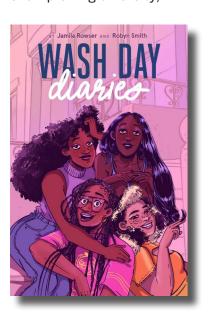


## Children's Book Recommendations for Middle Grade March & International Children's Book Day

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By Zoe Doyle, Amy Wright and Lauren Jones

To celebrate Middle Grade March and International Children's Book Day, with the latter taking place on 2 April, this issue we're recommending some of our favourite children's books that we've read recently. With controversial topics like book bans and censorship, literature for children and young adults becoming more prevalent, we thought that marking Middle Grade March and International Children's Book Day was an excellent way to highlight some of the positive aspects of children's literature like championing diversity,



helping children feel less alone, improving literacy and encouraging children to use their imaginations. Children's literature is such a diverse category that it was tough to narrow our picks down to just four. We've chosen to highlight some must-read books that we truly think deserve a place in every library, school or bookshelf.

## Wash Day Diaries by Jamila Rowser and Robyn Smith

There has been an increased interest in and appreciation for graphic novels within the publishing industry recently and it's not hard to see why. With vibrant colours and stylised illustrations to suit the mood of the story, graphic novels can transport readers into a world in a way normal books can't. Wash Day Diaries is a love letter to Black hair and sisterhood. Through five interconnected short stories featuring four best friends - Kim, Tanisha, Davene and Cookie – we explore the ups and downs of daily life in the Bronx. There is joy and love and, of course, hair care in each story as the hair routines of these women



allow the reader an intimate insight into their lives. A nominee for the Goodreads Choice Awards, this graphic novel is a great slice of life and stands out from the crowd in a victorious exploration of the daily lived experiences of young Black women, something that is so lacking in mainstream publishing.

## Starring Kitty by Keris Stainton

Starring Kitty is a charming and important LGBTQIA+ children's book that explores friendship, first love and chronic illness. The novel tells the story of Kitty, who is secretly struggling to cope with her mother's recent diagnosis of a chronic disease. Kitty is also hiding Dylan from her friends, her first crush who she is starting to fall for. When Dylan makes it clear that she is not happy to be kept as Kitty's secret, Kitty must make a decision in order to avoid losing Dylan. Kitty is a brave protagonist who you can't help but root for as she experiences falling in love for the first time, alongside the huge amount of pressure and worry that comes with her mother's illness. Stainton explores how the family come to terms with the diagnosis, and the novel raises awareness of children who have a parent with a serious chronic illness. Kitty's friends are also just as endearing, and we meet the likeable characters again in Spotlight on Sunny, the second book in this heartwarming series.



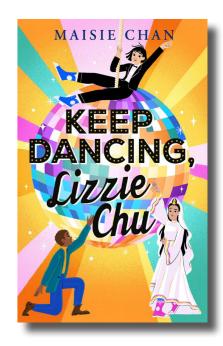
## The Goldfish Boy by Lisa Thompson

Children's books have proven to be an excellent platform to embrace diversity and celebrate our differences. The wide variety of representation in these books is vitally important for helping children to understand more about themselves as their awareness of the world around them grows. The Goldfish Boy is a great example of a book that refuses to shy away from complex topics, instead approaching them in a way that is comprehensible for younger audiences.

Living with severe OCD as a result of previous trauma, twelve-vear-old protagonist Matthew's life is ruled by his compulsive cleaning to avoid germs. His OCD means that he has been out of school and spends most of his time watching his neighbours through his bedroom window. One day, a toddler disappears. As the last person who saw the toddler. Matthew resolves to work out what really happened and along the way, finds himself empowered to try and live more fully.

## Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu by Maisie Chan

For any nine-twelve year old who loves to watch Strictly Come Dancing and is currently missing having it on their screens, *Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu* makes a great substitute. Written by Maisie



Chan, a Blue Peter Book Award shortlisted author, the book tells the story of twelve-year-old Lizzie Chu, a young carer who lives with her grandad Wai Gong, whose increasing forgetfulness and odd behaviour is starting to cause concern. Lizzie is worried and hopes that taking him to the Blackpool Tower Ballroom, somewhere her grandad has always longed to visit, will help him get better. This is an uplifting story where we are taken on Lizzie's challenging journey as she does everything, she can to make the trip happen, whilst also caring for Wai Gong and mourning her grandmother's death. An unforgettable book that will make you laugh and cry, Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu is a heart-breaking yet heartwarming read about family, love, friendship, responsibility and so much more.

