

LESTER LITERARY AGENCY & ASSOCIATES



FICTION SPRING 2022

Russia

Ukraine

Belarus

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RECENT SUCCESSES

Ananda Devi
LE RIRE DES DÉESSES
(The Laugh of Goddesses)
 Grasset, September 2021, 224 pages



- ◇ Awarded the Prix Femina des Lycéens 2021
- ◇ Previous titles translated into Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, English, Polish, Slovenian, Swedish, Romanian, Slovenian.
- ◇ Longlisted for the Prix Fémina and the Prix Décembre 2021.
- ◇ With a writing style that is at once cutting and poetic, Ananda Devi returns in this book to speak about the country of her ancestors, and its age-old culture still ruled by rigid codes and castes...
- ◇ In transporting us to other side of the globe, she leads us back to ourselves and to those questions that are being asked across every one of our societies.

Through this portrait of Indian culture, Ananda Devi, with the intensity for which she is renowned, delves deep into the burning questions of our times: a woman's place, and how transgender women fit within it, the kingdom of men and the sisterhood, religious extremism, paedophilia, religion, rage and love.

In the north of India, in an impoverished town in Uttar Pradesh, is The Alley where the prostitutes work. This is where Veena lives with her twelve-year-old daughter, Chinti, whom the local women have taken under their wing. And none more than Sadhana, a hijra, a woman feared and rejected by society for having been born with the body of a man. These three lives are turned upside down when a client, Shivanth, a monk who enjoys getting exalted in his temple, falls in love with Chinti and kidnaps her. Convinced he has found the daughter of a goddess capable of rendering him divine, he takes her off on a pilgrimage to Varanasi.

Not for a moment would he have suspected that on his heels were two representatives of the very lowest castes - a whore and a hijra, Veena and Sadhana – who have set out to get Chinti back, and to end Shivanth's life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ananda Devi is an ethnologist, translator and writer, and is considered one of the central figures of Mauritian literature. She has published numerous collections of poems, short stories and novels, including ÈVE DE SES DÉCOMBRES (2006, Prix des Cinq Continents and Prix RFO) and LE SARI VERT (2010, Prix Louis Guilloux). Her last novel, MANGER L'AUTRE (2018), was likewise published to high public and critical acclaim.

Claire Berest
ARTIFICES
(Fireworks)
 Stock, August 2021, 432 pages



- ◇ English sample available.
- ◇ Rights sold: Italy (Neri Pozza). UK (Leopard Press).
- ◇ Option in Hungary (Libri Publishing), Israel (Keter), Kuwait (Dar Kalamat), Lithuania (Alma Littera) and Taiwan (Sun Color Culture).
- ◇ By the 2020 Grand Prix des Lectrices ELLE awarded-author.
- ◇ A heart-stopping investigation with a shockingly unexpected resolution.

A cop who collects orchids in his Paris apartment. Mysterious, unauthorised artistic performances in the capital's major museums... What if crime were an art?

Why has the exemplary police officer Abel Bac been suspended?

Who illegally took a horse into the Pompidou Centre?

Who dropped off copies of a newspaper outside Abel's apartment, a newspaper featuring the same horse?

What tragic past event are these strange coincidences reminding him of?

This series of disturbances will lead him inexorably to Mila, a mysterious and anonymous international artist who stirs up crowds and the world of contemporary art with her confrontational performances. Caught in the eye of the storm, the suspended police officer tentatively investigates, helped – whether he wants it or not – by Camille, a colleague concerned by his unexplained absence, and Elsa, a neighbour who turns up at his door one evening blind drunk.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Claire Berest is the author of many novels that have enjoyed public and critical acclaim, including BELLEVUE (Stock, 2016) as well as GABRIËLE, co-written with her sister Anne Berest. Her 2019 book RIEN N'EST NOIR, a colourful depiction of the love story between Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera (100,000 copies sold), was translated into 8 languages and won the Elle magazine readers' prize.

"A gigantic and multicolored firework" - Page des libraires

RECENT SUCCESSES

Pierric Bailly
LE ROMAN DE JIM
(The Novel of Jim)
POL, March 2021, 256 pages



- ◇ **17,000 copies sold**
- ◇ **One of the BEST NOVELS OF THE YEAR 2021** by both the **Magazine Littéraire** and **Sens Critique**.

The novel is set in peripheral France», describing the resourcefulness, the precarious work, the small trafficking and staggering existences.

At twenty-five, after an undesired separation and time in jail, Aymeric strives to make contact with the outside world. He comes across Florence at a concert, with whom he had worked several years earlier. Florence has just turned forty, is six months pregnant and single. Aymeric attends the birth of the child and, during the first years of his life, brings him up as his father. The three live together in harmony, in the middle of the wilderness, between vast valleys and pine forests. Up until the day Christophe, the biological father, reappears.

Aymeric will be separated from Jim and suffer from a situation he can do nothing about. But is he really trying to find a solution for the problem? All the way through, he remains obsessed by the child he saw being born and whom he raised, only to be taken away from him; yet he never knows how to observe the right distance or occupy the right place.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Pierric Bailly was born in 1982 in the Jura area of France. He is the author of five novels, all published by P.O.L. L'HOMME DES BOIS ('The Man of the Forests') was nominated to the Prix du Livre Inter and was awarded the Prix Blu/Jean-Marc Roberts in 2017. His novel LES ENFANTS DES AUTRES ('Other People's Children') is currently being adapted for the cinema.

"This novel about absence, about the passing of time, regrets and retained confessions, is simply heart-wrenching down to the last pages, overwhelming and comforting" – *Le Figaro*

"With great modesty, Pierric Bailly describes life built on the fringes of the traditional family model." – *RTS Culture*

"A beautiful book read straight through with a lump in the throat [...] A great melodrama, always in balance between emotion and modesty." – *Sud Ouest*

"Loving forever a boy who is not his son: Pierric Bailly unveils with finesse the complexity of emotions wherever life brings us. (...) The author shows social determinism without pouring into misery. There's a total lack of clichés in this portrait of a man on the edge of marginality." – *Les Inrockuptibles*

Kim Thúy
Ru
(Ru)
Librex, 2009, 142 pages



- ◇ **A bestselling title in Quebec and France.**
- ◇ **Translated into 28 languages!**
- ◇ **Literary awards:** Canada's prestigious Governor General's Award in 2010, the 2010 Grand prix RTL-Lire at the Paris Book Fair, Italy's Premio Mondello per la Multiculturalità Award in 2011 and the 2011 Archambault Literary Award.
- ◇ **Was also shortlisted for the Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie Award in 2010 and a finalist in 2012 for the esteemed Giller Prize, awarded to Canada's best book.**
- ◇ **The English translation won the Canada Reads book battle in 2015 and was proclaimed "the" book to read in Canada that year.**

Ru is a mosaic of very short stories that play off each other the way a wind chime jingles in the breeze. The first sentence of a chapter tends to pick up on the idea where the previous chapter left off, bridging the gap between the events the narrator experiences in her life: born in Vietnam during the war, she and her family flee their home with the boat people and are welcomed as refugees in a small town in Quebec. She later goes on to higher education, starts a family and discovers life with an autistic child. The writer pens a tale of a life filled with charming, unique characters and a happy-go-lucky approach to the most absurdly challenging of situations, tugging expertly at the reader's heart strings.

RECENT SUCCESSES

Maria Pourchet
FEU
(Fire)
Fayard, August 2021, 360 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Rizzoli), Slovakia (Inaque), Germany (btb Luchterhands), Korea (Gimm-Young) Czech Republic (Odeon / Euromedia).**
- ◇ **20,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Running for 4 literary prizes, the Prix Renaudot 2021, the Prix de Flore, the Prix Interallié and the Prix Décembre.**
- ◇ **Hailed for her unique and remarkable prose, Maria Pourchet is one of the most powerful feminine voices in French literature today.**
- ◇ **The author achieves the seemingly impossible: to write a love story that is also a suspense novel. For as she herself says, writing about love necessarily means writing about fear. And indeed from the first lines, the novel is infused with a palpable sense of tension and unease.**

The story of Laure (40) and Clément (50), two Parisians whose lives feel lacklustre. In nervous and sharp prose, Maria Pourchet offers us a vivid, powerful, and humorous novel about love, which is terrifyingly more serious and more dangerous than we think.

Laure is a university Professor who is married and the mother of two daughters. Outwardly her life seems happy and conventional, but internally she feels restless and trapped. Clément is single and lives alone with his beloved elderly dog. He works in finance, which he finds soulless, and feels unmotivated and misunderstood both personally and professionally. When the two meet and begin an affair, they both hope that the passion of their illicit partnership will be the catalyst for change. What they hadn't counted on, however, is the intrusion of Laure's teenage daughter Véra, who secretly involves herself in their relationship by spying on them and ultimately answering a personal ad to become Clément's dog sitter.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Maria Pourchet's previous book was an unforgettable narrative non-fiction title TOUTES LES FEMMES SAUF UNE, published by Pauvert in 2018, a powerful feminist text about maternity that advocates the need for sisterhood and solidarity amongst women. She is also the author of 4 previous novels with Gallimard.

Abel Quentin
LE VOYANT D'ÉTAMPES
(The Seer of Etampes)
L'Observatoire, August 2021, pages



- ◇ **Awarded the Prix Maison Rouge 2021.**
- ◇ **Awarded the Prix De Flore 2021.**
- ◇ **30,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Spain (Libros del Asteroide), Italy (E/O Edizioni), Latvia (Zvaigzne), Slovakia (Inaque).**
- ◇ **Was longlisted for the Prix Goncourt 2021, Prix André Malraux, Prix Renaudot, Prix Femina and the Prix Blù Jean-Marc Roberts.**
- ◇ **Coup de cœur by Frédéric Beigbeder : « l'éclosion d'un écrivain extraordinaire ».**

The Seer of Etampes portrays, with a deliciously acidic humor, the portrait of a carefree generation in the early 80's, that wore its hair long and its evanescent ideals on its sleeve.

In the early 1980s, Jean Roscoff was a promising young intellectual: a graduate of the Ecole Normale Supérieure, an activist with SOS Racisme, and a dandy in his spare time. Thirty-five years later, he is a divorced, alcoholic, retired university teacher. He decided to resume the work of his youth on a mysterious American poet who was a friend of Sartre and Beauvoir before killing himself at the wheel of his car, deep in the Essonne region, in the early 1960s. He then set about writing The Seer of Etampes, an essay that he saw as his last chance. But as soon as the book was published, a blog post criticized him for not mentioning that the poet was black. From then on, social networks and the media went wild, and the descent into hell began. Accused of racism, harassed on the Internet and in his daily life, Jean Roscoff finds himself at the heart of a controversy that he cannot control. Overwhelmed, he has not seen the era change and his universalist ideals questioned in favor of a more radical struggle.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Abel Quentin is a lawyer and the author of an acclaimed first novel, Soeurs (selected for the Goncourt Prize and finalist for the Goncourt des lycéens Prize in 2019).

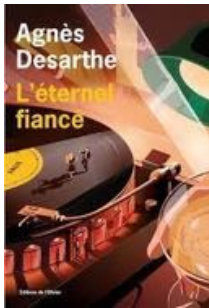
« Cet héritier de Balzac a plus d'un tour dans son sac. » L'Express

« Une authentique fresque romanesque, grinçante autant que tendre parfois, navrée et en prise directe avec notre temps. Le talent de Quentin y éclate à chaque page. » Livres Hebdo

« L'auteur réussit l'exploit d'embrasser dans un roman les questions les plus brûlantes de notre époque. » Lire

RECENT SUCCESSES

Agnès Desarthe
L'ÉTERNEL FIANCÉ
(The Forever Fiancé)
L'Olivier, August 2021, 256 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold in: Bulgaria (Enthusiast).**
- ◇ **Shortlisted for the Prix Goncourt 2021 and the Prix Renaudot 2021.**
- ◇ **An author with regular sales, whose every novel is eagerly awaited. Recent successes: Ce cœur changeant: 45,000 copies / La chance de leur vie: 31,300 copies.**
- ◇ **A moving, beautifully written text with powerful themes: family, love, a woman's destiny.**

A brilliant new novel from Agnès Desarthe's: a woman explores her life by going back in time, guided by her passion for music.

In the wedding hall, a declaration of love is exchanged and a lifelong bond is formed. The lovers are a four-year-old boy and girl. Years later, in college, they meet again. She, the narrator, recognizes him. He, Étienne, has forgotten her. Yet she keeps deep inside the promise she made herself to love him forever. They live, each, their own lives. Music inhabits her, while he has a passion for a young woman. Antonia, which carries him towards creation. For her, it's family, extraordinary people, music lovers; we fall out, we shout, but we remain united. Him, it's a drama: Antonia dies while giving birth to their daughter. Life brings them back to each other at the strongest moments of their lives. And, always, the narrator listens to Etienne, who never remembers her first name. But that doesn't matter... One day, they will meet again in an orchestra, and perhaps, on that day, the smuggler, the eternal lover, will be able to resume the course of her destiny. She will have been faithful to this man desired by all women.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Agnès Desarthe was born in 1966. Novelist, she has published among others: UN SECRET SANS IMPORTANCE (Prix du livre Inter 1996), DANS LA NUIT BRUNE (Prix Renaudot des lycéens 2010) or Une partie de chasse, as well as many works for young people. She has also published an essay on Virginia Woolf with Geneviève Brisac, V.W. LE MÉLANGE DES GENRES and an autobiographical essay COMMENT J'AI APPRIS À LIRE (Stock, 2013). CE COEUR CHANGEANT (L'Olivier, 2015), won the Prix Littéraire du Monde and LA CHANCE DE LEUR VIE (L'Olivier, 2018) was a great bestseller.

Clara Dupont Monod
S'ADAPTER
(Adapting)
Stock, August 2021, 196 pages



- ◇ **Awarded the Prix Femina 2021, Prix Goncourt des Lycéens 2021, Prix Landerneau des lecteurs 2021, Prix Goncourt de l'Orient 2021**
- ◇ **200,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Clichy), Germany (Piper), Spain (catalan Les Hores, castilian Salamandra), Greece (Psychogios), Taiwan (Marco Polo), Brazil (Dublinense), Croatia (Znanje, at auction), the Netherlands (Meulenhoff, at auction), Portugal (Presença), Russia (Polyandra No Age), Saudi Arabia (Dar Athar WAL, at auction), United Kingdom (MacLehose Press, WEL)**
- ◇ **A wonderful, luminous book.**

A child born with disabilities turns the whole family dynamic upside down and redefines his siblings' lives.

This is the story of a dark-eyed child lost in a hazy limbo, a child forever bedridden, an eternal baby, a maladjusted child who creates a boundary between his family and other people. It is the story of his place in the household he's born into, surrounded by burgeoning nature and protective mountains, of his place within this deeply shaken family. The eldest child connects with him, is close to him, and loses himself in the process. His sister develops feelings of disgust and anger. And lastly, the baby of the family who comes later, after his disabled brother has died, after the older two have left, and who lives in the shadow of family ghosts but still brings hope of reconciliation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Clara Dupont-Monod has a degree in ancient French. She is a journalist and has written several novels, including LE ROI DISAIT QUE J'ÉTAIS DIABLE, which sold over 60,000 copies. She has been haunted by Eleanor of Aquitaine for many years.

"A breathtaking book about self-knowledge and the strength of sibling bonds" – Page des libraires

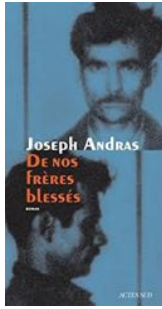
"Clara Dupont-Monod relates the power of sibling bonds, the ambivalence towards difference and humans' extraordinary capacity to adapt" – Page des libraires

"A deeply moving book written in an intense and vivid style" – Le Parisien

"Clara Dupont-Monod approaches the theme of disabilities with delicacy in this deeply moving book" – Le Parisien

RECENT SUCCESSES

Joseph Andras
DE NOS FRÈRES BLESSÉS
(Our Brothers in Pain)
Actes Sud, May 2016, 144 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: Barzakh (Algeria), Fazi (Italy), Hanser Berlin (Germany), Protou (Greece), Sophia (Slovenia), Verso (UK - word English), Antigona (Portugal), Ithaki (Turkey), Afers (Spain).
- ◇ 30,000 copies sold in France
- ◇ Adapted for the cinema. The film will be released in March 2022 in France (<http://diaphana.fr/film/de-nos-freres-blesses/>).

In this novel fraught with the exigencies of justice, Joseph Andras' intense, lyrical style betrays great admiration for its protagonists, and provides a heart-rending condemnation of the death penalty.

Algiers, 1956. Fernand Iveton is a young communist who has joined to the nationalist cause against French colonialism in Algeria. He has a mission to bomb his factory, but the bomb does not detonate. For his victimless, symbolic act of defiance, he is sentenced to death. Before he Fernand Iveton became a terrorist - or hero, depending on people's point of view – however, the young rebel was an everyday human being with friends, a wife, and a normal life. He was also an idealist with a deep love for his homeland and a passionate desire to help free his fellow man from oppression.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1984, Joseph Andras is the author a well-received debut novel, *De nos frères blessés* (Actes Sud, 2016, adapted for the cinema in 2021 by Héliér Cisterne), a poetic text, *S'il ne restait qu'un chien* (Actes Sud, 2017), and an essay, *Kanaky. Sur les traces d'Alphonse Dianou* (Actes Sud, 2018). He regularly writes profiles of poets for *L'Humanité* and contributes to various online current affairs and culture platforms including regards.fr and lundi.am.

Pascal Janovjak
LE ZOO DE ROME
(Rome Zoo)
Actes Sud, April 2019, 256 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: Italy (Casagrande), Germany (Lenos), World English (Black Inc), Romania (Tracus Arte). Under offer in Serbia.
- ◇ A fascinating historical exploration of the Rome zoo, packed with fun facts and anecdotes throughout history, wars, politics, fashion and ideas.
- ◇ The author stages with a sweet irony and a real tenderness, a gallery of characters all linked to the zoo for the best and the worst.

Through a century of existence of the zoo of Rome, Pascal Janovjak tells the evolution of our relationship with animals, taking us into the alleys of a now controversial place, which remains a place of wonder for children, but disturbing for adults.

Inaugurated in 1911, the Rome zoo owes its architectural distinctiveness to the boldness of Hagenbeck. First and foremost a merchant, he supplied circuses and zoos with wild animals. But Hagenbeck was also one of the first champions of training animals humanely and of zoos without cages. It was from this perspective that he conceived of a new approach to zoological parks in general and to the zoo of Rome in particular. In this book, the reader is immersed in the history of this extraordinary garden which takes in the story of Raffaele de Vico, the architect who created an aviary reminiscent of an observatory, a Swiss sculptor of genius who was half- mad, Mussolini and his pet lioness, the pope, and the writer Salman Rushdie, as well as a host of other characters. The reader is also introduced to a man and a woman who were destined to meet each other: Giovanna, who has been in charge of marketing at the zoo since 2010, and Chahine, an architect who gives up his day job after being drawn by the strangeness of the buildings which connects with his own eventful past.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1975 in Basel of a French mother and a Slovakian father, Pascal Janovjak studied comparative literature and art history in Strasbourg and then departed to the Middle East, first to Jordan as a development aid volunteer and then to Lebanon, where he teaches literature at the University of Tripoli. His books include *COLÉOPTÈRES, RECUEIL DE POÈMES EN PROSE* (Samizdat, Geneva, 2007), *L'INVISIBLE, ROMAN* (Buchet-Chastel, Paris, 2009) and *À TOI, RÉCITS CROISÉS* with Kim Thuy (Liana Levi, Paris, 2011), which has been translated into Slovakian, Serbian and Romanian.

RECENT SUCCESSES

Christian Niemiec & Ludovic Manchette ALABAMA 1963

(Alabama 1963)

Le Cherche Midi, August 2020, 384 pages



- ◇ Full English translation available.
- ◇ 25,000 copies sold.
- ◇ Winner of the Prix du Jury du premier roman de la ville de Mennecey
- ◇ Long-listed on the Prix des lecteurs L'Odysée Long-listed on the Prix Saint-Renan Short-listed on the Prix Ouest
- ◇ It reads like a genuine American novel, reminiscent in its accomplished storytelling of Joël Dicker, with the verve and the humor of Peter Farrelly's Green Book.
- ◇ A duet as improbable as it is endearing. The realistic contrast between the characters makes the strength of the book.

Birmingham, Alabama, 1963. The body of a young black girl is found but the white investigating officers pay the crime little heed. And then other little girls start to disappear.

Bud Larkin, a cranky, alcoholic and racist ex-cop turned private detective, is hired to look into the case by the father of the first victim. Adela for her part is a black and illiterate widow who works as a cleaning lady. Circumstances conspire to oblige these two very different people to put up with each other and work together.

More than a simple crime novel, Alabama, 1963 is a portrait of 1960s America with segregation, the Ku Klux Klan and Kennedy's assassination as a backdrop.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Christian Niemiec and Ludovic Manchette are translators who adapt into French the dialogues of mainly American TV series and films. ALABAMA 1963 is their debut novel.

Juliette Morillot LES ORCHIDÉES ROUGES DE SHANGHAI

(Red Orchids of Shanghai)

Presses de la Cité, Juillet 2021, 500 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: Bulgaria (Ciela), Italy (Newton & Compton), Czech Republic (Euromedia).
- ◇ The new edition of a successful novel sold up to 120.000 copies and translated into 5 languages (all rights are available now)

An impressive novel, with a powerful emotional force, which sheds light on a little-known page of history: comfort women. The new edition of the bestseller based on a true story published 20 years ago.

From 1930 to the present day, the true story of a Korean comfort woman, one of these women forced into slavery to entertain the Japanese soldiers during their invasion of Korea. An impressive novel, with a powerful emotional force, which sheds light on a little-known page of history. By a specialist of Korea.

The tragic, moving and authentic story – written in the first person – of Sangmi, a fourteen-year-old Korean girl forcibly enlisted by Japanese soldiers in 1930 during the colonization of Korea. She becomes one of those comfort women trapped as sex slaves, living in the hell of military brothels. Her daily life was filled with horror: dozens of sexual assaults a day, the cruelty of the men, honor swallowed up, separation from her family. But Sangmi endures outrage and humiliation because of her courage, her strength of character and the secret hope of one day finding the trail of her unknown father, a Frenchman, whom her mother disowned forever ... From Manchuria to Shanghai, via Singapore and Hiroshima, Sangmi's destiny is, despite her will, intimately linked to that of the Japanese conquest.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Juliette Morillot is passionate about the Far East and particularly the two Koreas. She spent a lot of time there. Lecturer, journalist, writer, she has already published several books on the topic, including LE PALAIS DE LA COLLINE AUX NUAGES, (Plon, 1993). LA CORÉE DU NORD EN 100 QUESTIONS written with Dorian Malovic (Tallandier, 2016), awarded the Axentis/Conflits best geopolitical novel prize in 2018, LE MONDE SELON KIM JONG-UN, with Dorian Malovic (Robert Laffont, 2018).

RECENT SUCCESSES

Fatima Daas
LA PETITE DERNIÈRE
(Baby Girl)
Libella, September 2020, 192 pages



- ◇ English sample available.
- ◇ 35,000 copies sold.
- ◇ Rights sold: USA (The Other Press), Germany (Claassen Verlag), Castilian (Cabaret Voltaire), Catalans (Llibres del 9 Angle), Denmark (Grif Bokförlag), Italy (Fandango Libri), UK (Hope Road), Sweden (Verbal Förlag), Turkey (Can Yayinlari), Brazil (Bazar dô Tempo).
- ◇ Awarded the prestigious Internationaler Literaturpreis for its German translation.

Fatima is in her twenties and has to conceal a terrible secret. She is a practicing Muslim, and a homosexual. An unspeakable orientation in her environment.

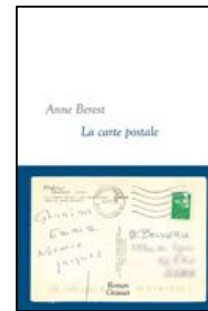
My name is Fatima Daas. I'm the *mazozija*, the baby of the family. The one no one was expecting. I was born by C-section. I'm French. With Algerian roots. A practicing Muslim. I live in Clichy, a working-class suburb, and spend more than three hours a day in public transportation. I'm a tourist. A woman from the projects who observes Parisian mentalities and behavior. I'm a liar and a sinner. As a teen, I was a turbulent student. As an adult, I'm seriously mal-adjusted. I write about other people's lives to avoid living my own. I feel like I'm living a double life. I spent four years in therapy. It was the longest relationship I've ever had. My connection to other people is unstable. I need to control myself. I need to control my emotions. I need to control other people. I think I'm polyamorous. Love is taboo at home, as are manifestations of tenderness or sexuality. I don't like boys, but I like their accessories. At age 25, I met Nina Gonzalez.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Fatima Daas was born in 1995. She grew up in a working-class suburb where her parents have lived since they immigrated from Algeria. The last child in a large family, she began to rebel in her early teens. In high school, she participated in workshops led by the award-winning writer Tanguy Viel. Encouraged by both Viel and her French teacher, she entered a Literary Creation Master's Degree program. Influenced by Marguerite Duras and Virginie Despentes, she identifies as an intersectional feminist.

"À la manière d'une douce slameuse, la jeune autrice scande les mille et une manières qu'elle a d'être à soi." Le Monde Des Livres

"Croyante et lesbienne : d'une prose intrépide, l'autrice cherche comment vivre avec l'inconciliable. Un premier livre d'une grande puissance." Télérama

Anne Berest
LA CARTE POSTALE
(The Postcard)
Grasset, August 2021, 528 pages



- ◇ 80,000 copies sold.
- ◇ Rights sold: German (Berlin Verlag), Danish (Alpha Forlag), Spanish (Penguin Random House), English (Europa Editions), Hebrew (Modan), Italian (e/o), Japanese (Hayakawa), Lithuanian (Baltos Lankos), Dutch (Nieuw Amsterdam), Polish (Foksal), Romanian (Trei).
- ◇ This book recounts at once her investigation, the story of her ancestors and her discovery of what being Jewish means to a secular life.
- ◇ A painful introspection on Jewish identity, this book recounts a century of family history, from the pogroms in Russia in 1917 to the present day. Unforgettable and masterfully conducted.
- ◇ Told in the manner of a tale of a thousand and one nights, vibrant with endearing characters, this incredible odyssey keeps us on our toes until the last lines.

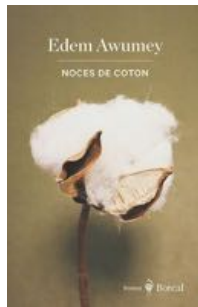
In January 2003, amidst all the usual greeting cards, a strange postcard appeared in the letterbox. There was no sign-off, no return address: the writer wished to remain anonymous. The Opéra Garnier was on one side, four names on the other: two belonging to the grandparents of Anne Berest's mother, the other two to her aunt and uncle. All four died in Auschwitz in 1942.

Twenty years on, Berest decides to discover who had sent them the mysterious postcard. With the help of her mother, she carries out an investigation that leaves no stone unturned. Assisted by a private detective and criminologist, she questions the inhabitants of the village in which her family had been detained. This investigation draws her back a century into the past. She retraces the quixotic story of the Rabinovitches, their flight from Russia, odyssey across Latvia and Palestine, and, finally, their arrival in France, Paris - then war. She seeks to understand how it was that her grandmother Myriam was the only one to escape deportation, and to shed light on the mysteries surrounding her two marriages. She moves heaven and earth in the attempt, and ultimately succeeds.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Anne Berest has published several novels including LA FILLE DE SON PÈRE (Seuil, 2010), LES PATRIACHES (Grasset, 2012), SAGAN 1954 (Stock, 2014), RECHERCHE FEMME PARFAITE (Grasset, 2016), GABRIËLE, co-written with her sister Claire (Stock, 2017), as well several plays: *La Visite* and *Les filles de nos filles* (Actes Sud, 2020).

AUTHORS IN FOCUS

Edem Awumey
NOCES DE COTON
(Cotton Nuptials)
 Boréal, January 2022, 256 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Spanish (Baile del sol).**
- ◇ **A call to solidarity between African and African-American peoples worn down by a “capitalist hell.”**
- ◇ **A novel about the devastating human impacts of globalization.**
- ◇ **A conversation that moves at a breathless pace, inspired by revolution and understanding.**

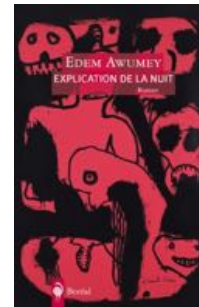
In an African city somewhere between the Sahel and the Atlantic coast, cotton farmer Toby Kunta takes a journalist from Berlin hostage in a museum’s exhibition hall. He demands millions of francs in compensation for the farmers left destitute by the production of genetically modified cotton.

As tensions rise inside the museum and Kunta and the chief of police are locked in a stale-mate, Kunta starts to burn the artworks in the museum one by one, threatening to do the same with his prisoner if he does not receive justice.

In this confined, tense setting, in which words and gestures are imbued with rage and hope, Edem Awumey takes us on a journey along the contemporary cotton road, from the African savannahs to the American South, from luxurious Berlin lounges to the glyphosate-drenched fields of Indian Rajasthan, to the valleys of Uzbekistan coated in white fibres and the mills of Dacca, Bangladesh. The novel takes us through a world struggling against the diktats of multinational corporations. It is a cry for freedom that has been suppressed for far too long and that is, at long last, erupting with thunderous violence.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in Togo, Edem Awumey took up residence in 2005 in Gatineau. He is the author of novels, including *PORT-MÉLO* (Gallimard, 2006; Grand Prize for Black African Literature). Also published, all at Boréal, *LES PIEDS SALES* (Boréal, 2009; selection of the Goncourt prize), *ROSE DELUGE* (2011), *EXPLICATION DE LA NUIT* (2013) and *MINA PARMIS LES OMBRES* (2018). His work has been translated into several languages, including English, Spanish and German.

Edem Awumey
EXPLICATION DE LA NUIT
(Descent into Night)
 Boréal, August 2013, pages



- ◇ **Full English translation available.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: English world (Mawenzi House), Argentina & South Cone (Empatia), Germany (Weidle Verlag) Spain (Baile del Sol).**
- ◇ **Winner of the Governor General’s Literary Award, Translation, 2018**
- ◇ **Edem Awumey gives us a darkly moving and terrifying novel about fear and play, repression and protest, and the indomitable nature of creativity.**

With a nod to Samuel Beckett and Bohumil Hrabal, a young dramatist from a West African nation describes a student protest against a brutal oligarchy and its crushing aftermath.

While distributing leaflets with provocative quotations from Beckett, Ito Baraka is taken to a camp where torture, starvation, beatings, and rape are normal. Forced to inform on his friends, whose fates he now fears, and released a broken man, he is enabled to escape to Quebec. His one goal is to tell the story of the protest and pay homage to Koli Lem, a teacher, cellmate, and lover of books, who was blinded by being forced to look at the sun—and is surely a symbol of the nation.

“Artfully constructed, peppered with evocative phrasing, and skillfully translated, this beautiful volume is upsetting, poignant, and at times harrowing.” Publishers Weekly, starred review

“This is a novel of emotional complexity, of what it means to survive through trauma, and the repercussions of that survival.” Montreal Review of Books

“The poetical lyricism of the work intensifies the power of the horror of the story being told. The prose is an unflinching spotlight that shines directly into that morass of unspeakable events.” Lisa de Nikolits, author of No Fury Like That

“[T]he story of Ito Baraka takes the reader on a journey into the darkest places of the human mind...” The African Book Review blog

“Un récit poignant et magnifiquement écrit.” La Presse

“Grave, tragique, dur, violent, mais porté par une écriture fiévreuse, embrasée. La surenchère poétique n’est pas loin...” Le Devoir

Edem Awumey
MINA PARMİ LES OMBRES
(Mina Among the Shadows).
Boréal, August 2018, 360 pages



- ◇ Full English translation available.
- ◇ Rights sold: Argentina & South Cone (Empatia) English World (Mawenzi House), Spain and Mexico (Baile del Sol), Armenia (Guitank).
- ◇ A hymn to immutable desire and love, the power of art and beauty, and the courage of ordinary men and women.

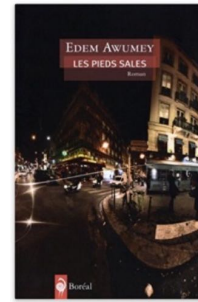
Kerim Neto returns to his hometown, a city on Africa's Atlantic coast, to search for Mina, his former model, lover, and muse. But Mina has disappeared. He combs the streets and byways he has known, hoping to find her.

He questions his old friends from the theatre, with whom he and Mina had performed and mocked the country's army and dictators. But these friends have now joined the establishment, they are now imams, preachers, and police informers.

Which Mina will Kerim find? Does she hide behind a veil? Or sing of the risen Christ? Will she bear the marks of torture? He has returned to a nation steeped in fear, where power lies in the hands of evil forces; where religions and superstition lull the minds, as the ancient gods look on.

"[A] unique blend of mystery, political commentary, and magic realism." Roxane Hudon, Montreal Review of Books

Edem Awumey
LES PIEDS SALES
(Dirty Feet)
Boréal, August 2011, pages



- ◇ Full English translation available.
- ◇ Rights sold: US & Canada (House of Anansi Press), France (Seuil), Germany (Weidle), Netherlands (Querido) Spain (Baile del Sol)
- ◇ Was shortlisted for the Prix Goncourt 2009.
- ◇ Nominated for the Governor General's Literary Award: Translation and the ReLit Awards.

As a small child, Askia was forced, along with his family, to wander the African desert as if under a curse. First driven from their home by drought and hunger, they were then kept from the villages they passed through by the fear and suspicion of others, who did not want to see their "dirty feet" stay for too long.

Years later, it seems Askia is destined to relive his family's curse night after night as he roams the streets of Paris in his taxi. One evening, he picks up Olia, a young woman who claims to recognize his face, telling him that his features are similar to those of a man she photographed years ago. Had it been his father, the enigmatic Sidi Ben Sylla Mohammed? The father who migrated north long before he did; the father he has so often dreamt about; the father whom he aches to meet?

With Olia's help, Askia sets out to retrace Sidi's steps. But before he can embark on this new journey, he must first confront his violent past. A brutal, indelibly powerful look at the harrowing, often violent lives of those who are condemned to wander.

Philippe Besson
LE DERNIER ENFANT

(The Last Child)

Robert Laffont / Julliard, January 2021, 208 pages



- ◇ **EXCEPT FOR POLAND.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Guanda), the Netherlands (Beizge Bij).**
- ◇ **In this sensitive and nuanced novel, Philippe Besson succeeds at raising an ordinary event—a grown child leaving the home—to the level of a sublime, poignant moment.**
- ◇ **With his signature elegant style, full of precision and detail, Besson scrutinizes the contradictory emotions, psychological flaws, and secret thoughts of a simple, fragile woman devastated by reality.**
- ◇ **Readers will find it impossible not to see themselves in this mother's vertigo and fear in the face of the unknown horizon stretching out before her.**

What happens inside a mother's heart when her last child leaves home? Such are the stakes of this novel, which takes place over twenty-four hours in the life of a woman whose entire existence hinges on an inevitable separation about to take place.

Without admitting it, Anne-Marie has been dreading this date for months. Today, her youngest son, Théo, is leaving the family nest. From the family's last breakfast as three around the kitchen table to the moment when the son's silhouette disappears from the moving van's rear-view window, she will have to face facts: nothing will ever be as it was before. Throughout this particular day, Anne-Marie, in turns unsteady and confused, awkward and touching, revisits the decisive moments in her life, a large part of which has been devoted to motherhood, between forgetting herself and the intense joy of being the familial center of gravity. With her last child now flying off on his own, how can she relearn to live alongside Patrick, her husband of few words, and find new meaning for her life to come? What new signposts can she cling onto?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Philippe Besson is one of the most unmissable authors of his generation. Since 2001 he has published eighteen novels, including *His Brother*, adapted for cinema by Patrice Chéreau, *In the Absence of Men*, *End of Autumn*, *The Atlantic House*, and *Stop With Your Lies* in 2017. His latest novel, *PARIS BRIANÇONS* published in January 2022 is sold in Russia (to AST).

Philippe Besson
EN L'ABSENCE DES HOMMES

(In the Absence of Men)

Julliard, September 2001, 214 pages



- ◇ **Full English translation available.**
- ◇ **Rights previously sold in Bulgaria, Belarus, Slovenia.**
- ◇ **Awarded the Prix Emmanuel-Robès 2001.**

*Like Michael Cunningham's homage to Virginia Woolf in *The Hours* and Jean Rhys's to Charlotte Bronte in *The Wide Sargasso Sea*, Philippe Besson's extravagantly praised first novel pays tribute to Marcel Proust.*

It also dares to introduce an asthmatic middle-aged Proust into its masterfully manipulated plot and invents a series of deeply felt letters written by him to the novel's young protagonist, Vincent de l'Etoile. In the summer of 1916, the emotionally precocious Vincent, who is the same age as the century, awakens to the possibilities of both erotic and platonic love. In the course of one week-at literary salons, at the Ritz, in cork-lined rooms-Vincent launches an intense friendship with the celebrated Proust, while at his parents' house in Paris he embarks on a sensual journey with Arthur Vales, the soldier son of a family servant, on leave from the front. Unknowingly, Vincent is also beginning a passage into a manhood that will be haunted by the secret he uncovers behind the love he bears for a doomed French infantryman and a famous middle-aged Jewish writer.

Philippe Besson
ARRÊTE AVEC TES MENSONGES

(Lie with Me)

Julliard, January 2017, 198 pages



- ◇ Full English translation available.
- ◇ 165,000 copies sold.
- ◇ Rights sold in 15 languages: English, Chinese, Korean, German, Danish, Spanish, Italian, Hebrew, Dutch, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Turkish and Vietnamese.
- ◇ A powerfully moving coming-of-age story captures the eroticism and tenderness of first love—and the heartbreaking passage of time.
- ◇ Arrête avec Tes Mensonges turned out to be the first of a series of three pieces of auto-fiction, with Un Certain Paul Darrigrand appearing in 2018 and Dîner à Montréal in 2019.
- ◇ A movie version of “Arrête avec Tes Mensonges, directed by Olivier Peyon, is due to start filming.
- ◇ Besson’s spare style, with its short declarative sentences is freighted with the specifics of a provincial French town in the 1980s, and with analysis of the complex tensions around class.

In the same vein as Sally Rooney’s phenomenally successful novel Normal People, which charts the different stages of a relationship between two people from different class backgrounds, Philippe Besson’s book is similar in that it begins with a clandestine relationship between two 17-year-old boys from different backgrounds at the same school and then reconsiders that liaison at a later stage.

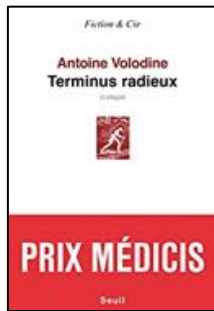
Just outside a hotel in Bordeaux, Philippe chances upon a young man who bears a striking resemblance to his first love. What follows is a look back at the relationship he’s never forgotten, a hidden affair with a gorgeous boy named Thomas during their last year of high school. Without ever acknowledging they know each other in the halls, they steal time to meet in secret, carrying on a passionate, world-altering affair.

Set in the same small town in south-western France where Philippe Besson grew up, and dedicated to a Thomas Andrieu who died in 2016, just as the character Thomas Andrieu does in the novel. The narrator is Philippe Besson, a successful writer living in Paris, remembering his adolescence.