## AI Generated Books

By Hayley Cadel and Maisie Clarke



It can feel like every industry is talking about AI, and publishing is no different. In this issue, we're looking at AI and its potential impact on books. What is AI, and will books be written by it in the future? AI stands for Artificial Intelligence, which is the computer simulation of human intelligence. A basic explanation is, AI is fed information and uses this information to learn, and this knowledge is used to create output. Right now, AI has many benefits across many disciplines: it can be used by students to write essays and has even produced poetry. As AI continues to advance, there is the potential for it to branch into producing books.

Launched in November 2022, ChatGPT is an advanced chatbot that is designed to respond to textbased queries and generate natural language responses. Chatbot technology is already used to provide automated customer service, but it can now be used to summarise texts or create content. ChatGPT can generate text based on a prompt, such as a question or statement, and therefore it is now being used to create books on Amazon. Many books discuss how to use ChatGPT to increase productivity and earn money, with one book offering to teach authors how to use ChatGPT to elevate their fiction. However, there is also a lighthearted element to this, with books such as 100 Witty & Odd Poems About Everything and Nothing, which uses ChatGPT to write poems in the style of 100 famous people. Whilst the technology has the potential to be exciting and potentially save costs for a notoriously risk-averse publishing industry, we will go on to talk about some of the potential drawbacks and concerns.

An interesting example of an Al generated book is the children's book *Alice* and *Sparkle*, credited to Ammaar Reshi. The story goes, Reshi was playing around with ChatGPT and realised it could be used to write children's books. Within a couple of days, he had published a twelvepage picture book, printed it and started selling it on Amazon. In *Alice and Sparkle*, a young girl builds her own artificial intelligence robot that becomes sentient. gaining self-awareness and the capability to make its own decisions. Reshi's story promotes this idea of churning out books as an easy way of generating income. Whilst using AI in this way is impressive, it also sparks a debate on the ethics of using it in this way.

However, there are key criticisms of AI; one being that it uses the hard work of creatives to learn how to emulate them, whilst posing as a potential replacement for authors. There are also no current reimbursements for authors when their work is used as AI training material. Another key criticism is that there are currently no rules around crediting AI, which therefore means that readers may be unaware that they are reading AI generated text. Not crediting the author can also be a problem when potential lawsuits ensue. when AI creates problematic content or content with errors or information which has been plagiarised. More generally, readers are often suspicious of content written by AI; when internet sources put Al disclaimers on their articles, a swift backlash ensues. And whilst AI can summarise texts well and collate sources to write articles well, it cannot

comment on information it hasn't been fed, nor can it draw intelligent conclusions on historical trends unless those conclusions have been made before. There is also a morality attached to writing, which AI does not harbour. Writers, on the whole, care - they endeavour to write truthful content to inform their reader – but AI does not have a conscience and may not be able to detect this nuance. The idea that AI can only generate content based on what it is fed may also result in a lack of originality.

When books are discussed, it is also with a level of purity. which readers often don't like to taint with capitalism, and this extends to the role of the author. However. the potential for Al-written books is a discussion worth engaging with. While there are valid criticisms, there is also the potential for Al to create more relevant content in a more timely manner. As AI continues to gain intelligence, it may only be a matter of time until it is competing in the marketplace. However, whether interest in books written in this manner will wane, only time will tell!



# **Upskilling Tips: Publishing in Ireland**



By Meghan Capper, Misha Manani and Joe Pilbrow

One of the regions rarely spoken about in the publishing industry tends to be Ireland. It has a small publishing scene, unlike London and Oxford. Consequently, there is a lack of awareness about the sector and regional work opportunities. However, there is a demand from people in this area hoping to pursue a career in publishing without moving to another part of the UK. The Upskilling team shares various job openings, the top publishing resources and advice for working in Ireland. We hope this equips you with the knowledge and tools to take your next steps!

## Work Experience and Internship Opportunities/ Companies

Publishing Ireland: This membership network represents book publishers throughout Ireland and aims to share resources, training and opportunities. They run a variety of training courses on everything from book pitches

and selling book rights to advertising on TikTok. The organisation also has a careers page for current vacancies at Irish publishing companies.