Philippe and Thomas are 17 years old and at school together; they’ve never spoken because Philippe is in those classes that prepare the children of bourgeois families to progress in their education, and Thomas isn’t. Philippe’s father is the

headmaster of a primary school; Thomas’s has a small dairy farm and sells the produce of his vineyard to local cognac distilleries, while his mother comes from a family of Spanish migrant labourers. Across the class divide Philippe yearns for Thomas’s beautiful and unattainable self-possession, though he never dares look at him directly. He assumes that Thomas is straight, and oblivious to him – that he “doesn’t know me at all”. Philippe is clear already that he’s gay, and although he doesn’t mind being different (“I wouldn’t follow packs. Out of instinct, I despised packs”), he knows better than to avow it openly to his schoolfriends. One amazing day in the playground, however, it turns out that Thomas has noticed Philippe after all, and has been cherishing a secret passion for him, precisely because he’s different. “Because you are not like all the others, because I don’t see anyone but you and you don’t even realise it ... Because you will leave and we will stay.” There follow sexual encounters in the secret places Thomas knows: the locker room at the basketball court, a shed next to the football field, eventually in Philippe’s teenage bedroom. The sex is raw and transforming, but they don’t talk much – in public Thomas won’t admit to knowing Philippe. Eventually the strains of shame and secrecy are unbearable, and he leaves to live in Spain with his mother’s family.

Antoine Volodine
TERMINUS RADIEUX
(Radiant Terminus)
 Seuil, September 2014, 616 pages



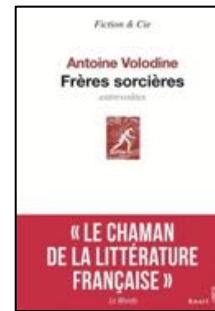
- ◇ Fully translated into English by Jeffrey Zuckerman.
- ◇ 40,000 copies sold.
- ◇ Rights sold: Italy (66th and 2nd), World English (Open Letter), Mexico (Sur+), Korea (Workroom).
- ◇ Awarded the Prix Médicis 2014 and the Prix de la Page III.
- ◇ Fantastical, unsettling, and occasionally funny, a key entry in Volodine's epic literary project that—with its broad landscape, ambitious vision, and interlocking characters and ideas—calls to mind the best of David Mitchell.
- ◇ Prepare to enter parallel universes where time collapses on itself. The future and the past are always the present, where a 2,000+ year old Gramma feeds and talks to a nuclear reactor core, where you never know if a character is living, dead, or somewhere in between, and where the characters exist mostly in a dreamlike state.

The most patently sci-fi work of Volodine's takes place in a Tarkovskian landscape after the fall of the Second Soviet Union.

Most of humanity has been destroyed thanks to a number of nuclear meltdowns, but a few communes remain, including one run by Solovyei, a psychotic father with the ability to invade people's dreams—including those of his daughters—and torment them for thousands of years. When a group of damaged individuals seek safety from this nuclear winter in Solovyei's commune, a plot develops to overthrow him, end his reign of mental abuse, and restore humanity.

"Irreducible to any single literary genre, the Volodinian cosmos is skillfully crafted, fusing elements of science fiction with magical realism and political commentary." Music & Literature

Antoine Volodine
FRÈRES SORCIÈRES
(Witch Brothers)
 Seuil, January 2019, 304 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: Italy (66th and 2nd).
- ◇ Demonic and violent adventures, marked by a delirious sexuality but also by the nostalgia of declamation, of words and breath. A world of survival at all costs.

Three powerful voices, all linked to theater, femininity, shamanism and death.

In a country of mountains and deserts, a small group of strolling actors is attacked by bandits. Soon, the sole survivor is forced into the wild and criminal life of her kidnappers. The sexual slave of a chief, she remains obsessed by a cantopera composed of magical vociferations addressed to all the little sisters of misery, guiding them towards appeasement, towards the art of dying, or towards other worlds. The second voice repeats the whole text of the strange play inhabiting the actor. The third voice responds to the other two. In a single, long witch- sentence, it recounts the endless path, from renaissance to renaissance, of a genderless character, sometimes male, sometimes female, who wanders in dark space.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Antoine Volodine was born in 1949. He has published more than a dozen books, which are now the foundation of "post- exoticism", a parallel literary universe in which oneirism, politics and disaster are the driving forces of all fiction. DES ANGES MINEURS sold 40,000 copies and TERMINUS RADIEUX earned him the Prix Médicis. His works have been translated into 14 languages. After teaching (and translating) Russian literature, he now devotes all his time to writing. He often travels in the East (Macao, Hong Kong).

"Once again, readers are swept off their feet by the beauty of the language, its bewitching power, the radical uniqueness of images and words." Télérama

HIGHLIGHTS

Nathalie Azoulai
LA FILLE PARFAITE
(The Perfect Girl)
 POL, January 2022, 320 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Germany (Seccession Verlag), Spain (Empuries), Italian offer.**
- ◇ **13,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Shortlisted for the Prix France Télévisions 2022.**
- ◇ **This is the story of a friendship, a double-headed Bildungsroman in which academic orientation determines much more than a syllabus by shaping intelligence and existence itself: family, love, maternity, ambition and our relationship to the world... Especially when one is a woman in a man's world.**
- ◇ **'A poignant and intimate investigation, this book combines the portraits of two women marked by their schooling. It evokes the scope of our adolescent choices and the struggles that young girls still have to make a place for themselves. A text that shakes and disturbs.'** - Le Parisien

Why did the beautiful Adèle, a high-ranking mathematician, hang herself at the age of 46? And why, in spite of a loving husband and an adorable little boy, in spite of "all the apparent signs of happiness", did this "perfect girl" take her own life?

When, one fine June morning, Rachel realizes that Adele, her life-long friend, has hanged herself at home, she feels both stunned and relieved. Her reaction reflects their turbulent friendship, which had always provoked a mixture of fusion and a deep sense of unease in her. From this ambivalence, Rachel decides to find out why a woman as perfect as Adele, brilliant mathematician and mother of a young boy, would take her own life so violently at the age of forty-six. She goes back to the beginnings of their friendship, and to its various stages and events, and continuously comes up against the tacit sermon or crucial deal it was based on: in the land of Knowledge, Adele was to tackle Science, and Rachel, Literature. Did they intend to cover the entire spectrum of knowledge or social success? In other words, why had Adele always chosen Mathematics, a boy's world, whereas for Rachel it had always been Literature, a girl's world? But is that really how things happen in life? And if so, up to what point?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Nathalie Azoulai is a novelist and screenwriter. Winner of the Prix Médicis for *Titus did not love Berenice* (P.O.L, 2015), the novel was also nominated for the Prix

Goncourt and the Prix Fémina and was translated into several languages. Nathalie Azoulai is also a translator and has worked in theatre, radio, and youth literature. *The Perfect Girl* is her tenth novel.

"A poignant and intimate investigation, this book combines the portraits of two women marked by their schooling. It evokes the scope of our adolescent choices and the struggles that young girls still have to make a place for themselves. A text that shakes and disturbs." Le Parisien

"Beyond the novel of apprenticeship, Nathalie Azoulai's alert and inspired writing, erudite without being pontificating (a challenge), sweeps us along like a groundswell: impossible to let go of this dense, intelligent reconstruction, between investigation and introspection. All the more so as its sharp statements on science and literature, on women and men, on social determinism and ambition, are particularly relevant to our time." L'Express

"The Perfect Girl is a story of friendship, complicity, bickering and endless contamination between two girls who do not exactly share the same world. Without really trying to win posterity, but always in competition, the two young prodigies play elbows, leave each other but always find each other again. Nathalie Azoulai has produced a brilliant book about a feeling in perpetual motion. Her work is as precise as science and as dreamy as fiction. Her confrontation of worlds is also a matter of learning, of two-headed ambition. Who is this perfect girl who gives the novel its title? The one who chooses "the path of men", the royal road of mathematics, and who will cut her hair one morning in June, climb on the table and throw herself into the void?" Télérama

HIGHLIGHTS

Adèle Rosenfeld LES MÉDUSES N'ONT PAS D'OREILLES

(*Jellyfish Have No Ears*)
Grasset, January 2022, 240 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: German (Suhrkamp), World Spanish Rights (Seix Barral), Catalan (Edicions 62), Dutch (De Bezige Bij), World English Rights (Graywolf Press), Lithuania, Brazil (Fosforo).
- ◇ Offer from Italy.

A deeply moving first novel about the flaws of language, the fear of silence and the power of the imagination. A dazzling dive into the world of the deaf and hard of hearing.

A few sounds still reach Louise's right ear, but nothing on the left. Louise, who since childhood has evolved in the in-between space - neither totally hearing nor totally deaf - sees her hearing drop drastically at her last ENT examination. Faced with this inevitable loss, her doctor suggests a cochlear implant. A true dilemma, as the operation is irreversible and will have serious consequences for the young woman's hearing. She would lose her weak natural hearing in favour of synthetic hearing, and with it her unique relationship with the world, full of whispers and shadows.

Until now, Louise has always needed the lips of others to hear. It is through the light that she perceives the words that she then strings together, like pearls on a thread, to reconstruct the conversation. But when the thread breaks, misunderstandings arise, eccentric images enter her mind and fabulous characters inhabit her imagination: a soldier from the First World War, a dog named Cirrus or a whimsical botanist who accompany her during these long months of reflection and doubt, during which she tries to preserve her universe weaved into this sound herbarium. An ethereal world that constantly collides with the reality of Louise's life - the excitement of a new relationship, a first job at the town hall, a dysfunctional friendship. Time is running out and the young woman must make her decision.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Adèle Rosenfeld was born in 1986. *Jellyfish Have No Ears* is her first novel.

Véronique Olmi LE GOSSE

(*The Kid*)
Albin Michel, February 2022, 290 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: Italy (E/O).
- ◇ Print run: 40 000 copies
- ◇ Shortlisted for the Prix France Télévisions 2022
- ◇ Véronique Olmi comes back to the theme of devastated lives, recounting, with the empathy her readers know so well, the mangled life of a kid from Paris at the dawn of a century that aimed to be better.

A youngster in Paris in the turmoil of the interwar years. The primary injustice is always the country, the background and the date of your birth. Every destiny begins there, in that unstoppable inequality." Véronique Olmi

Joseph lives happily with his mother, a feather worker, his grandmother who is slowly losing her mind, his football chums and the people of his district. But life is about to step in and shatter his innocence and his joy.

From the Petite Roquette to the Mettray Penal Colony – where Jean Genet was imprisoned – Joseph's childhood is wrecked. But fortunately, we can count on resilience and hope.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Actress, novelist and playwright, Véronique Olmi authored *BORDS DE MER* and *CET ÉTÉ-LÀ...* her thirteenth novel, *BAKHITA*, was a huge success in France and abroad (Finalist of Goncourt, Goncourt des Lycéens and Femina Prizes).

HIGHLIGHTS

David Foenkinos NUMÉRO DEUX

(Number Two)

Gallimard, January 2022, 240 pages



- ◇ **Option: Russia (Azbooka Atticus).**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Spanish, Dutch + Japanese and Romanian offers.**
- ◇ **92,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Première sélection du Grand Prix RTL-Lire Magazine Littéraire 2022.**
- ◇ **This witty and original story is not the tale of Martin's failure, even if he had come so close to success and that, surely, had to be the most unbearable outcome. Imbued with melancholic invention, this novel paints the portrait, both accurate and light-hearted, of a disillusioned young man constantly facing what his life could have been.**

In 1999 began the casting to find the boy who would interpret Harry Potter and would, in doing so, become famous worldwide. Hundreds of actors were auditioned. But, in the end, only two remained. This is the fictional story of the one who wasn't chosen. Martin Hill, the hero or perhaps anti-hero of this novel, was born in 1989 in London. He was still a child when his parents divorced and he grew up between London and Paris, where his mother settled. One day, while he was accompanying his father, a prop man, on a film set, Martin was noticed by one of Harry Potter's producers. He went for an audition, successfully passed several tests, but during the last session, the other finalist proved to be more convincing. All of Martin's hopes were destroyed, and worse still, he would henceforth have to live in the shadow of his rival's omnipresent triumph. How would he overcome such failure? Had he just missed his own life?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: David Foenkinos is the author of eighteen novels, including LA DÉLICATESSE (2009) and LE MYSTÈRE HENRI PICK (2016), which have both been adapted to the screen. His books have been translated in more than forty languages. His novel CHARLOTTE won both the Prix Renaudot and the Prix Goncourt des lycéens in 2014.

Gautier Battistella CHEF

(Chef)

Grasset, February 2022, 336 pages



- ◇ **A novel of flesh and blood, full of suspense.**

The first great novel dedicated to French gastronomy, Chef portrays the violence of a macho world where drugs, alcohol and sex are often the only things that keep people going. But in counterpoint to this is the passion that this profession and craft inspires in its practitioners, who are determined to perpetuate and reinvent its magic, beauty and excellence.

'Les Promesses' is a three-star Michelin restaurant frequented by a clientele from as far afield as Singapore, Dubai and San Francisco. It is a remarkable success story, consecrated when its 62-year-old owner Paul Renoir is voted the 'world's best chef' by his peers. But one Monday morning his body is found next to the hunting rifle that he has used to take his own life. The world of fine dining is stunned and in mourning. What pushed this exceptional chef to end it all?

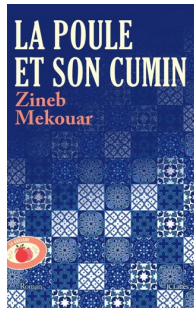
Just before he died, a crew from Netflix had come to make a feature about Renoir that explored his family memories, where his vocation came from, and the stages in his road to success. Perhaps somewhere in his story lies the secret behind his suicide, unless the answer is to be found in the battle that ensues over his estate. Tensions quickly mount between his widow Natalia, sous-chef Christophe, his son Mathias, and his unscrupulous professional rival Albinoni. In the wake of the king's sudden death, pretenders to the throne emerge, plots take shape, and a battle of the egos unfolds...

But Chef is also the story of French cuisine since the Second World War. Paul learnt everything from his grandmother, who was a friend of the celebrated Lyon cook, Eugénie Brazier. It was women who invented fine dining before men appropriated it and elevated it to its central place in modern culture. Alongside Bocuse, Loiseau and Ducasse, Paul Renoir is one of the pioneers of the Nouvelle Cuisine of the 1970s, when chefs first began to achieve the kind of star status that they enjoy today.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A contributor to the Michelin Guide for fifteen years and a friend of some of France's greatest chefs, Gautier Battistella is an undisputed world expert on fine dining, as well as being very familiar with the workings and secrets of restaurant guides. He is the author of UN JEUNE HOMME PROMETTEUR (Grasset, 2014, Prix Québec-France and Prix Jean-Claude Brialy, LGF, 2017) and CE QUE L'HOMME A CRU VOIR (Grasset, 2018, LGF, 2021).

HIGHLIGHTS

Zineb Mekouar
LA POULE ET SON CUMIN
(The Chicken and Her Cumin)
JC Lattès, March 2022, 240 pages



- ◇ English sample chapter available.
- ◇ At once a moving and entertaining portrait of an enduring female friendship, this novel also provides a thought-provoking commentary on the inequality between the sexes and social classes. Fatiha and Kenza are an unforgettable duo, and this is an unforgettable debut!
- ◇ “An intense novel depicting a complex Moroccan reality, which is often hypocritical and so very violent.” – Tahar Ben Jelloun

The coming-of-age novel of two young Moroccan women: Kenza is born into wealth and Fatiha is the daughter of Kenza's maid. We follow them and their friendship from childhood through adolescence to adulthood, in good times and bad.

Soufiane had promised Fatiha that he would introduce her to his parents and she believed him. They had made love, she became pregnant, but now he was backing out. Desperate, in a country where abortion is against the law, Fatiha seeks out an underground abortionist. Meanwhile, her childhood friend, Kenza, has finished her studies in France and is returning to Morocco. France would not renew her visa. Upon her arrival she looks up Fatiha but her phone doesn't answer.

How did these two women, who were so close in childhood, become so estranged from one another? Fatiha, the Arab-speaking daughter of a maid, and Kenza, daughter of the upper-class, well versed in French culture but so out of touch with normal life in Morocco.

Zineb Mekouar zigzags through the lives of these two women and, through them, tells the story of contemporary Morocco, with its political and social divisions, its elites and its lower classes.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Zineb Mekouar is 31. She has participated in several writing workshops at Gallimard under the direction of Jean-Marie Laclavetine. This is her first novel.

Gabrielle Filteau-Chiba
SAUVAGINES
(Savengers)
Stock, March 2022, 368 pages



- ◇ English sample available.
- ◇ Rights sold to Italy (Lindau), Germany (DTV, 5-figure deal) the Netherlands (Prometheus, 5-figure deal, at auction), Spain (Minúscula editorial, 3-book deal) and the UK (Mountain Leopard Press).
- ◇ Canada - Guest of Honour of the Frankfurt book fair (special subsidies)
- ◇ Video from the author: <https://youtu.be/MBujHvc3yll>
- ◇ A revenge feminist tale, as well as a compelling love story, *Savengers* will appeal as much to the nature writing readers of *The Eight mountains* by Paolo Cognetti's than to readers of strong female novelists such as Virginie Despentes or Aminatta Forma.

Hunt or be hunted. Unfolding over three weeks in late September, Savengers plunges us into a shadowy world of illegal poaching and sexual violence, as Raphaëlle's calling to protect the laws of the forest sees her become the hunter's prey. Yet two can play at that game, and this gritty eco-warrior won't go down without a fight.

Raphaëlle is a forest warden, estranged from her family and living alone in a trailer, miles from civilisation. In the savage cradle of nature, daily life is fraught with dangers. The forest is alive with bears, coyotes and lynxes – and, with no signal in reach, nobody can save you if a predator strikes. On the eve of her fortieth birthday, Raphaëlle is shaken to discover fresh bear prints outside her front door. But when man-sized footprints appear a few days later, she realises the true predator is even more sinister...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: In the winter of 2013, Gabrielle Filteau-Chiba left her job, home and family in Montreal, sold all her worldly belongings and moved into a wooden cabin in Quebec's remote Kamouraska region. There, she spent three years living deep in the forest, without running water, electricity or phone signal, and with only prowling coyotes for company outside. She has written a first novel *ENCABANÉE*, rights to which have been sold in France, Germany and Italy.

« Un roman anti-braconnage qui met à l'honneur deux personnages féminins forts » - *La Repubblica*

« *Sauvages* tord le cou aux bonnes intentions écologiques des citoyens et montre la nature telle qu'elle est vraiment : féroce et fascinante » - *Pensieri Accesi*

HIGHLIGHTS

Éric Vuillard
UNE SORTIE HONORABLE
(An Honourable Exit)
Actes Sud, January 2022, 208 pages



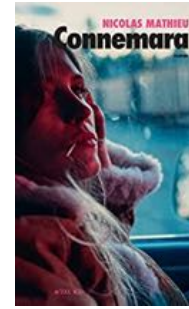
- ◇ **Right sold:** Greece (Polis), Sweden (Lind & Co), UK (MacMillan/Picador), US (Other Press), Finland (Siltala). Germany (Matthes & Seitz), Spain (Tusquets), Catalan (Editions 62), Finland (Siltala), Serbia (Akademiska Knjiga), Turkey (Can Yayinlari).
- ◇ **First print-run:** 60,000 copies.
- ◇ **The charge is powerful, against politics, militaries and bankers.**
- ◇ **In this shocking account of the First Indochina War, Vuillard depicts through a series of memorable scenes the tangled interests at stake and resurrects a whole gallery of rather disturbing characters, including rubber planters, generals and their wives, politicians and bankers.**

The First Indochina War was one of the longest wars of modern times and yet it hardly features in the school history books. With an impressive feeling for the art of narration, this is the story of how, in a remarkable twist of history, two of the world's leading powers lost a war against the modest little Vietnamese nation, taking us into the heart of the conflicting interests that led to their defeat.

What were French politicians debating over during the First Indochina War? Can we look over their shoulders and read the restaurant menu, and hear their hearts beating? Are you wondering how, during the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the US Secretary of State could seriously offer the French foreign minister a couple of atomic bombs to settle the issue once and for all? Would we like to hear France's national hero and napalm apostle, General de Lattre, speaking laborious English in a television studio, or attend a board meeting of the Banque d'Indochine to find out how the bank was able to discreetly determine the course of the war? Do we prefer the comforts of fiction to the dizziness of reality? If it is literature's vocation to be universal, then the story of how the modest little Vietnamese nation managed to defeat two of the great world powers is a fitting subject for it, and it will also help us to understand why in today's world, from Afghanistan to Mali, we will always seek an honourable exit in vain.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A writer and filmmaker from Lyon, Éric Vuillard is the author of *TRISTESSE DE LA TERRE* (2014), *14 JUILLET* (2016) and *LA GUERRE DES PAUVRES* (2019), all published by Actes Sud. Widely translated and published in some forty countries, his work has won numerous prizes including the Prix Goncourt for *L'ORDRE DU JOUR* (2017), which was named book of the year by the Boston Globe.

Nicolas Mathieu
CONNEMARA
(Connemara)
Actes Sud, January 2022, 400 pages



- ◇ **Under option in** Albanian, Arab, Bulgaria, simplified Chinese characters, Croatian, Greek, UK English, Hungarian, Korean, Russian, Serbian, Slovenian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese.
- ◇ **Rights sold:** Italy (Marsilio), Germany (Hanser Berlin), Norway (Gyldendal), Spain (Anaya), the Netherlands (Meulenhoff), World English (Other Press), Slovakia (Inaque), the Netherlands (Meulenhoff).
- ◇ **First print-run:** 70,000 copies.
- ◇ **Finalist for the Grand Prix RTL-Lire Magazine Littéraire 2022.**
- ◇ **A tale of coming to terms with the illusions of one's youth, of a second chance and of a love that persists in spite of separation in a country singing along to Sardou that is soon going to vote against itself.**

The story of a return to one's roots, of a relationship, and of an attempt to make a life as a couple in a France that is changing fast.

Hélène will soon turn 40. She was born in a small town in the east of France. She was successful academically and now has a good career, two daughters, and lives in an architect-designed house in the hills of Nancy. She has achieved the dream both of her adolescence and of the glossy pages of the magazines: leaving her humble origins behind and making a success of her life. And yet she feels a lack of fulfilment – the years have passed without living up to her expectations.

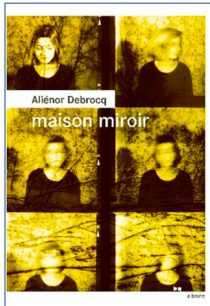
As for Christophe, he has just turned forty and has never left this little corner of France where he grew up with Hélène. He's no longer so handsome as he used to be and has led an unassuming life, giving priority to his mates and to partying, and putting off until tomorrow the big efforts and life-altering decisions. These days, he is selling dog food, dreaming of playing hockey again like he did when he was 16, and living with his father and son – a quiet, indecisive little existence. He could be seen as having failed in life.

And yet he has a cast-iron belief that anything is still possible.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1978, Nicolas Mathieu lives in Nancy in north-eastern France. Actes Sud is the publisher of his debut novel, *AUX ANIMAUX LA GUERRE* (2014), which won a series of prizes, *LEURS ENFANTS APRÈS EUX* (Actes Sud, 2018, Prix Goncourt 2018) and *ROSE ROYAL* followed by *LA RETRAITE DU JUGE WAGNER*, a novella of 50 pages (Babel, 2021).

HIGHLIGHTS

Aliénor Debrocq
MAISON MIROIR
(The Mirror House)
Le Rouergue, May 2022, 352 pages



- ◇ Exploring the twin themes of communities co-inhabiting and feminist emancipation, Aliénor Debrocq serves up a complex portrait of two women at a time of crisis in their lives which prompts them to examine their fundamental values.

In a residential district where property prices are becoming unaffordable, there is a house that has been divided into two semi-detached properties by a thin partition through which all the shouting, whispering and laughter from next door can be heard.

On one side live Rose, her husband and their young daughter Goldilocks. Rose has just lost a baby during pregnancy and is silently going through a depression punctuated by guilty lesbian desires. On the other side is Nour, the secretly rebellious daughter of a large Moroccan family who is trapped between an urge to be loyal and a sense of suffocating. She feigns submission while constantly pushing at the boundaries imposed on her gender.

The neighbours are not on good terms, one side exasperated by all the noise coming through the partition, and several generations coupled up on top of each other on the other side. One day as she is browsing in a department store, Rose bumps into Nour, who works there, and after this encounter the two women can no longer ignore each other. They are troubled by questions about their femininity, the forcefulness of their physical urges, and their identity in a world tailored to men, and find themselves irresistibly drawn to each other.

The first two parts of the book focus in turn on the characters of Rose and Nour, while in the third part the supporting actors occupy centre stage: Rose's husband Roger, who has never been able to forget Yamila, his father's second wife; Nour's elder brother, a strict type but in fact more tormented than he appears, and her parents, who still identify with the more temperate and tolerant Islam of their youth; and Soraya the Moroccan cousin, who is a campaigner for women's rights.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Aliénor Debrocq teaches literature and storytelling in art schools in Brussels. She has published numerous works, including the novels *LE TIERS SAUVAGE* (Éditions Luce Wilquin, 2018) and *CENT JOURS SANS LILY* (ONLIT Éditions, 2020). In 2017, she won the Prix Franz de Wever for the short story collection *À VOIE BASSE* (Quadrature).

Nicolas Delisle-L'Heureux
LES ENFANTS DE CHIENNE
(The Children of a Dog)
Boréal, February 2022, 320 pages



- ◇ Multiple points of view are interwoven throughout the story, keeping us guessing until the very end.
- ◇ Written in style at once poetic and colloquial, Nicolas Delisle-L'Heureux's novel is captivating and lyrical. His masterful storytelling gives the reader the impression of looking at an incomplete jigsaw puzzle, zooming in on different individual pieces, with the full picture only coming into focus at the end.

In the same vein as TROIS by Valérie Perrin, the coming-of-age story of three teenagers scarred by a shared tragedy. A novel about friendship, desire, and revenge.

Wendy lives with her brother Willy in an abandoned ski resort on the remote north shore of the St. Lawrence. Wendy's world is limited, confined to the hotel, the mountain, and the chairlift. On her 35th birthday, her old friend Louise Fowley shows up unannounced with a surprise for Wendy: a picnic for the three of them on the summit.

With her return to Mont-Brun, memories come flooding back to Louise of the time in the 1990s when she was inseparable from Marco, the son of the local kingpin, and Willy and Wendy's younger brother, Laurence. Their adventures often took place in an old car, a Plymouth, abandoned in the middle of the woods, a place full of discoveries and danger.

The trio broke up when they reached adulthood. Louise was forced to move to Montreal and became a chic, urbane woman. Marco wanted to start over in Labrador. The two followed strikingly different paths, destined to never meet again, sharing only a mutual wish to forget Laurence and the wound that never healed.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Nicolas Delisle-L'Heureux grew up in Gatineau during the 1980s and 1990s and now resides in Montreal. He is a social worker in Pointe-Saint-Charles, where he works on building social bonds. He is also a lecturer at UQAM. *LES ENFANTS DE CHIENNE* is his second novel.

HIGHLIGHTS

Anne Delaflotte Medhevi LE LIVRE DES HEURES

(The Book of Hours)

Buchet Chastel, January 2022, 256 pages



- ◇ With its historical setting, portrait of a woman, love of color and life, and descriptions of mediaeval bookmaking... Anne Delaflotte-Mehdevi's latest novel is truly charming.
- ◇ An enchanting immersion in the world of color and the life of a young woman whose vocation is book illuminating in the late 15th century, on Paris's Pont Notre-Dame.

Marguerite, the daughter and granddaughter of illuminators – craftspeople who “illuminate” or decorate the pages of books with bright colors and even gilding, lives on Pont Notre-Dame, a bridge in Paris. Her twin brother suffers from epilepsy. Marguerite watches over him, literally keeping him alive. Her mother would have preferred that Marguerite had been sick rather than her brother. She is constantly scolding and overburdening her daughter with chores. To make up for and escape from her confined existence, Marguerite clings to a vital manifestation of life: light and color. She will earn her spot in the family business, but only after a fight.

Her entire life she has walked a line, a path circumscribed by Pont Notre-Dame and the Petit Pont. Every day, she crosses the Ile de la Cité, from the illumination workshop to her godfather's apothecary, where she buys pigments. Until the day Marguerite meets Daoud. He's a Moor – her people's sworn enemy.

Before him, Marguerite's physical world was clearly defined. She was tenacious for what was essential and knew how to make calculated compromises, but adventure and risk-taking used to be limited to abstractions and art. But all that will change with Daoud. Meeting him will force her out of herself and into life and the world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Anne Delaflotte-Medhevi was born in the Burgundy region in 1967. She grew up near Saint Sauveur en Puisaye, studied political science and international law, and moved to Prague, where her partner opened a bookstore in the early '90s. There she learned the bookbinder's trade and began writing. Her previous novels have all been published by Gaià. Some of them were translated in foreign languages.

Isabelle Autissier LE NAUFRAGE DE VENISE

(The Sinking of Venice)

Stock, May 2022, 272 pages



- ◇ Under option in Russia (Phantom Press).
- ◇ This masterful crusade through La Serenissima is full of romance but also ecological truth.

Having explored the whole Venice Lagoon and immersed herself in its culture, the author paints a picture of the contradictions and issues at the heart of the city.

Venice is drowned, submerged by the deadly effects of one last *acqua alta*. But before this ecological disaster, the Melegatti family is torn apart by different political convictions about the future of the Queen of the Adriatic. On one side are the rudderless middle classes, represented by the father, Guido, who wants to exploit tourism in the city for the sake of economic performance. On the other is his wife Maria Alba, descended from nobility, who delights and luxuriates in the bygone splendours of a now-sleeping city on the brink of collapse. Between these two parents, young Lea takes a stand with her environmental campaigning.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Isabelle Autissier was the first woman to sail solo around the world and is Chair of WWF France. *Le naufrage de Venise* is her fifth novel. *SOUDAIN, SEULS* (Stock, 2015) has been translated into ten languages and is being adapted for the big screen. *OUBLIER KLARA* (Stock, 2019) won the 2019 Version Femina Prize.

HIGHLIGHTS

Anaïs Llobet
AU CAFÉ DE LA VILLE PERDUE
(*At the Lost Town Cafe*)
L'Observatoire, January 2022, 336 pages



With a unique talent of raconteur, Anaïs Llobet blends History with a capital H with that of the ghost town of Varosha, a seaside resort in Cyprus, where, in the middle of summer 1974, time suddenly stopped, and a family's future was devastated.

In Varosha, formerly a coastal town where Hollywood stars came to holiday, time stopped in 1974 when Turkey invaded the north of Cyprus. Since then, this district of Famagouste has been deserted, the prisoner of barbed wire and the bougainvillea that rise up in the middle of houses, where, formerly, life was in full swing. These days, in Nicosie, a divided town, a young woman called Ariana clears the tables of the Tis Khamenis Polis, the café of the 'Lost Town' where the inhabitants of Varosha used to meet. Today they have nothing: no past, no roots, no future and no certitudes. A former student of architecture, she now has only one hope: to be able, one day, to rebuild the house her father was born in, and where her grand-parents, Aridné and Ioannis, lived. She knows only snippets of their lives, as though the makeshift barriers forbidding access to Varosha had also blocked access to their memory... and their secrets. When Ariana learns that the house is to be demolished by Turkish bulldozers, and that the story of Aridné and Ioannis will disappear with the walls, the young woman, with the help of a writer - a captivating double of the author - decides to do everything she can to save what is left of the family memory and understand the weighty secret that burdened her ancestors.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Anaïs Llobet is a journalist. She lives in Cyprus, the land that inspired the story of her latest novel.

"With a rare talent for storytelling, Anaïs Llobet combines the past and the present, the ancestor and their descendants, the differences and similarities between the communities." Télérama

« Ces pages sondent, topographient, fictionnent le plus délicatement possible cette Chypre partitionnée. » Marie-Claire

« Un beau livre d'une jeune auteure à suivre » Version Fémina

« Un beau roman » La vie.

Marina Dédéyan
LÀ OÙ LE CRÉPUSCULE S'UNIT À L'AUBE
(*Where Sunset and Dawn unite*)
Robert Laffont, January 2022, 550 pages



- ◇ The female-narrated story, written in exquisite French, of an extraordinary family and social history concentrated in revolutionary Russia but also encompassing various states of settlement and exile across Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain and Italy.
- ◇ In this Russian fresco, Marina Dédéyan explores the memories of her family to retrace the history of her great grandparents whose lives crossed paths with the likes of Lou Andreas Salomé, Rilke, the Nabokovs, Fabergé and many other important figures of their time.
- ◇ Promotional videos in English, German, Russian and Italian, as well as an extended English interview with the author.

The vast fresco of a Russian family – in the steps of Lou Andreas Salomé, Rilke, Nabokov, Fabergé and many more.

"Through the bluish winter landscape, their sleigh bore them back to Saint-Petersburg. Against the white background, the firs, birches and poplars stood out like drypoint etchings. Thin lines of smoke were rising from the little huts huddled together in scattered hamlets. The cold and the silence transfixed the world in a reassuring state of inertness.

In this atmosphere of purity, the crunching of the skates, the neighing of the horses, the snap of the whip, every sound was gaining a particular intensity. The snow would quickly cover the furrows left behind by their sleigh – life is a passage."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Marina Dédéyan has already published six novels across Flammarion, Stock, and Plon, and has a dedicated website where you can discover her and her work in detail: <https://www.marinadedeyan.com>.

HIGHLIGHTS

José Rodrigues dos Santos
LE MAGICIEN D'AUSCHWITZ
(The Magician of Auschwitz)
LE MANUSCRIT DE BIRKENAU
(The Birkenau Scrolls)
Pocket, April 2021, 448 pages



- ◇ Original Portuguese editions published at Gradiva Publicações.
- ◇ Rights sold: Finland (Minerva); Hungary (Kossuth); Bulgaria (Hermes); Czech Republic (Rybka), Turkey.
- ◇ Trailer: <https://youtu.be/LFso3GSeow>
- ◇ The novels are based on manuscripts and testimonies found in concentration camps. José Rodrigues dos Santos' work is the result of a large research, and feature historical characters, including the main character Herbert Levin, SS soldiers and people from the Sonderkommando.
- ◇ The Magician of Auschwitz and The Birkenau Scrolls show us the Shoah as it has never been told. Based on true events and real characters, José Rodrigues dos Santos' riveting novels take us to the darkest place on Earth and unveil unknown episodes of the Holocaust, including the role esotericism and mysticism played in the Final Solution, as well as a largely unknown event: the prisoner revolt at Birkenau.
- ◇ "The purpose of literature is not only to entertain us, to experiment with language, or to present exercises in stylistic skill, though such options are obviously legitimate, relevant, and of great value. Literature exists primarily to tell us things, to open windows, and to knock down barriers." José Rodrigues dos Santos

A Jewish magician crosses paths with a Portuguese SS soldier and a young Russian woman in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Prague, 1939. Nazi Germany invade Czechoslovakia. Jewish magician Herbert Levin, the Great Nivelli, is deported with his family, first to the Terezin ghetto and then to a large camp in Poland.

Leningrad siege, 1943. Portuguese legionnaire Francisco Latino battles with the Spanish Blue Division against the Red Army. He falls for a Russian girl, Tanusha, but she is taken by the SS. To save her, he joins the Nazi elite force and is sent to the camp where she is kept in Poland.

Thus the Portuguese soldier, the Russian girl and the Jewish magician share the same destiny. Auschwitz. They must cooperate to survive, but the plot thickens when the death

camp prisoners organize a major uprising and the magician is drawn to the heart of it. Can magic save them all?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: José Rodrigues dos Santos is a TV anchor, and one of the bestselling novelists in Portugal. He is the author of seven essays and twenty-two novels which sold over 3 million copies. José's fiction is published or is about to be published in 20 languages.

"No character is simple. (...) There are no monsters, no innocents, but one or the other according to the circumstances: just human beings, caught by their weaknesses and their contradictions." Cultures Juives, France

"I recently read The Magician of Auschwitz and The Birkenau Scrolls, and, despite having read hundreds of books on this subject, these two stand out. (...) These are two heavyweight novels that manage to bring the reader into that living hell on Earth. They are worth every written word." Márcio Pitliuk, director Yad Vashem Brazil and curator of the Holocaust Memorial in São Paulo

EMERGING VOICES

Joy Majdalani
LE GOÛT DES GARÇONS
(The Taste of Boys)
 Grasset, January 2022, 180 pages



- ◇ Legends, gossip, ignorance, fears, impulses, pitfalls, alliances, treachery, the telephone, the Internet, everything revolves around boys and their mysterious bodies in a mixture of fantasy and romance... Marked by a certain naivety of adolescence and the cruelty of its language, this lucid novel depicts the violence of nascent female pleasure, told from the point of view of young women.

A raw and delicate debut novel that portrays the awakening to sexuality of young teenage girls in an only-girls school in Lebanon. In the cloistered atmosphere of the Catholic school, the thirteen-year-old girls share with each other the curiosity, the fear and the intensity of the nascent sexual desire.

They are "from a good family", "well brought up". They are schoolgirls at Our Lady of the Annunciation. They could just as easily be in any other religious institution or a prestigious French school. They are thirteen years old, they are inconspicuous. They have only desire in mind.

The narrator, who is thirteen, dreams of boys, of their sex, of making love with them. They all talk about it. There is fear, which the nuns at the school are quick to entertain by brandishing bloody images of aborted fetuses, but fear! It adds to the curiosity.

The narrator joins forces with the terrible Bruna. A rival and confidante, she knows how to find boys on the Internet with whom to engage in forbidden telephone conversations. Bruna sets a trap for her, which she falls into naively. What should she do? Get close to the most beautiful girls in the class, the Dangerous Ones? These transgressors know what to do with their bodies.... The mean ones can call her a whore, but she must taste, taste the boy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in Lebanon in 1992, Joy Majdalani attended a Catholic school in Beirut. At the age of eighteen, she moved to Paris and studied literature at the lycée Henri IV. She published her first text in 2018, a short story in the magazine Le Courage, published by Grasset. The Taste of boys is her first novel.

Nicolas Carreau
UN HOMME SANS HISTOIRES
(An Ordinary Man)
 JC Lattès, March 2022, 192 pages



- ◇ A zany and light-hearted first novel that proves that when fate intervenes, even the most ordinary of people can go on the most extraordinary of adventures.
- ◇ "Every man contains more stories than he suspects. Or how a cufflink theft sparks a novel."Hervé Le Tellier, Goncourt prize-winning author
- ◇ Reminiscent of films by Wes Anderson and the Coen Brothers, a fabulous romp around the world, starring a classic anti-hero.

A great number of extraordinary things happen to a man whose only wish was to live an ordinary life. The incredible story of an anti-hero you'll never forget.

Most people try by every means possible to distinguish themselves from their contemporaries. But Henri Reille does just the opposite, always trying his best to be neither first nor last. Every morning he leaves home at precisely 7:52 to arrive at the office, where he works as an expert accountant, at 8am sharp. He enjoys his mundane life as it generates the least amount of problems. The only thing he really cares about in the world can be kept in a tiny case: the cufflinks he inherited from his grandfather. When he discovers that his wife has stolen his most precious possession to offer them to her lover, Henri Reille loses his composure for the first time. And things go from bad to worse. After committing an act from which there is no going back, he finds himself on the run from Munich to Ostende, from New York to Argentina, trying to locate the man who gave the cufflinks to his grandfather. He is being followed by a mysterious man in a hat and trench coat who uncannily keeps picking up his trail, from the German archives to a wall in Mexico where he is the only one going the other way, to a mixer cartel in the Argentinian jungle.

A frantic escapade that will ultimately transform Henri from ordinary to extraordinary!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Nicolas Carreau is a journalist and hosts a radio program on books called "La voix est livre" on Europe 1. He is the son of bookshop owners and this is his first novel.