#### The Black Staff Press:

Located in County Down, this leading <u>publisher</u> of Irish books covers a range of genres from fiction, non-fiction, memoirs, autobiographies, historical and political. Although there are no live internships currently on their page, keep an eye out on their Twitter and Facebook where they have previously posted vacancies.

No Alibis Press: This Belfastbased indie press evolved from the No Alibis bookstore and is proud to represent books with strong voices and "attitudes." Although they have not advertised any internship opportunities, they have had vacancies in their store for bookseller positions which could be a useful foot in the door!

Penguin Ireland: Although there are no Northern Ireland offices, Sandycove is the leading Irish-based publishing imprint at <u>Penguin</u> Random House in Dublin.

#### **Indie Presses in Ireland:**

There are a variety of independent presses outside of Northern Ireland that are worth looking into. For example, Dublin-based New Island Books focuses on literary fiction and Irishinterest non-fiction. Bullaun Press in Gallway represent literature in translation and are currently looking for a part-time publicity assistant. The Lilliput Press specialise in biography, historical nonfiction and memoir. Finally, The Stinging Fly Press Imprint/Magazine; lovers of short stories and champions of emerging writers.

## Organisations and Resources

#### Pathways - Northern Ireland: This is a two-year training

This is a two-year training and mentoring programme for LGBTQIA+ sixteen-twenty-six-year-olds interested in publishing inclusive and diverse children's books. They learn about the publishing process from leading experts and finish by launching

their publishing enterprise. It started in December 2022 and will end in 2024, but there could be another cohort following its completion, so keep an eye on application dates.

## The Society of Young Publishers (SYP) Ireland:

They host a variety of events and socials in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Sign up for their newsletter!

#### **Queens University Belfast:**

There is a dedicated <u>careers</u> <u>page</u> for students interested in publishing. This includes two organisations; <u>The</u> <u>Publishing Training Centre</u> and <u>Professional Publishers</u> <u>Association (PPA)</u>. They also have blogs with different roles in the sector.

The National Collection of Northern Ireland Publications (NIPR): On the Resources for Authors page, they have a list of organisations, e.g. The Editors' and Proofreaders' Alliance of Northern Ireland (EPANI), and a list of Northern Ireland publishers. There are even some bookshops where you could work or volunteer for

the experience or visit to understand the bookselling scene.

#### **Libraries - Northern Ireland:**

Libraries are great places to understand what consumers are reading. You can find your nearest library in Northern Ireland. They hold general events, some for World Book Day and virtual webinars. If you are not a member yet, join here!

#### **Top Tips**

Network: Reach out to those in the industry on LinkedIn, create opportunities by applying speculatively to publishers, attend bookish events and author talks, and keep up to date with industry news on Twitter.

#### Volunteer at bookshops:

There are a bunch of great bookshops in Northern Ireland for you to develop your bookselling skills such as No Alibis, Keats and Chapman, The Bookwell, Bookfinders, ICM Books, Little Acorns Bookstore and The Secret Bookshelf. Do your research: Tailoring your reading and showing you have researched regional Irish literature is a great way to demonstrate your passion for the local publishing scene. Make sure you're aware of up-and-coming Irish writers and talent which is a good way to showcase your knowledge and interest in interviews.

Festivals: Volunteering at local book festivals across Ireland is a valuable way to show your passion for books. Here are some that may be local to you: Belfast Book Festival, International Literature Festival Dublin, Dublin Book Festival, Cork World Book Festival, Festival of Writing & Ideas (Co. Carlow), Limerick Literary Festival.

Thank you for reading issue sixty-eight! Join us again for issue sixty-nine, where we will cover Upskilling Tips for London Book Fair.

## The Inklusion Guide: Making Literature Events Accessible for Disabled People



By JOANNE BOUSTEAD

Co-founded by Julie Farrell and Ever Dundas. Inklusion was created in response to the rapid increase in access and inclusion in the arts that was triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and implores that the creative industry continues to improve accessibility for disabled people. Organisers repeatedly claim that they do not have the resources to plan accessible events, and this has not only served as a barrier to disabled people who wish to attend these events but has also been disproved by the industry's fast response to the pandemic.

In 2022, Inklusion partnered with Penguin Random House UK to design and deliver an accessible and comprehensive access guide for UK literary organisations to use when planning inperson, online and hybrid events. Designed to take the "emotional labour off disabled individuals" to educate event's organisers on accessibility needs, the Inklusion Guide has been directly informed by disabled

writers and other disabled people working within the publishing industry. Current research into accessibility in publishing provides a supportive foundation for the guide. The demand and support for this free resource has seen Inklusion receive funding from the Edinburgh International Book Festival, as well as other sponsors such as Hachette UK and the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS). Find out who else is sponsoring the Inklusion Guide here.