"I am certain it will be read and read again" – Yves Bonnefoy

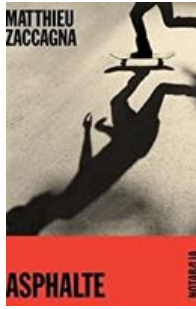
"Every man always withholds more stories than they suspect – or how a robbery of cufflinks give birth to a novel." – Hervé Le Tellier

Matthieu Zaccagna

ASPHALTE

(Asphalt)

Noir sur Blanc (Notabilia), January 2022, 144 pages



- ◇ English & German samples available.
- ◇ An extremely powerful, physical and modern first novel with a rare sense of absolute necessity.
- ◇ A deep and dense text with violent sensations and sentiments, yet one that is without pathos, carried along by changes of rhythm and the burning hot breath of the race and of running away.

At age 17, Victor flees a life of absolute violence. With no money, no ties, no help from anyone, he runs through Paris to the point of suffering, to the point of obliteration. He'll meet people, challenge himself, defy death time and again in order to reclaim his body and his past.

“Run with grueling determination, in a solid, resistant block. Force yourself, grit your teeth, squint your eyes, crush the asphalt. Run fast, feel alive, keep it urgent, never slow down, never give in. Breathe hard, mechanically, breathe in three times, breathe out three times, always, even when you're going uphill. Feel the burn, feel that you're ripping something out, something you're holding onto with your sweaty fingers and shaky hands. That thing you're gripping, wearing down, wearing out; that body you're purging, what in the name of all that's unholy can be inside it for you to need to punish it so? Progress through the neighborhoods in the north of the city. My thighs are a wreck. My knees are no better. I don't stop. I obliterate the pain. In the nascent dawn, the mist melts into the water of the canal. I don't know how much longer I can go on like this.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Matthieu Zaccagna was born in 1980. After studying business and communication, he moved to Paris, where he held all sorts of jobs in the cultural sector. Since 2006, he has been contributing to producing concerts at the Cité de la musique-Philharmonie de Paris. Asphalte is his first novel.

Hector Mathis

LANGUE MORTE

(Dead Language)

Buchet Chastel, January 2022, 256 pages



- ◇ The birth of a world. A disenchanting world with neither ideals nor gods, where relationships between humans are either economic or conflictual.
- ◇ The book has no black-and-white good and bad, and it's not nostalgic, either. It's just a boy's life tipping from one era into another.
- ◇ The whole is well served by a poetic and powerful writing style.

Standing in front of the apartment building where he grew up, a man remembers. End of an era, emergence of a new world. Langue morte is a fierce, funny and finely crafted novel.

Alone and distraught, the narrator is roaming around the streets of his childhood. He wanders through time as well, bringing his neighbors, parents and brother back to life.

Introduced to the theatre by his father, to foolishness by school and to death by his grandmother, he will be forced to flee to escape his own demons... From that bleakness to Austria, via Paris, southern France, Germany and Italy, the narrator will be confronted with his own idleness, suffering and anger, but will also find love, music and friendship. Those obsessive memories from his youth will lead him through the night to the dawn of a new era.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1993, Hector Mathis was raised in the suburbs of Paris, influenced by both literature and his friends. He is currently in charge of cultural relations for the Zola House/ Dreyfus Museum. His two former novels, KO and Carnaval were both published by Buchet Chastel.

Fabienne Lips-Dumas
LES VIRTUOSES DE BROOKLYN
(The Brooklyn Virtuosos)
 Anne Carrière, January 2022, 329 pages



- ◇ A subtle instrumentalist, Fabienne Lips-Dumas composed a beautiful book about legacy and the quest for one's truth, dotted with wonderful pages about music.
- ◇ A powerful eulogy of one's inner resistance and strength of soul.

A deeply moving first novel about legacy and the quest for one's truth, dotted with wonderful pages about music.

Anton Bauer is a young and solitary virtuoso, tethered to his piano keyboard in a Brooklyn basement. To remind him that outdoors, there are people with different lives, he has Dorothee, his wild and charismatic friend, a budding diva. On his way to the final tests of the international Frantz Liszt piano competition, Anton is convinced that his interpretation of the breathtaking Sontata in B minor will open to him the door to a brilliant international career. But, to conquer the Sonata, he needs a mentor. His meeting with Maud Szabor, a professor emeritus, will plunge him into another desperate love story with Liszt's work that will push him to his very limits and into the absolute hell of World War II.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Fabienne Lips-Dumas is a journalist and a film-maker. Her documentaries were selected and won awards at international festivals. The Brooklyn Virtuosos is her first novel.

Alizée Gau
MINUIT AU BORD DU MONDE
(Midnight at the Edge of the World)
 Le Cherche Midi, March 2022, 336 pages



- ◇ The first novel of a young poetess that is a lively blend of voyage of self-discovery and socio-political panorama.
- ◇ The author produced a photo reportage on modern-day post-war realities which has become a travelling exhibition called Tales of the afterwar.
- ◇ A story about people's capacity to renew themselves at the most critical junctures.

'The line separating good and evil passes [...] right through every human heart.' Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. A story of reconstruction and emancipation in which people and places merge into each other.

Leila is a Parisian musician who has just lost her grandfather, and her little brother has lapsed into a coma following the terrorist attacks of 2013. Tim is a war photographer who brushes with death on a daily basis. Leila travels to Zaramestria for the first time; it is an imaginary country nestled somewhere in the Balkans, torn apart by a civil war some thirty years ago. Drawn there by a curious sense of purpose, she learns about its history and the past conflicts that continue to haunt it, but she comes to it with a fresh and optimistic pair of eyes. Her introspective and dream-like account approaches the register of a fairy tale. By contrast, Tim expresses himself in a hyper-realistic, bitter and disillusioned voice. Shaped by his profession and all the violent and morbid images he has come across, he sees the dark side of Zaramestria – a country lost and stuck in the past. Between them, these two very different voices capture the lasting repercussions of war and the conflicts that have never been forgotten, which made the newspapers when there were still bombs but disappeared off the radar of the tabloids once the civilians had been disarmed.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Alizée Gau grew up at sea aboard a sailing ship before travelling around the ex-Yugoslavia, Georgia, Northern Island and Rwanda to document the work of peacekeepers. She is the author of a poetry collection entitled ÉTERNELS DÉBUTS and the creator of the Tales of the afterwar exhibition, which was awarded the Paris-Europe label for promoting cultural diversity. MINUIT AU BORD DU MONDE is her debut novel.

Quentin Bruet Ferreol
DIEU EST UN VOLEUR QUI MARCHE DANS LA
NUIT

(*God Will Come like a Thief in the Night*)
Bouquins, January 2022, 448 pages



- ◇ English sample available.
- ◇ A cross between a murder mystery and a coming-of-age story, this book is the fruit of a seven-year-long investigation of the Heaven's Gate cult, which attracted the world's attention with the mass suicide of 39 of its members in March, 1997
- ◇ Blending fact and fiction, the novel is a dizzying dive into one of the strangest anecdotes of the 20th century – and into the souls of members of the cult, who are more like us than we might care to imagine.
- ◇ Through his extraordinary, sometimes quixotic investigation, the author met several survivors of the Heaven's Gate cult, and entered into a dialogue that went on for years.

California. Thirty-nine corpses are found in a luxury villa. They are wearing black uniforms and brand-new sneakers, and purple cloths are draped over their faces. Death seems to have come upon them peacefully – there are no signs of a struggle. And yet an alarm signal is flashing on a computer screen on the first floor, a message in capital letter that reads: "Red Alert".

Twenty years before, in the mid-1970s: Young Bartholomew is at the end of his rope. A broke hippie, he's crashing on a friend's couch in a small town in the middle of nowhere in Oregon, after having failed at pretty much everything he has tried to do. Then one day he meets God himself in a motel, in the guise of a charismatic man in his 40s with a melodious voice and ideas about another world.

The young man decides to abandon everything and follow him around the United States. But that's just the beginning, because this mysterious god is demanding the impossible: Bartholomew has to renounce his humanity. If he succeeds, his spiritual teacher has promised to throw open Heaven's Gate for him.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Quentin Bruet-Ferreol, has been writing about cults and marginal practices for over 20 years (Vice, Slate, Europe 1). He is the founder of *Tryangle*, a "contemporary cabinet of curiosities for the Internet Age" focused on cults and the occult that is well-established on Instagram. He is frequently invited to speak on those topics by various YouTubers, particularly Sylar (250,000 subscribers), and has recently finished his first documentary film, about a French psychedelic artist.

Nicolas Geibel
LA CITÉ
(*The Town*)

Julliard, January 2022, 192 pages



- ◇ Written in the tradition of the American hard-boiled fiction, which inspires the dark and desperate atmosphere of the novel as well as its unflinching look on the failures of society.
- ◇ Nicolas Geibel retraces the ricochet effect of terrorism on the human psyche by highlighting the disintegration of social cohesion terrorism feeds off as well as the progressive dehumanization it gives rise to. Bordering on the Nouveau Roman, this novel unfolds its intrigue with surgical precision by omitting all feelings and moods of the characters. With its irresistible attraction, the violence of the images works like a black hole.
- ◇ A brilliant literary debut which delivers an uncompromising reflection on the nature of violence; a violence which is at the same time unintelligible, fascinating, endemic and capable of destroying all projects for a living together in peace.

What if one single picture would suffice to instill horror in people's minds? In this first hard-boiled novel brimming with an almost hypnotic suggestive power, Nicolas Geibel dazzles us with a unique and original universe.

One morning, the first photograph appears on the sidewalk of the Rue Faidherbe in Paris. Just one glance at the picture and two passing freshmen scream out in fear, collapsing on the spot. Alarmed by the boys' cries, passers-by rush to the scene and are seized by the same madness when they lay eyes on the unspeakable picture. A second photograph is mailed to the job centre. The secretary who opens the envelope is devastated by this inconceivable vision. Rapidly, an uncontrollable fear spreads among the population. Julien and Pierre, Special Forces attached to the ministry, go about the case in their usual methodical way. But what they are up against goes far beyond the usual kind of attacks that bereaved France of its citizens up until now. And can this kind of contagious horror be qualified as an attack properly speaking?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Nicolas Geibel is an associate professor of German literature and civilization and teaches in the Paris region. Born in Frankfurt, Germany, he moved to France at the age of 23 and chose French as the main language for his writing.

Dima Abdallah
BLEU NUIT
(Blue Night)

Sabine Wespieser, January 2022, 234 pages



A deeply moving portrait of a man haunted by the ghosts of the past. Bleu nuit is a powerfully human novel, a tale of the lost, forgotten souls on our streets, a portrayal of a magnificent character of equal light and shade, struggling with all his might to escape his demons.

“I walk a tightrope. I am the high-wire act crossing the line stretched taut across the abysses of memory. I must not fall. I am on a wire that risks snapping if I put a foot wrong”.

The author of this intense monologue spent years keeping his memories on a short leash. A journalist frozen into inaction at the thought of facing the world outside, he lives locked away in his flat, unbeknown to his employers. One phone call is all it takes to tip his life into chaos: Alma, the only woman he ever loved, has died. He cannot bring himself to attend her funeral. The very next day, he forces himself outside, dumping his keys in a drain and deciding to live in the street.

He sleeps somewhere new every night, always within easy reach of the Père Lachaise cemetery, seeking to exorcise the violent memories that assail him, the obsessive images of deep blue sea and scorching sun. Taking refuge in his newfound rootlessness, he fills his weeks with fleeting daily contacts with a handful of women and girls whose names rhyme with his lost love, Alma. Unwittingly, as if the figures had much to teach him about himself, buried memories wash over him: orchards in bloom, the tang of seaweed, the sweet scent of aniseed and jasmine.

He stops fighting the crushing tidal wave of the past that no ritual, no drink, no drugs could hold in check. Watched only by the faithful Minuit, a dog he found lying on a grave, he drops his guard, devoting his turbulent nights to retelling the living nightmare he has struggled in for so long – a nightmare he sought to leave behind when he crossed the Mediterranean.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: DIMA ABDALLAH was born in Lebanon in 1977 and moved to Paris in 1989. Her debut novel, MAUVAISES HERBES, was published by Sabine Wespieser in 2020 to considerable acclaim. BLEU NUIT confirms her status as an author of unique talent and brio.

Dima Abdallah
MAUVAISES HERBES
(Weeds)

Sabine Wespieser, August 2020, 240 pages



- ◇ **9,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Awarded the Prix “Envoyé par la Poste” 2020, Prix France-Liban de l’ADELF 2020**
- ◇ **Mention spéciale du Prix de la Littérature arabe 2020.**
- ◇ **A deep vein of tenderness runs through the text, in the child's tiny hand clasped in her father's fist and the scent of jasmine – fleeting vignettes recording her daily victories over a body colonised by the past.**

This beautiful debut novel is a detailed, deeply affecting account of the author's ongoing battle with memories of a childhood blown to ruins.

Outside, the gunfire intensifies. The children clustered in the school yard wait for their parents, tears pouring down their cheeks. The young girl narrating the arresting opening chapter is alone in remaining dry-eyed: she is just pleased that her “giant” is coming to collect her earlier than usual. Clutching one of his huge fingers in her tiny hand, she is sure to make it through the chaos safely.

Never complain. Hide your fears. Keep quiet. Leave home after home behind. The child born in Beirut during the civil war is used to it all.

The girl's father, whose narrative voice alternates with her own, knows that in this city of ruins, his power is negligible. As an intellectual, his refusal to join a particular faction or party will always count against him. Try though he might to reassure his family with his jokes and the tiny patches of garden he cultivates every time they move somewhere new, all he has to offer them is the knot of fear in his belly, his lucidity, and his silence.

The year his daughter turns twelve, the family goes into exile in Paris, leaving him behind. At first an outstanding student at her secondary school, she finds herself increasingly at odds with the world around her. Even in motherhood she never feels part of a group, seeking consolation in the presence of trees, flowers, and above all her beloved weeds, that she cannot bring herself to uproot.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dima Abdallah was born in Lebanon in 1977 and has been living in Paris since 1989. She studied archaeology, specialising in late Antiquity. Weeds is her literary debut.

Maruska Le Moing
AIMEZ-VOUS LES UNS LES AUTRES
(Love One Another)
Gallimard, January 2022, 176 pages



- ◇ **ONLY FOR POLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES**
- ◇ With abrasive humour and love aplenty, Maruska Le Moing masterfully stages, behind closed doors, the sweet madness of a woman drifting away.

How do you expedite the predicted and yet constantly postponed death of the mother you've hated ever since your childhood? Maybe by abducting her to make her disappear slowly but surely.

But to do that, you have to call your own bluff with the help of a stubborn Romanian woman, to abandon the lover who may certainly be violent but in whose arms you could nevertheless finally forget yourself, and send away a few too well-intentioned healthcare professionals...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A business school graduate (ESSEC) and holder of a BA in art history and psychology, Maruska Le Moing is a soprano singer and stage actress. AIMEZ-VOUS LES UNS LES AUTRES is her debut novel.

Natasha Kanapé Fontaine
NAUETAKUAN, UN SILENCE POUR UN BRUIT
(Nauetakuan Silence For Sound)
XYZ, November 2021, 216 pages



- ◇ In this debut novel, the author explores the theme of self-discovery through art.
- ◇ As we follow the protagonist along her journey, we learn fascinating things about Indigenous cultures and what heritage they share.

A quest for identity steeped in the poetry of its author, who uses powerful imagery to evoke shared emotions. A highly readable story of empowerment that restores confidence in the belief that we can marshal our heritage to make a future of our own design.

Monica is searching for her freedom, as well as her roots. She has just dropped out of a degree in art history when she has an epiphany at a vernissage. Monica feels a deep connection to the work of the First Nations artist: something about the wound she carries is expressed on these canvases, in these installations.

Thus begins Monica's quest to reconnect with what defines her. But she must also heal from the past violence of intergenerational trauma, a childhood uprooted from her culture, and relationships with toxic men. If she is to shed this baggage and return to Pessamit in peace, she will first need to meet with Indigenous women accross the continent to discuss the importance of passing on traditional arts and the power they hold for the next generation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Natasha Kanapé Fontaine is an Innu poet, actress, visual artist, and activist for Indigenous and environmental rights. She was born in Pessamit, Quebec.

UP-MARKET

Jeanne Benameur
LA PATIENCE DES TRACES
(Repairing the Wear and Tear of a Lifetime)
 Actes Sud, January 2022, 208 pages



- ◇ Under option in Ukraine (Old Lion).
- ◇ Dutch rights under offer.
- ◇ Shortlisted for the Prix France Télévisions 2022
- ◇ As always with Jeanne Benameur, it is a tale of winning one's freedom. The novel is an exploration of this necessary, delicate and yet often tiny shift of perspective that enables us to see ourselves differently and to arrive at a serene acceptance of the person that we see.
- ◇ It is a book of serenity and silence, both of which are built on fire, ferment and violence, conveyed in a sensual and limpid language that distils a humble, gentle and stubborn wisdom, hard-won from experience and conflict but ultimately, and patiently, victorious.

This novel charts a parallel path that reader and protagonist have in common, each connecting the dots of the author in order to complete the drawing. Amid the meanders of this intimate and solitary quest is a coming-of-age novel and a story of youth, burning passion, a devastated friendship, a love, and a journey. And also an ode to swimming, to water, to silences and to encounters, all conveyed with a remarkable authenticity.

As a psychoanalyst, Simon has made a career out of listening to others, but at the risk of enveloping his own story in silence. Courtesy of a breach in his daily routine – a broken bowl – the moment arrives for him to finally confront himself. This inner journey begins with a true departure from one shore to another and to the distant Japan, with its rituals, its kintsugi (the ancestral art of repairing wear and tear), and its ancient cloths.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1952 in Algeria to a Tunisian father and Italian mother, Jeanne Benameur arrived in France with her family at the age of five. Among her novels published by Actes Sud are PROFANES (2013, Grand Prix du Roman RTL/Lire), OTAGES INTIMES (2015, Prix Version Femina 2015, Prix Libraires en Seine 2016), L'ENFANT QUI (2017) and more recently CEUX QUI PARTENT (2019, Prix des Lecteurs de Corse 2020).

Elena Piacentini
LES SILENCES D'OGLIANO
(Ogliano's Silences)
 Actes Sud, January 2022, 208 pages



- ◇ In the final selection of the prix de La Closerie des Lilas
- ◇ The tale of the advent of adulthood and the grand awakening of the senses that comes with it, as well as a story of the injustice of being born into one clan rather than another, of belonging to one class and line of descent rather than another, and of the desire to change the world.

An adventure novel full of devouring passions, heavy secrets, and questions of honour and dignity.

The party is in full swing at the Villa Rose to celebrate the graduation of Raffaele, the young heir of the wealthy Delezio family. Everyone is reunited for the occasion except for Argentina, the mother of the novel's main protagonist Libero. There's Baron Delezio; his wife, the young and divine Tessa on whom everyone's eyes are trained; César, the former carabinieri turned jeweller, who is like a father to Libero; and the many other guests. But the festivities are cut short by the discovery of the lifeless body of 'Herminia the Madwoman' in the little chapel on the estate. And the next day, the baron's son is abducted. Libero risks his own life as he sets out to find and free the young man who is in love with Antigone, traversing the high plains of Argentu and penetrating the depths of the fairy grottos. The quest transforms him and he emerges from it more a man than a teenager, consumed by desire and passion. And he also finally discovers his father's identity, which Argentina had hidden from him all these years by claiming that he was dead. Can he bring himself to accept his long line of descent?

It is a true mosaic: a fresco of human society and of characters who have suffered too long from the code of silence imposed by their families and their origins. And it is also the story of the village of Ogliano and those who live within its walls, and of the high plateaux, the cemeteries, the caves, and the grandeur of the landscapes.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Elena Piacentini is from Corsica and lives in Lille. Following on from several crime novels which have won several prizes, LES SILENCES D'OGLIANO is her first literary novel to be published by Actes Sud.

Claire Vigarello
OÙ NAISSENT LES HÉROÏNES
(Where Heroines are Born)
 Albin Michel, April 2022, 416 pages



- ◇ **First print run: 25,000 copies.**
- ◇ Positioning and promoting like Katherine Pancol's novels.
- ◇ The main character is touching and very endearing.
- ◇ Mischievous and madly tender, delightful from the first page to the last, Claire Vigarello's novel is an irresistible invitation to awaken the heroine that is slumbering inside you.

What can you do when you are painfully shy, overweight, with a husband on the dole and problems at work? Transform your miserable life into a flamboyant novel!

"It didn't happen in a day, or a month, or even a year. It took time, probably quite some time, but the result was undeniable: Sylvie had become invisible. The world had labelled her fat, shy, clumsy. In a nutshell, uninteresting. The world had excluded her. It wasn't entirely disagreeable. It was like sitting in a warm, comfortable train and watching the pictures of the landscape fly by. Other people spoke up, took decisions, commitments, yelled and argued, happily skinning each other alive, and in the meantime, Sylvie took notes that nobody read, not even her. She was no more significant than a little beetle that had crawled, at 7 in the morning, beneath the windows of MaBelleNuit, the specialized upmarket 'made in France' mattress makers for whom she had been working for six years."

"She wasn't afraid of being alone in the midst of others. Now, she had Charlotte by her side. Her heroine did not have painful knee joints, no spare tyres to hide, no tummy to pull in, no bags under her eyes to disguise, no grey hairs. Charlotte was a queen, and Sylvie shared in her radiance."

"Her heroine did not judge Sylvie, what did she care if she was laid off, or that she lived in a dilapidated house with a complicated family and a deeply depressed husband? Charlotte wanted to live, she wanted to enjoy life, she would say, 'Let's go girl! What do we care? The world is ours!'"

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1975 in Paris, Claire Vigarello is works in film editing. But impossible to cross the desire to write which tormented her. So, about ten years ago, she embarked on screenplay writing. *Where Heroines Are Born* is her first novel.

Sophie de Baere
LES AILES COLLÉES
(Glued Wings)
 JC Lattès, February 2022, 240 pages



- ◇ **Selected for the Prix Françoise Sagan 2022 and the Prix Maison de la Presse.**
- ◇ A novel about first love, adolescence, pleasure and pain in the same vein as *The Secret of Brokeback Mountain*.
- ◇ It is also about how little we sometimes know about those around us, and ultimately about our own selves, and mostly our own hearts.

Love is no doubt the most beautiful and necessary mystery, but also the most dreadful. A poignant account of friendship and burning desire, this novel poetically explores what could have been and what could still be.

In his teen years, Paul meets Joseph who enjoys a bohemian lifestyle and who is everything Paul is not: confident, untroubled and free to do as he pleases. He soon becomes a breath of fresh air for Paul who is suffocating in his bourgeois family between a perpetually absent father and a mother who drinks to forget she is a neglected wife.

Joseph is his only true friend, and perhaps more. But before they have the time to explore their feelings, others get involved. Cruel and belligerent adolescents descend upon the pair with mockery and violence. Joseph runs away and Paul is left alone to face the crushing waves of hate. While adults look the other way, Paul slowly dies inside. Years later, he marries Ana. When she is pregnant, Joseph resurfaces, and all their memories resurface with him.

A poignant account of friendship and burning desire, *Les ailes collées* poetically explores what could have been and what could still be.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sophie de Baere has degrees in literature and philosophy. She lives and teaches in Nice and is also author and composer of French songs. Her first novel *LES CORPS CONJUGAUX* will soon be published in paperback with Le Livre de Poche.

Delphine Saubaber
LA FILLE DE LA GRÊLE
(The Girl of the Hail)
 JC Lattès, January 2022, 208 pages



- ◇ It is a story about the lies we tell the ones we love to protect them, and a powerful reflection on what and whom we are forced to leave behind in order to change our destinies.
- ◇ A poetic and moving novel on childhood, ageing, folly, guilt and the supreme force of Nature.

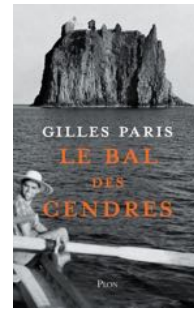
A moving novel about a woman at the end of her life who reveals the truth about her difficult childhood growing up on a farm. In particular about her relationship with her brother, who is not like other boys, and their violent father.

A poignant and bittersweet novel about what we must leave behind to make a new life for ourselves, and the secrets we keep to protect the ones we love most. As a child, Marie grows up in poverty on a farm in rural France (Occitania), with her parents and brother Jean, who is not like other people. As she nears adulthood, Marie yearns to leave her humble origins behind and to make a new life for herself in Paris, where she eventually pursues a successful career and has a daughter of her own, Adèle. Now at the end of her life, it is finally time for her to tell the truth about her past, and reveal its dark secrets, before it is too late.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Delphine Saubaber is a journalist and used to be a special correspondent for L'Express. Recipient of the Albert Londres award in 2010, she is the author, with Henri Haget, of the critically acclaimed VIES DE MAFIA (Stock, 2010).

“One doesn't emerge unscathed from this subtle psychological novel. It's as cruel as life is. And it's beautiful.” – l'Express

Gilles Paris
LE BAL DES CENDRES
(The Waltz Of The Ashes)
 Plon, April 2022, 312 pages



Various couples are savouring their holidays on the island of Stromboli. The men are sensitive, cowardly, unfaithful, selfish and childish. The women are strong, resilient, light-hearted and in love. The reawakening of the volcano turns their lives upside down. Might this summer of peril be the price to pay for emancipation?

The action takes place at the Strongyle, a hotel in Stromboli where several couples and families are staying. There is also a 10-year-old child called Tom, who is inseparable from the mysterious Gris, whom he is the only one to spend any time with along with his brother and sister. And lastly there is Giulia, a teenager who has grown up too quickly following the death of her mother. All of these characters get to know each other, come to appreciate each other, and in some cases even fall in love with each other. And then the volcano erupts and seals the separate fates of everyone in this choral novel. The hotel owner Guillaume de la Salle is a Frenchman who shares a shady past in French military intelligence with his business partner Matheo. Other clients take up residence over the course of the summer. But the still-active volcano is about to reawaken, just like the guilty consciences of this diverse cast of characters. This is to be the summer of peril.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Gilles Paris is the author of eight novels, all of which have been critically lauded. His bestselling AUTOBIOGRAPHIE D'UNE COURGETTE was made into an animated film that won a prestigious César award as well as many other prizes.

Élodie Garnier
JE M'ATTENDAIS À TOUT SAUF À NOUS
(Then You Came Along)
 Fayard, May 2022, 300 pages



Once you've experienced true love, can it happen again?

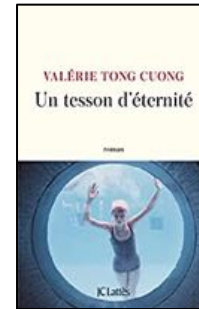
Élodie has given up on love after a painful breakup. Then one day, she meets Emmanuelle, a 35-year-old architect formerly married to a Japanese businessman and the mother of a son, Thomas, who lives with his father.

Élodie's feels the stirrings of love in her veins, as the gray days of heartbreak give way to happiness. With Emmanuelle at her side, Élodie is willing to start life afresh, to believe in life and love once more. The two women move in together, get married, and give birth to a daughter with the help of assisted reproductive technology.

But a few years down the road, the addition of the now teenage Thomas to their blended family, Emmanuelle's repeated absences, her father's homophobia, and her constant clashing with her ex-husband, threaten the foundations of their seemingly unshakeable love. Is Emmanuelle really the missing better half Élodie thought she was?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Élodie Garnier was born in 1987. Following the success of her debut novel, *Juste une fois pour essayer* (Fayard, 2020), she delivers a second, true-to-life love story with its share of doubting, pain, and passion.

Valérie Tong Cuong
UN TESSON D'ÉTERNITÉ
(A Shard Of Eternity)
 JC Lattès, August 2021, 300 pages



- ◇ **OPTION: RUSSIA (NO Age / Polyandria).**
- ◇ **30,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **This novel, carried by a breath and a real dramatic tension, questions the hidden part of each of us and the consequences when it emerges.**
- ◇ **An uncompromising novel about a social facade that suddenly disintegrates; a fascinating reflection on the roots of evil.**

What is left of little Anna Lacourt in the fiercely contained life of Anna Gauthier, a seemingly cheerful woman, respected by all?

Anna Gauthier leads a quiet, sheltered existence between her pharmacy, her villa overlooking the Mediterranean Sea and her close-knit family. In a situation of social unrest, an incident occurs and her son Léo, a high-school student with no prior history, gets caught up in the justice system. Anna is powerless as she watches her world fall apart around her, a world she built up brick by brick, carefully measuring each step to maintain complete control.

What happens when, over the course of a summer, a grain of sand jams up the machine and shatters all pretense?

Through this powerfully emotional and intense portrait of a woman, *A Shard of Eternity* goes back to Anna's early life and breaks through the sequestered memory of a sacrificed childhood that never should have seen the light of day.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Valerie Tong Cuong is the author of twelve novels, among which, *L'ATELIER DES MIRACLES* (JC Lattès, 2013, Nice Baie des Anges Award), *PAR AMOUR* (JC Lattès, 2017), recipient of numerous awards, among which, the Prix des lecteurs du Livre de Poche, and *LES GUERRES INTÉRIEURES*. Her works have been translated into 19 languages and have sold over 100,000 copies.

"The author dives deep to explore the abyss of guilt and the ravages of repression. Intense and very dark, this is a novel that grabs us by the throat. The meaning of the title is revealed in a startling scene at the very last page." L'OBS

Marie Barthelet
LE JARDIN DES SANGARDE
(The Sangarde Garden)
 Buchet Chastel, May 2022, 368 pages



- ◇ This novel opens like a tale of disillusionment and evolves into a story of letting go, rebuilding and redemption.

Eve is a devoted, demanding academic who pours all of her time and energy into her research and teaching. Her career has impressed everyone around her, when the first symptoms of a strange malady appear. Although the malady is clearing winning, she tries to ignore the warning signs, stubbornly acting as though nothing's wrong until the day she collapses at a major conference. Then she finally takes a good look at herself and wonders: who is that anxious, wasted looking woman staring at me in the mirror?

Obliged to take sick leave, Eve tries to find meaning in the pain that has laid her low. Like it or not, she lets her mother and her friend Laura tend to her. Then a serious accident caused by Eve's weakness changes everything.

Unable to bear her city or her life any longer, Eve flees to her grandmother's house in the snow-covered Morvan countryside. There she tries to forget and to forgive herself. While taming her ancestor's garden as it emerges from winter, she is gradually able to connect with, understand, accept and even love the other she has become. A springtime to find a new place for herself in the world of the living.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Marie Barthelet, 33, lives in southern France. She is a heritage professional, in charge of the Pont Saint-Esprit Museum. So far she has published two novels with Buchet Chastel, *CELUI-LÀ EST MON FRÈRE* in 2016 and *DAMALIS*, in 2018. *CELUI-LÀ EST MON FRÈRE* was longlisted for the First Novel Award.

Dorothee Werner
N'AVANCE QUE DÉARMÉ
(Go Forward Unarmed)
 Fayard, February 2022, 250 pages



- ◇ Dorothee Werner's powerfully poetic narrative tells the story of two inspiring characters who plunge into the magic of the night to forget for a moment their fate in life – and with it, the fate of humanity. Along the way, she reminds us of the necessity of abandoning ourselves to the miracle of chance encounters.
- ◇ This is the majestic new novel we have eagerly been waiting for from Dorothee Werner since her last title, *Au nom des nuits profondes* (Fayard, 2017), which was lauded by the press.

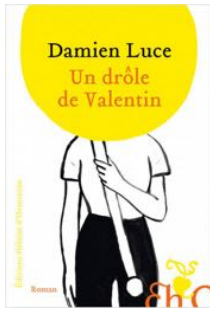
Two lovers meet for their fifth date at an airport between flights. Around them the first warning bells of the apocalypse to come are sounding, brought about by climate change, and it seems that everything is an obstacle to their nascent relationship. But love has a way of growing roots, even in the most hostile of terrains.

He is a diplomat. He knows all the texts of the major international treaties by heart, paragraph by paragraph, but he dreams of being a poet. She is a film editor, who sees the world in terms of shot/reverse shot. She knows it is impossible to edit life the way you can film, except when memory and writing combine to turn certain episodes into inspiring rushes. One night at an airport, the two are meeting for the fifth time. He is on a layover, and she has hurried from a nearby city to spend a few hours with him in that nondescript space.

Under a cloud of climate change and looming apocalypse, they mutually agree there is no way forward for them, as if their past commitments and the state of the world had come up with a scheme to deprive them of a future. But doesn't love grow even stronger when the present is the only thing two people can commit to?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dorothee Werner is the author of *Au nom des nuits profondes* (Fayard, 2017).

Damien Luce
UN DRÔLE DE VALENTIN
(What a Strange Valentine)
 Héloïse d'Ormesson, April 2022, 304 pages



- ◇ A loving and irresistibly fable.
- ◇ Damien Luce advocates the values of friendship and sorority with four strong female protagonists as endearing as they are quirky!

They are four Friends, self-proclaimed nonconformists and a little bit feminists.

There is Blanche the romantic cop, Capucine the shy bookworm, Suzanne the deadpan shrink and Laura the loud pragmatic Argentinian. Their bond unexpectedly faces death when Blanche refuses to let go of her deceased lover, her beloved Valentine. A survival blanket and a Siberian cold help her to put her fanciful plan into action. Once they overcome the shock, the quartet is even closer.

And through tenderness and affection, the trio manage to convince Blanche to let go and accept the loss of her lover. They can count on the support of a bell founder who dances tango and an unreadable taciturn. Together, they will stamp on prejudice and find the solution to imagine a poetic grave worthy of Valentine.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Damien Luce was born in Paris in 1978. He is a composer, pianist, playwright, actor and a novelist. This polyphonic artist wrote three novels: LE CHAMBRIOLEUR, CYRANO DE BOUDOU and LA FILLE DE DEBUSSY, as well as an essay, Claire de plume, winner of the “prix Folire 2017”. All were published by Héloïse d'Ormesson.

Marine Westphal
OLYMPE, MAUVAISE GRAINE
(A Bad Seed)
 Stock, March 2022, 208 pages



- ◇ A novel sustained by poetic writing reminiscent of Boris Vian, Edward Scissorhands and Miyazaki's most beautiful films.

A coming-of-age novel suffused with magic realism, following the fortunes of a girl who lives on the streets of Paris.

Olympe is an orphan growing up among crooks. She was given the name Olympe by Luis, the ringleader who found her as a baby in a cardboard box for Olympus cameras. They have to steal to survive. She learns about silence, fighting, solidarity (which is rare) and betrayal (which is frequent). One day, Luis is captured by another gang and dies. This leads to full-scale gang war, police intervention, hospital... and while a solitary, intubated Olympe wanders around her hospital ward, a strange man appears. His skin seems to be made of tree bark and he tends to endangered plants; he will heal this “bad seed”.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Marine Westphal was awarded two writer's grants for this novel. She works as a nurse in eastern France and is also a professional dancer. Her book La Téméraire was published by Stock in 2017.

CONTEMPORARY

Inès Bayard
STEGLITZ
(Steglitz)

Albin Michel, January 2022, 224 pages



A novel of investigation that dissects the tortuous inner life of a woman.

Leni lives with her husband Yvan, a respected architect, on the top floor of a building in Berlin. She likes the life they lead, no surprises almost always quiet. What she likes best is walking alone in their neighbourhood. She spends hours looking at the windows which look like those little puppet theatres her mother used to take her on Sunday afternoons. But one day Lieutenant Ziegler rings their doorbell, an investigation about an incident in their district. He talks about gunshots... Is this a pretext for something else? What does he really want to know? Is this man really who he is pretending to be?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Inès Bayard is 30. She authored LE MALHEUR DU BAS, 15,000 copies sold in France and translated into nine languages, published in 2018 by Albin Michel. STEGLITZ is her second novel.

Benoît Duteurtre
DÉNONCEZ-VOUS LES UNS LES AUTRES
(Denounce Each Other!)

Fayard, February 2022, 198 pages



- ◇ Against a tyrannical backdrop a group of disparate characters try to survive the perils of denunciation.
- ◇ Wickedly funny and eerily prescient

No need to present Benoît Duteurtre, whose novel La Petite fille et la cigarette (Fayard, 2005), seduced readers around the world. He is back with another darkly humorous satire set in a fast-approaching future, where citizens are called on to anonymously denounce each other for a myriad of social misdemeanours (sexism, pollution, etc.).

An inventive novel set in a fictional universe where, much like the world we live in, good intentions can lead to authoritarian rules: a system of anonymous denunciation to fight sexism, a mandatory recycling program subject to Kafkaesque regulations, the obligation for meat-eaters to slaughter the animals they eat, and a “retroactive brigade” mandated to search the pasts of the general public... A world where any person found guilty of inappropriate speech or complicity in ecosystem destruction is forced to make a public confession.

Life in this cruel society can be pushed to tragic farcical extremes. Take Barack, for example, a student who is afraid of sleeping with his girlfriend for fear of being accused of sexual harassment. Then there is Mao, a former entertainment executive who believes power and money will absolve him from all wrongdoing. Not to mention a young girl named Robert, a sardonic observer of the absurdities of the era, and Giuseppe, an intractable old man living in his own private fairyland. Each in their own way will strive to get by as best as they can, in a world of good intentions where “denouncing is not only a duty but considered an act of courage”.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Benoît Duteurtre’s newest dystopian farce continues the tradition of his earlier novels LA PETITE FILLE ET LA CIGARETTE (Fayard, 2005) and L’ORDINATEUR DU PARADIS (Gallimard, 2014).

Mahir Guven
LES INNOCENTS
(The Innocent Ones)
 Grasset, March 2022, 424 pages



- ◇ This novel brilliantly mixes the tragic and the wonderful, the lightness of first times and the scrutiny of adult age.
- ◇ In a tender, musical and joyful prose, full of humour and vitality, this evokes some of the best texts of Romain Gary.
- ◇ Mahir Guven, also wrote the widely acclaimed debut novel **GRAND FRÈRE**, winner of the Prix Goncourt 2018 in the category “First novel”.

A magnificent contemporary drama that brings to light the lives of the invisible and the humble: the youth of the French suburban middle classes, living off the city's periphery.

Noé Stéphan, 35 years old, is detained by the police. He is accused of premeditated murder of his friend, who had beaten up his own wife. Noah pleads his innocence; it was an accident. As Noé's wife Ayla, a lawyer, is delaying joining him at the police station, the interrogation becomes more and more violent. Noé tries to escape but heats his head and is thrown into the cell half-unconscious. He is about to die, he calls for help, and it is at this moment that the memories of his childhood appear: here he is before the court of his own conscience, presided by his mother. To get out free Noé must prove to the court that he is innocent. So how did he get there? Here he is as a child, at Saint-Sébastien-sur-Loire, near Nantes. An innocent age marked by the absence of a father, and with a mother, La Joce, who works as a temp to support Noé and his brother, a philosophy student. On his mother's order, Noé plays with the girls at the playground to avoid violence but finds himself the victim of a gang of boys. First loves, first times come and go, while the absent father – a sailor in the family legend but actually in prison – dies in a car accident the day of his dismissal. Noé then continues to grow up without a reference paternal figure. On the verge of his adolescence, Noé learns that his father was part of a Breton independence network and decides to investigate his past. With love in all its guises, sport, sex, parties and fights, he discovers the violence inherent to life. Beware of mother Joce's judgement... if he wakes up from the coma into which the head trauma plunged him.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Mahir Guven is born in 1986, he was executive director of *America* and *Le 1* journals and is currently the literary director of La Grenade collection of the JC Lattès publishing house. In 2017, he published **GRAND FRÈRE** (éditions Philippe Rey), Prix Goncourt du premier roman 2018, Prix Première 2018, Prix Régine-Deforges 2018, Prix de la Francophonie 2018, finalist for the Prix Médicis 2017, translated into fourteen languages. **LES INNOCENTS** is his second novel.