Launched in print and PDF on 10 March, the Inklusion Guide features four handy sections on accessibility for authors and audiences, as well as how to fund access provisions and employing disabled staff. Additional formats (large print, easy read, braille, BSL video and audio) will be launched soon.

## Investigating Language

The Inklusion Guide opens with an explanation of the language used within the guide and addresses how non-disabled people often worry about what language

to use and the fear of "saying the wrong thing." The guide plainly states that "disabled" is not a "dirty word" and is often only considered as such by non-disabled people who believe it to be shameful. Identity-first language (e.g. "disabled person") is often preferred to person-first language (e.g. "person with a disability") by the disabled community the Inklusion Guide reminds the reader that, when referring to disabled people. identity-first language should be the default.

Throughout the guide, the word "disabled" is used for simplicity and to encompass a wide range of people, including but not limited to, those who are neurodivergent, deaf and chronically ill. The definition of "disabled" and the foundation of the Inklusion Guide is based upon the Social Model of Disability, which was created to directly challenge the traditional Medical Model of Disability – this model often views disabled people as needing charitable assistance and that they have a medical problem that needs to be prevented, cured or contained. Although the Inklusion Guide refers to the Social Model, it is important to note that not all disabled people (for example, those with chronic illnesses) believe that this model fully realises their experience, as even if societal barriers were to be removed, their impairments mean they would still be disabled, and the guide acknowledges this.

#### **Access for Authors**

According to the Royal Society of Literature's 'A Room Of My Own' Report, 74% of writers who are disabled or have a longterm health condition have a lack of income or expectation. This section covers provisions for general events and discusses how "disability narratives are overwhelmingly white." There is also advice on accommodation and travel provision for in-person events, as well as guidance on specific online and in-person events (author networking and career development events form integral examples in the guide).

#### **Access for Audiences**

Did you know that businesses lose approximately £2 billion a month by ignoring the needs of disabled people? "Access for Audiences" shows that by being accessible, businesses can increase audience outreach and engagement, as well as increase the demand for books by disabled authors in turn businesses are then supporting disabled authors to write more books and helping to facilitate positive change! Consider your marketing and advertising approach: are you using a range of formats to promote inclusivity? Have you considered the socioeconomic barriers that are preventing people from accessing online, as well as in-person, events?

## How to Fund Access Provision

Most organisers and businesses claim that a lack of money prevents them from providing good accessibility at events. This section provides a brilliant and creative checklist for businesses to use when trying to generate funds to increase accessibility. It urges you to find solutions and to build-in access plans and budgets from the very beginning in order to save money and ensure a welcoming event for all disabled people.

#### **Employ Disabled Staff**

The Access Denied report shows just how inaccessible the industry can be to publishing hopefuls and jobseekers – 40% of disabled publishing jobseekers have found a publishing industry event inaccessible. Disabled people have a legal right to be supported in employment and the Inklusion Guide provides an abundance of ways to support disabled employees.

It is vital that we continue to push and advocate for accessibility in the creative industry. Read the Inklusion Guide for yourself here!

## Special Thanks Sinéad Molony

#### **Editorial**

Clare Huxley
Vicki Mileson
Joanne Boustead
Sara Harris
Hayley Cadel
Olga Bialasik
Charlotte Ashton
Abby Donaldson
Radhika Ghosh
Lexie Mladenovic
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Chelsea Graham
Gemma Zucchi
Alice van Raalte
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Katie Watters
Jennifer McDowall
Valeria Barbon
Ivana Ivancic
Sanvari Malik
Gabriel Hidalgo
Olivia Houston
Emma McInnes
Katia Fernandez Mayo

#### **Proofreaders**

Asya Gadzheva

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Isabel Blatch
Emily Bevis
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Maia Martin
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Larua Hasson

#### **Editorial Co-Ordinator**

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**Serena Tutt** 

#### **Article Production**

Vicki Mileson

#### **Design Co-Ordinator**

Asya Gadzheva

#### **Production Editor**

**Kaitlyn Mannix** 

#### **Editor in Chief**

Chelsea Graham

## Contributors