Gérald Bronner
COMME DES DIEUX
(Like Gods)
 Grasset, January 2022, 304 pages



- ◇ This novel is a metaphysical quest that is at the same time funny, powerful and essential: what if Jesus really did come back, how long would the society of the spectacle be interested in him?
- ◇ A jubilant and dark text, finely analysing our human behaviour while questioning the possibility of the sublime in a disenchanted world.

A reality show to choose a god? This is the crazy and brilliant idea launched by an American evangelical church. The principle is simple: after a gigantic casting session conducted throughout the world, thirteen candidates chosen for their extraordinary aptitudes, real or pretended, compete in the show He is alive! and it is up to the people - us, the millions of television viewers - to vote for the modern-day messiah.

Who will they elect? Martin Schnapper whose heart-shaped tattoo bleeds like a stigma? Lei, who claims to have never slept in his life and who, being Asian, considers his chances of being chosen by providence to be statistically superior? Or the beautiful Dorothy Olsen, daughter of Colorado farmers, who resurrects animals and has no known mother on Earth?

This eccentric project cannot fail to attract the attention of Jeff Jefferson, a Franco-American academic who, some twenty years ago, wrote his thesis on the sectarian group that is now giving rise to this evangelical revolution. Here he is pulled from his melancholy and fully immersed into a television phenomenon in the heart of America.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Gérald Bronner is a novelist and sociologist. He has published three novels, the latest of which, **COMMENT JE SUIS DEVENU UN SUPERHÉROS** (*How I Became a Superhero*), now in paperback at LGF, has just been released on Netflix. After **DÉCHÉANCE DE RATIONALITÉ** (Grasset 2019), **APOCALYPSE COGNITIVE**, his latest essay, published by PUF in 2021, has sold over 45,000 copies.

Adrien Borne
LA VIE QUI COMMENCE
(Life Begins)
 JC Lattès, January 2022, pages



Inspired by a true story, this novel explores a major issue in society today – An urgent and necessary read.

It is the middle of summer and Gabriel, age 12, is home alone. He is lying down on the living room rug watching the Tour de France, savoring a bowl of ice cream. Pure freedom. The doorbell rings. Standing there at the front door is the camp counselor in his red jogging suit, the one who came to his room every morning during summer camp. But this time, Gabriel says no and shuts the door. And in the time it takes for him to lie down again in front of the television, it's as if none of it had ever happened.

20 years later Gabriel returns to Tonnerre to help his grandfather, Lucien, sift through his belongings before his house is put up for sale. He especially wants to find out why this grumpy, old, solitary man has devoted his whole life to the mysterious Fosse Dionne, a resurgent spring, in the heart of the town.

But, there is something else, a presence he would like to make disappear. Gabriel's legs tingle with strange impatience and he feels a violence about to explode. As he explores the depths of the Fosse Dionne, searching for Lucien's secret, he delves deep into his own memory. He feels an urgency to travel back to that green room to try to piece together, one by one, the mosaic of images in his mind. Until the truth finally surfaces.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Adrien Borne, age 40, is a journalist and author of a first critically acclaimed novel, MEMOIRES DE SOIE, (Lattès 2020). This author has earned several awards: Prix Alain Fournier, Prix de la ville d'Angoulême, prix des Lecteurs de Levallois and prizewinner at the Festival du premier roman de Chambéry.

« A devastating novel about a childhood trauma. » - *Le Figaro littéraire*

Joël Baqué
LE ZOO DES ABSENTS
(The Zoo Of The Absentees)
 POL, January 2022, 192 pages



◇ This dystopic farce pushes to the point of absurdity our wildest questions about tomorrow's world.

René Cornet, a middle-class Frenchman born in the southern wine region, has an incredible destiny. He spent all his professional life as an accountant in a delicatessen, the "Salaisons occitanes." Upon his well-earned retirement, his life changes drastically. He meets Stella, a vegetarian supermarket cashier, who introduces him to a new world, the world of veganism and antispecism. This discovery will win over the boredom of his eventless existence. More or less reluctantly, René decides to join his new friends in Switzerland, and takes part in an enormous, visionary project, the Global Animals Project, a radical antispecist project that intends to change the world by eliminating animal suffering, using all possible means to liquidate predators of nature, both animal and human.

He is hired as an accountant for the futurist Swiss foundation, but his "perfect genetic profile" makes him the ideal guinea pig for the ultimate experience: creating very special holograms. This strange invention is named Cornetton after our hero. The Cornetton is conceived as a fabric of digital jinns, which reproduce for the future the "absentees" of the old world, meaning all the violent, carnivorous specimens, in order to create the "Zoo of the Absentees," with René's hologram as guide and eternal guardian.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Joël Baqué, who worked as a riot squad agent and judicial police officer, is a novelist and a poet based in Nice. P.O.L has published his five books. The last two were *Melting Ice* (2017) and *The Tree of Knowledge* (2019).

François Cusset
FINALE FANTASIE
 (Final Fantasy)
 POL, February 2022, pages

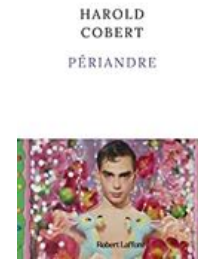


Four old friends at the end of the race decide to live together in a rickety, joyous sort of phalanstery, to avoid nursing homes or sunny exile in a town providing medical care. They call this refuge “Final Fantasy.”

Bob the giant, Leila the mystic, Suzanne the worrywart and the narrator live on the top floor of this ageless building, with a rusty caddy in the entrance and sparse patches of grass on the terrace. They have chosen to live together. On high, nothing disturbs them. They hang out, grumble and hobble along. The narrator tells their stories, as if their petty rituals could push back their expiry date. This lifelong joint occupancy of the very old is a token of their immortality. But play as they may, chat while making dinner, get heated up over revolts and welcome the injured demonstrators, imagine themselves as the last beautiful people and trace their old trajectories on a map of Paris, they won't be able to keep death at bay for long. And so they remain quiet, and one of them becomes the diarist of this tender, acidic shipwreck. He writes about pain and jokes, along with the soft sensation of decline. As the months go by, how can they be sure that friendship and silence are still relevant? Death knocks at the door. Love is in the air, and the narrator writes: “It could even make me ecstatic, the bastard, one last time.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: François Cusset, born in 1969, is a professor at Nanterre University. He spent the nineties in New York before writing several essays on contemporary intellectual and political history (namely *French Theory*, La Découverte, 2005). P.O.L has published two of his novels: *À L'ABRI DU DECLIN DU MONDE* (2012) and *LES JOURS ET LES JOURS* (2015).

Harold Cobert
PÉRIANDRE
 (Periander)
 Robert Laffont, January 2022, 208 pages



- ◇ **Long-listed for the Grand Prix RTL-Lire Magazine Littéraire 2022**
- ◇ **A modern rewrite of an ancient myth.**
- ◇ **A best-selling author:**
- ◇ **His first successful novel, *A Winter with Baudelaire*, published in 2009, has sold over 30,000 copies in France and almost 100,000 abroad – 50,000 in Germany alone.**
- ◇ ***The Chickadee and the She Ogre*, published in 2016, has sold over 6,700 copies and has been adapted into a television movie by Yves Rénier – *The Hunt*, broadcasted in 2021 on the major channel TF1.**
- ◇ ***Belle-Amie*, published by Les Escales in 2019 and reprinted by Pocket in 2020 has already sold 6,300 copies.**

Exploring the Periander complex in an uncompromisingly intelligent and highly precise way, Harold Cobert narrates the rise and fall of a boy who has become a man and the cold insanity of a mother. The result is a brilliantly entertaining novel that skillfully blends modernism with tradition and myth with suspense.

A woman gets pregnant with a boy, but she not only becomes a mother: from now on, she is invested with the most sacred of all missions in the universe which is to bear a child. She is a whole reigning over the whole world – like Cratea, incestuous and possessive mother to Periander, second tyrant of Ancient Corinth. Thus mother and son become united by a fusional and necessarily unhealthy relationship. Even though the mother has abandoned her art studies to dedicate herself entirely to the upbringing of her son, she counts on her child to accomplish her destiny and by so doing to glorify herself. And this is how the son, down the years, becomes the masterpiece of his mother: a seductive man, a brilliant art expert and appraiser who excels in everything...Until the day he meets his future wife. The omnipresent, intrusive and perverse mother accepts her daughter in law, but only to be able to manipulate, smother and break her. How could she ever measure up to her? And when her daughter in law gets pregnant with a boy, the mother knows that this little child, her grandson, her own flesh, will be, he too, her own masterpiece...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Harold Cobert is a writer who has published already several novels. The most successful of them are *A Winter with Baudelaire* (2009), and *Belle-Amie* (2019). He also writes screenplays for television.

Delphine Benattar
LE TEMPS D'UNE AUTRE
(Another Woman's Time)
 Anne Carrière, June 2022, 250 pages



An hypnotic novel about marital life that explores the issue of desire within the couple.

« I never thought I would like the idea of being my husband's mistress. I would never have imagined I would become this mistress one day. And even less that I would want to maintain this new identity. »

Delphine Benattar offers the reader an hypnotic novel about marital life and explores the mechanism of couple dynamics with extreme and impressive lucidity. At a time when marriage is not highly rated anymore, the author reinvents the story of desire and mad love.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Delphine Benattar is an actress and a writer. After *As I Recall* (*SI MES SOUVENIRS SONT BONS*), published in 2021 at Éditions Anne Carrière, she continues her reflection about love in her second novel.

Denis Lachaud
LE SILENCE D'INGRID BERGMAN
(The Silence of Ingrid Bergman)
 Actes Sud, March 2022, 304 pages



Why have two women never attempted to escape their prison? How can his power over them vanquish their own will, although that same willpower is the very key to their survival?

A 14-year-old child is abducted on her way back from the beach. She is a Danish girl on holiday in the south-west of France. She recognises the attractive young man who has been smiling at her for several days and who on that particular afternoon offers to give her a lift back to the campsite. Lone knows that she shouldn't, but she likes the boy and so she gets into his car. She never makes it back to the campsite and disappears for forty long years, until one morning when the doors are finally opened.

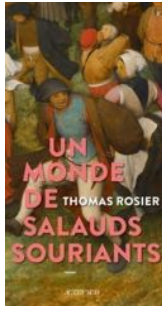
At the start of the book we learn that he has been calling her Ingrid for a very long time and that she now has the run of the whole house, not just the cellar. Forty years have passed, and she has only left the house once in that time, accompanying him in the car. She has forgotten her Danish and now speaks French without an accent. She has also forgotten her actual first name, has learnt how to live with fear, and above all she has learnt how to pretend in order to survive in the presence of this man who has given her a daughter named Rosalie. A child who has never left this almost invisible detached house in the suburbs of Paris, hidden amidst the vegetation of a garden. When the story begins, Rosalie is 35 years old.

And then one morning everything comes crashing down: the man has a heart attack and the door finally opens onto an alternative life and a freedom that obliges these women to rebuild their mental worlds in order to testify to what they have endured and reappropriate a sense of identity that has been taken from them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Denis Lachaud is a playwright, director and actor. He conducts the research for his creative endeavours in prisons, hospitals, universities, schools and companies. Following on from *LES MÉTÈQUES*, this is his ninth novel to be published by Actes Sud.

Thomas Rosier
UN MONDE DE SALAUDS SOURIANTS

(A World of Smiling Bastards)
Actes Sud, April 2022, 240 pages



- ◇ Three voices – set against other more fleeting voices – carry the novel: three solitary characters who are symptomatic of our age and embody each in their own way a visceral reaction to the excesses and injunctions of contemporary life.
- ◇ Three human beings contending with the tentacles of a dominant capitalist system who, conscious of all the dead ends that this implies, are looking for the best way of avoiding falling into the trap.

Self-isolating is not always a healthy affair. Japan has fallen prey to a growing phenomenon that sometimes strikes as early as adolescence. Known as hikikomori, there are people who withdraw from the world and live as hermits, their only interaction with the outside world being through their computer screens and/or their bedroom doors.

This state of affairs can sometimes last for years, and it would seem that this form of social isolation has begun to extend beyond the borders of Japan. One day Lucas has an exam at the faculty but realises that he's no longer up to it. So he goes home and effectively imprisons himself in what feels like a slightly uncomfortable observation post. He knows the situation is untenable over the longer term and yet he feels relatively protected.

By contrast, the ultra-sensitive Mélanie seeks to navigate the unpredictable vicissitudes of life, embracing the margins of society on instinct, partying, and venting her anger at various demonstrations. An academic without tenure and a researcher in psychology and sociology, she is politically engaged and has not entirely given up on the idea of changing the world. She is lucid, but rebellious nevertheless.

And then there is Michel, a plastic surgeon from the money-obsessed generation who hides his demons behind the slick façade of success and is building his empire on the fragilities of other people. In the face of the exponentially rising demands of contemporary life, he places his expertise at the service of the countless ways in which people seek to boost their egos. He is not taken in by the system, but he does intend to take full advantage of it, no matter what risks that may entail.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Thomas Rosier was born in Villeurbanne in 1981. He studied political science, urban planning and carpentry, and opted to make a career out of the latter option. Written between two building projects, UN MONDE DE SALAUDS SOURIANTS is his debut novel.

Isabelle Stibbe
A SPELL ON YOU

(A Spell On You)
Le Cherche Midi, January 2022, 156 pages



- ◇ A refined and sensitive handling of an infanticide that made the headlines and an original perspective that raises the question of ances.
- ◇ A form that is inspired by Greek tragedy while paying tribute to Senegalese culture, to emphasize the double culture of the character, at the center of the subject.
- ◇ A fluid, sensitive writing, which knows how to keep the rhythm of the narration until the last page.

What could push a mother to kill her own child? Can such an act be made sense of from a 'cultural' angle? This is the disorientating question posed by this novel inspired by an actual infanticide that took place in Berck-sur-mer in 2013 and has lingered long in the collective memory.

Vivienne grew up in a well-off family in Dakar and is studying for a thesis on Machiavelli's legal philosophy at the Sorbonne. She feels herself to be imbued with two cultures, French and Senegalese, both of which have shaped her. Her partner Emmanuel, who is retired and is passionate about sculpture, knows Africa well and is madly fond of their daughter Aurore. Vivienne is getting worn out by her studies, which do not fit very well with being a mother. She suggests to Emmanuel that they send Aurore to stay with her mother in Senegal for a year while she finishes her thesis. He is not aware that of late Vivienne has been experiencing the first symptoms of dementia and that he will never see his daughter again.

On her journey, Vivienne crosses paths with several people who unwittingly help her to carry out her tragic act. She seems to be acting mechanically and blindly. As soon as she has committed her crime, her visions cease and her nervous crises vanish. Is it possible that someone had cast a spell on her, as she later claims at her trial? That jealous women from her village had bewitched her? But in France, such tales are regarded as mere superstitions...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A Spell on You is the fourth novel by writer and theater critic Isabelle Stibbe. Her first, BÉRÉNICE 34-44, received nine literary awards including the 2013 Simone Veil Prize and the 2013 Grandes Écoles Prize. She has also published LES MAÎTRES DU PRINTEMPS at Serge Safran Editeur and LE ROMAN IVRE in the "Les Passe-murailles" series.

Jérôme de Verdière

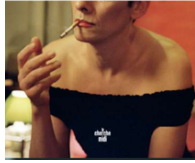
LA ROBE

(The Dress)

Le Cherche Midi, May 2022, 256 pages

Jérôme de Verdière

La robe



- ◇ A comedy, which deals with social issues (neo-feminism, ecology, etc.) without bias.
- ◇ The reader is held in suspense throughout the novel: the fact that a man wears a dress seems to be part of the customs. What is it really?

One evening, before receiving friends for dinner, Isabelle offers a dress to Jean-Pierre, her husband. Is it a bad hoax or a real injunction to change? Could it be that the world has changed so much without Jean-Pierre realizing it? A novel with caustic humor that questions the upheavals in our society and in couple relationships.

“My question is simple, Isabelle. If this dress is not for you, who is it for? - It is for you, my darling... Try it on.” What’s wrong with him all of a sudden? Jean-Pierre, 50 years old, in a relationship with Isabelle for 25 years, leads a comfortable life in Paris. As he comes home from work exhausted, an evening full of twists and turns awaits him, starting with the flowered dress he refuses to wear to dinner, much to his wife’s dismay.

The Dress is a vaudeville novel with punchy dialogue. Alternating the points of view of Jean-Pierre and Isabelle, Jérôme de Verdière mocks both the blissful progressives and the sullen reactionaries... This world is going crazy!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Host of the press review on Paris Première, working for RTL, Jérôme de Verdière has also written and directed several plays, including *Un banc pour deux* and *Les égoïstes anonymes*.

Monique Proulx

ENLÈVE LA NUIT

(Take Off Your Night)

Boréal, March 2022, 352 pages



- ◇ The novel is narrated by Markus, a young Hassidic Jew who has left the community, which he found suffocating.
- ◇ Through his eyes, we discover the concrete jungle and its most destitute residents, whom Markus tries to help.
- ◇ The young man is looking for his place in the world, having lost his bearings, while also searching for his soulmate.
- ◇ Markus is the one who tells us this story, like a wide-eyed child having just discovered a new language. Markus’s words and his innocent gaze reveal the tragedies that surround us and the blindness of a free world ceaselessly on the run, trying to escape itself.

One can enter the world at any age. For Markus, the moment comes in his early 20s, when he flees the closed community in which he was born and that he felt suffocated by. He now finds himself submerged in a “New World,” a concrete jungle that threatens to drown him. He has to reinvent himself from scratch.

He needs to learn how to feed himself, put a roof over his head, get a job. He also needs to master the rules of free life, including the rules of courtship, as he finds himself irresistibly drawn to the “Cuties” populating the New World, each more beautiful than the last, and all of them revealing an intoxicating amount of flesh.

It is no coincidence that Markus finds himself helping the neediest in the city, and it is no surprise when Abbie and Raquel, vestiges of his past life, end up marooned in his home. Markus is different. Despite his desire to integrate, a fire burns inside him, enabling him to light the way for those who seem to suffer in darkness. And they are legion. How can Markus find his way without losing his soul? Where is the ultimate Cutie, the soulmate he so deeply craves? And who is the benevolent shadow that has been watching over him since the beginning, the mysterious old man that Markus nicknames “Mr. K.” and who evades him every time he tries to get near?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Monique Proulx is the author of several novels: *LE COEUR EST UN MUSCLE INVOLONTAIRE*, 2002; *CHAMPAGNE*, 2008; *CE QU’IL RESTE DE MOI*, 2015, but also short stories: *LES AURORES MONTRÉALES*, 2015 and screenplays for cinema. She has won many awards including the Quebec booksellers Prize for *HOMME INVISIBLE À LA FENÊTRE*, 1993.

Alissa Wenz
L'HOMME SANS FIL
(The Man With No Thread)
 Denoël, January 2022, 240 pages



- ◇ Alissa Wenz's narration is deep, highly introspective and sometimes harsh – it is a hyperrealistic text, which questions readers about the paradoxes of our societies and the tragical destiny of a man, who had all the keys to succeed, but fell into hell and died in circumstances, which are still not elucidated.
- ◇ An incredibly precise documentary novel: by drawing on real facts, dialogues, and anecdotes, Alissa Wenz paints a high-quality portrait with psychological depth.
- ◇ Remarkable narrative construction: at the border between reality and fiction, the novelist gives the floor in turn to those who knew, saw, and loved Adrian Lamo.

The return of an emerging female voice plunging into the universe of a controversial and barely known personality, the homeless hacker Adrian Lamo, an IT genius, who played a main role in the WikiLeaks scandal.

In 2010, the military analyst Bradley Manning leaks confidential documents implicating the American army to Wikileaks. In 2013, he is sentenced to 35 years in prison. Would he have been condemned if Adrian Lamo hadn't denounced him? Adrian Lamo is destined for a bright future. Like an American version of Balzac's character Rastignac, with talent and freedoms galore. He's an unrivaled hacker. A brilliant programmer. A man for whom the parallel worlds of computer science hold no secrets. The biggest companies in America call on his services to detect flaws in their IT systems. But this genius wants to be free. A computer in his backpack, a bus ticket, a coffee shop's WIFI code, and he travels the country with his eyes riveted to his screen. He refuses to work for others. He cracks the networks of the country's greatest companies and puts their security systems to the test. Yahoo, the New York Times... He becomes famous, "the homeless hacker". But this idolized genius progressively isolates himself. Solitude and medication gain the upper hand as Adrian Lamo pulls away from his life and reality. Neither his wife's love nor the concern of his family and friends manage to hold him back. His parallel life will destroy the lives of many others. In particular Bradley Manning, the young soldier and talented analyst who took the insane risk to leak confidential documents to Wikileaks.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A graduate of La Fémis, Alissa Wenz, divides her time between music (author, composer, performer), writing screenplays, and teaching film. After *À TROP AIMER* (2020), *L'HOMME SANS FIL* is her second book.

Lucile Bordes
QUE FAIRE DE LA BEAUTÉ ?
(What of beauty ?)
 Les Avrils, January 2022, 176 pages

Que faire de la beauté ?



- ◇ **Longlisted for the Prix des Romancières 2022.**
- ◇ Lucile Bordes wields the formidable precision of her writing and all of her inventiveness to create a female character that is by turns wise, elusive, and in love.
- ◇ In this fourth novel, she questions the role of fiction in a society whose points of reference have been damaged. And affirms the urgent need of the Other so that stories can continue to be written.

Before, Felicity lived near the sea. She was married, a teacher, and a novelist. Then everything spun out of control. When climatic, migratory, and social crises struck, literature became useless, suspicious. So she fled. For the last fifteen years, she's been living in a hamlet in the mountains on a border where soldiers and immigrants rub shoulders. She doesn't write anymore. She's clean. But when a young corporal named Eddie knocks on her door, it rekindles the memory of a man she once loved without admitting it to herself. The words return. Tonight, she has one last story to tell.

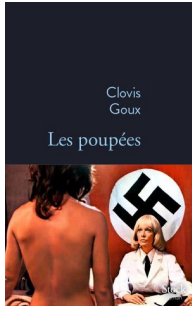
ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Lucile Bordes teaches linguistics at the University of Toulon and is the author of three noteworthy novels that were published by Editions Liana Levi: *JE SUIS LA MARQUISE DE CARABAS* (awarded the "Thyde Monnier de la SGDL 2012" prize), *DÉCORAMA* (awarded the "Prix du 2e roman de Laval 2015"), and *86, ANNÉE BLANCHE* (a finalist for the "Prix Orange du Livre 2016").

« Lucile Bordes façonne, dans le rythme haletant d'une écriture qui refait surface dans l'urgence, le témoignage poétique et politique de temps tristement marqués par l'isolement, l'exil et la surveillance policière. » Marie Fouquet, Livres Hebdo

« La beauté a ici, sous la plume de Lucile Bordes, quelque chose de divin. Elle se cache dans le paysage, une main, un dessin. Elle est de l'ordre de la transcendance, une anabase. Félicité écrit et elle renaît au monde. Doit-on rappeler que celui qui sortit des Enfers était un poète ? Ce roman se lit comme une prophétie. Tant qu'il y aura des humains, il y aura de la beauté à voir. » Alice Develey, Le Figaro Littéraire

Clovis Goux
LES POUPÉES
(The Dolls)

Stock, April 2022, 304 pages



- ◇ From Israel to Hollywood and Italy to sub-Saharan Africa this book bears witness to a cinematographic wave with no limits or morals: Nazisploitation.
- ◇ From the B-movie Love Camp 7 to the major work of an auteur, The Damned and from “Nazi trash” to “Nazi chic”, two apparently opposite trends exploit the exact same fascination for death, evil and decadence with kitsch as their aesthetic hinterland.

Through the interlocking stories of four people, Clovis Goux explores the “Nazi porn” movement and probes the furthest limits of fiction and how art can overstep boundaries.

1953. Under the pseudonym Ka-Tzetnik 135633, the Auschwitz survivor Yehiel Dinur publishes House of Dolls which brings him international fame. The book purports to be the story of his sister Daniella who was forced into prostitution in a Nazi concentration camp, and it transcends the very notion of historical truth, tipping into phantasmic fiction inspired by terrible experiences in Nazi camps.

Rome 1968. The director Luchino Visconti sees a demonic apparition in the half light in his apartment. This creature inspires his film The Damned and takes him into a downward spiral.

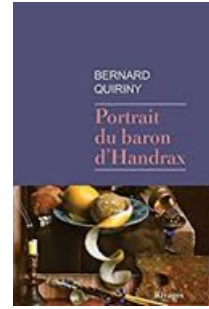
Los Angeles 1968. The B-series producer Bob Cresse is in preproduction on a film that will, in his words, “revolutionise the history of cinema”. The first feature film to depict Nazi sex slaves, Love Camp 7 would turn this pioneer into a pariah.

Khartoum 1974. The filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, who instituted much of the Nazi aesthetic with her propaganda films, embarks on a photographic expedition to South Sudan, hoping to capture the “eternal beauty” of the Nuba people and to erase her own past.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Clovis Goux is a journalist and writer. He is the author of LA DISPARITION DE KAREN CARPENTER (Actes Sud, 2017) and CHÈRE JODIE (Stock, 2020).

Bernard Quiriny
PORTRAIT DU BARON D'HANDRAX
(Portrait of Baron of Handrax)

Rivages, January 2022, 160 pages



The remarkable, masterfully told tale of an uncommonly eccentric personage.

Baron Handrax actually existed, Bernard Quiriny met him. Living with his family in a manor house in the Allier region of central France, this eccentric country squire and bearded giant was always bubbling with unexpected ideas that made him a charming companion. Collector of ruined houses, organizer of look-alike dinners, inexhaustible source of amusing anecdotes, specialist in little-known languages, self-taught inventor, lover of cemeteries and electric trains, Baron Handrax never did anything like anybody else, and was endlessly surprising.

To pay tribute to a dear friend who disappeared too soon, Bernard Quiriny could do no less than to paint his portrait. So here is Portrait du baron d'Handrax, an unclassifiable novel that reveals the fanciful and side-splittingly funny world of an unforgettable personages.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Recognized as one of the greatest contemporary short-story writers, Bernard Quiriny has published numerous short-story collections and novels.

Thierry Dancourt
SILENCE RADIO
(Radio Silence)

Table Ronde, April 2021, 240 pages



- ◇ **Awarded the PRIX DU PREMIER ROMAN 2008.**
- ◇ In a plot that unfolds backwards in time, Thierry Dancourt transports readers from the snowy silence of the Swiss Alps to the more troubling one of a radio that has stopped broadcasting.

1960: Cécile is married, she lives in Paris and is having an affair with Franck, who she met in Switzerland when they were working together on a show for RTS, a Swiss public radio station. Ever since, the lovers have been trysting regularly on the Swiss side of the border.

From hotel rooms to provincial train stations, their affair has been built on Franck's silences; he clams up the moment anyone mentions the past. Cécile stopped trying a long time ago. She just smokes her Du Mauriers and gulps Alka-Seltzer like water.

The illicit couple is planning to spend a few days in a closed spa resort with Franck's old friend Richard, the spa's caretaker. But Franck winds up not staying for long: a newspaper article about a body that has just been found after having spent years buried in the snow seems to have chased him away. The body must belong to their mutual friend Raymond, who vanished while out hiking with a colleague from the radio station. But why was only one of their bodies found? And does it all have anything to do with how Cécile and Franck met? Finding out will mean going back: over the border to Paris and the darkest days of the war... to a time when Franck was married to Perrine, and they were both in the Resistance. To a time when Franck's name wasn't Franck, but Nicolas Volodine. Guided by Richard's voice, when they are the only ones left in the deserted resort, Cécile will undertake that journey.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Thierry Dancourt was born in Montmorency. He is an editor in the fields of architecture and urbanism. *HÔTEL DE LAUSANNE* (La Table Ronde, 2008, 10/18, 2010) was written in Paris and in Casablanca, and was awarded the "Prix du Premier Roman" (First Novel Award) in France. It was followed by *JARDIN D'HIVER* (2010), *LES OMBRES DE MARGE FINALLY* (2012) and *JEUX DE DAME* (2018), all published at La Table Ronde.

"A chic and melancholic talent." Frédéric Beigbeder, Le Figaro Magazine
"Some extremely fine lacework." Eric Neuhoff, Madame Figaro

"A sensitive and mysterious writer." Alexandre Fillon, Lire

Catherine Cusset
LA DÉFINITION DU BONHEUR
(The Definition of Happiness)

Gallimard, August 2021, 352 pages



- ◇ **ONLY FOR POLISH AND RUSSIAN.**
- ◇ [English sample chapter available.](#)
- ◇ **66,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Guanda/Astoria), Arabic (ASP), Germany (Eisele), Greece.**
- ◇ **Was shortlisted for the Prix Renaudot 2021 and Longlisted for the Prix Littéraire Le Monde 2021.**

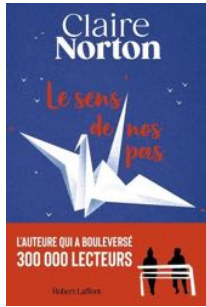
This novel gives us two women, who are opposed in every way: the larger-than-life Clarisse, an extensive traveller and hopeless romantic, who, from the onset, holds within her a flaw that heralds disaster, and Ève who oscillates between reason and folly, while entertaining a strong, stable relationship with her husband. One lives in Paris, the other in New York.

By interweaving their stories over several decades and revealing the mysterious link which binds them, this compelling novel, and its dramatic ending, offers a unique perspective on our era, on the relationship of today's women to the body and desire, to love, to motherhood, to ageing, and to happiness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Catherine Cusset is the author of more than fifteen novels published with Gallimard, including *Le Problème avec Jane* (Grand Prix des lectrices de ELLE, 2000), *Un brillant avenir* (Prix Goncourt des lycéens, 2008) and *Vie de David Hockney* (Prix Anaïs Nin, 2018). She has been translated in more than twenty languages.

COMMERCIAL & UPBEAT

Claire Norton
LE SENS DE NOS PAS
(*The Purpose of Our Footsteps*)
Robert Laffont, April 2022, 456 pages



- ◇ Shortlisted for the prestigious Maison de la Presse prize.
- ◇ Having already published four novels, and with over 100,00 copies sold of her last book alone, Claire Norton is a rising star amongst the fresh female voices fostered by éditions Robert Laffont.

"You have to trust in life's surprises"

August has "his" bench in a nice park in the Vésinet suburb of Paris. A bench he has sat on countless times together with Jeanne, the love of his life. After her untimely death, he continues to come back every day with their old dog, relishing in the remembrance of beautiful things past...

This afternoon, August sits down on his bench with a heavy heart: he has just learned that his son and his wife have decided to put him in a retirement home and that he is ridden with an incurable illness that leaves him with only a few months to live. On the other side of the bench, 14 years old Philomena is as desperate as he is. An only child, she has lost her mother in a car accident and has severed all communication with her father who she accuses of hiding the truth about the actual cause of her mother's death: a suicide.

Since August cannot envisage spending what is left of his life confined and passive in a retirement home and since Philomena needs to get to the truth about her mother's death in order to grieve properly, only one solution presents itself to the two of them: running away.

Even if August has never dreamed of bothering with a lonely kid clinging onto him, this journey that the old man and the young girl embark on together will prove to be the most precious gift that life could hold in store for them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A popular novelist whose first novel sold over 100,000 club copies, with great success digitally and in salons too, Claire Norton is primed to become a best-seller. MALGRÉ NOUS... (2019) : 17,300 + 33,000 pocket edition copies sold

Cali Keys
LA LIBRAIRIE DES BIENHEUREUX
(*The Happiness Library*)
Bragelonne, September 2021, 200 pages



- ◇ A touching story set in a beautiful seaside French city.
- ◇ A cast of endearing characters.
- ◇ An intergenerational story.

A novel to be enjoyed with cider and cakes.

Lucie loves words and people. She writes and publishes novels alongside her work as an instructor, but when a family tragedy shatters her life, she decides to leave everything behind, and moves from Paris to the seaside town of Saint-Malo, Brittany, to recharge her batteries in her grandparents' big old house. She quickly transforms it into a warm and welcoming home for a cast of characters who share their woes and their worries with her. Which turns out to be excellent therapy for Lucie !

We meet Léonard, a widowed and grumpy former librarian, Annick, Lucie's protective and admiring mother, Vivianne, a psychologically fragile bookseller, and Camille, a girl in conflict with her family.

The one thing they all have in common is their love of books. Together they develop a thousand projects, starting with a neighbourhood library to share their passion for beautiful words with the inhabitants of Saint-Malo.

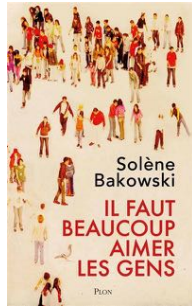
Can Lucie silence the demons that consume her soul by helping her strange roommates?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: After brief stints in Paris and California, Cali Keys settled in Switzerland. She writes feel-good novels to relax and cause pain for her ex (and for yours!). She has also been published in Quebec.

Solène Kakowski
IL FAUT BEAUCOUP AIMER LES GENS

(You Have To Love People A Lot)

Plon, May 2022, 258 pages



- ◇ A novel that shows we are all connected and that the good things we do to one person has a great impact on others as well.

Eddy, 30, already has a heavy past: he just spent 7 years in jail for a fight that turned him into a murderer. But what he did when he was 12 haunts him even more: he stole the purse of a homeless woman who died in his neighborhood. He knows that if he does not tell anyone, no one will ever be able to identify her... All he knows is her first name : Rosa, and he has a picture of her when she was younger.

From then on, fighting against his shyness and fear of others, Eddy will investigate to fix his mistake. What he doesn't know is that his actions are going to change his life completely, as well as the lives of the people who knew Rosa. First, Firefly, a mysterious radio host whose voice saved Eddy's life while he was in detention, who he listened to her every night in his cell, will help him again. And this time, she will help herself too.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Solène Kakowski was born in 1981 and *You Have To Love People A Lot* is her 7th novel. She creates a complicity with the readers with a universe full of soft magic which is a marvelous invitation to dialogue between beings.

Camille Anseaume
MA BELLE

(My Dear)

Calmann Lévy, February 2022, 256 pages



- ◇ In a sharp and funny letter, Louise tells her step-daughter how she constantly feels in the way, how her insecurities are intensified by the ex- wife's shadow and how Blanche's presence every other week puts a strain on her relationship with her father.

How to deal with a step-daughter with skin white as snow, lips red as blood, and hair black as ebony?

When Louise meets Blanche's father, she doesn't expect to be cast in the role of the evil stepmother. She had a happy childhood, she is bubbly and enthusiastic, and has years of babysitting under her belt, confirming that kids love her. But with Blanche, it's like facing a brick wall. This beautiful, sad and silent girl, with skin as white as snow, hair as black as ebony and lips as red as blood, counters Louise's cheerfulness with constant disdain. Her father, subjugated by his daughter's beauty, is blind to the problem. Their relationship soon turns sour.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Camille Anseaume is an author and a journalist. She has published three novels, *Un tout petit rien*, *Ta façon d'être au monde* and *Quatre murs et un toit*.

Serena Giuliano
SARA PER CHE TI AMO

(Sarà Perché Ti Amo)

Robert Laffont, March 2022, 224 pages



- ◇ In this latest book, the author and influencer talks about love, friendship, music, pizza and soccer: all the elements are combined for a delicious romantic comedy with an Italian touch.

July 2021. Procida, an island in the south of Italy, next to Naples. Two couples together on a sunny vacation. But the idyll might be short lived...

Alba has it all: a loving husband, an adorable infant and a house in Procida where she can spend all her summer vacations. But the reality behind the decorum is quite different: suffering from post-natal depression, overweight, sleeping problems as well as from brutal mood swings, she does not recognize herself anymore and has lost her appetite for life. Even more so since her ex has chosen exactly this time to show up again...

For Gabrielle, Nino is the prince charming she has always dreamt of. With his authoritarian charisma, the slightly older man seems to be able to give her the stability and reassurance she has always longed for. And this first holiday spent together as newlyweds will certainly make them grow closer than ever.

The two couples meet on the beautiful little island of Procida, hoping to enjoy the famous Italian Dolce Vita. But what if this stay proves to be a trigger, putting everyone face to face with his and her emotions, making them doubt their feelings towards their partners?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A highly successful influencer with 40,000 followers on Instagram, Serena Giuliano is also a best-selling author and has already published three successful novels: CIAO BELLA (2019), MAMMA MIA (2020) and LUNA (2021).

Serena Giuliano
CIAO BELLA

Le Cherche Midi, March 2019, 288 pages



- ◇ More than 92,000 copies sold.
- ◇ Rights sold: Czech Republic (Jota), Serbia (Laguna).

A first feel-good-novel as as jubilant as it is moving!

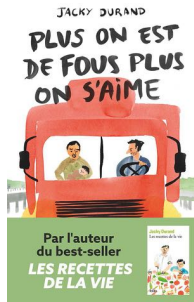
Anna is scared of many things - crowds, noise, driving on the highway, sickness, or number 4 ... She is also pregnant with her second child. And to face this new pregnancy more serenely, she decides to turn to a psychotherapist. During her first appointment, she doesn't know how long the road will be, nor that this meeting will change her life. Through her therapy, Anna takes us on a journey: in a painful childhood and in her native Italy. An immersion in his past that inevitably resonates with the present. To what lengths childhood determines an adult's life? Can we forgive the unforgivable? Can we turn fear and anxiety into driving forces, pushing us forward to a better future?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Serena Giuliano is a blogger, a freelancer and a writer. After a three books series of *Wonder mum* (2014-2016), literary success of the year 2014 from her special blog 'moms', she writes her first novel with CIAO BELLA.

« Ce roman se savoure comme un limoncello bien frais. » *Cosmopolitan*

« Sous une apparente légèreté, Serena Giuliano aborde des douleurs plus profondes, avec beaucoup de justesse et d'émotions. » *Librairie Page et Plumes*

Jacky Durand
PLUS ON EST DE FOUS, PLUS ON S'AIME
(The Crazier You Are, The More You Love)
 Stock, April 2022, pages



- ◇ Option in Czech Republic (Host), Estonia (Täpanäev), Hungary (Park Kiado), Lithuania (Alma Littera), Russia (Arkadia), Serbia (Laguna), Slovakia (Albatros).

An ode to the bumpy ride of life, from the same stable as The Little French Recipe Book.

One evening, at a motorway rest area that smells of burnt scrub, ex-con Roger and reformed middle-class Parisian Joseph settle in the back of their Volvo F89 for a snack. A car appears out of nowhere and dumps a wicker basket. Roger, whose huge hands smell of wood, goes over and is amazed to find a sleeping baby. What to do with it? Roger wants to take him to the nearest maternity unit, but Joseph smiles as he strokes the baby's velvety head. "What if we kept him?" The two men have been friends since childhood and live in a house in the woods with no modern comforts. How could they take in a baby? How would they see to his daily needs in this rustic, natural setting dominated by manual work? And most of all, how could they keep him perfectly legally?

They gradually learn to prepare the baby's bottles, they make nappies out of an old t-shirt, and cook healthy meals for the boy they've called Moses. Roger and Joseph heal their wounds, their loneliness and their regrets.

But a shadow emerges from Roger's past and hovers around the house and the baby. To protect Moses the two friends will have to rely on the help of those around them: Karl Marx, the therapist for these shipwrecked individuals, the Indian who is the self-appointed baker in this autonomous village, Roger's daughter Julie, and her boyfriend Karim, along with Muguetta, a prostitute living a hard-knocks life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jacky Durand is a print and radio journalist. His first novel was the very successful *Le cahier de recettes* (Stock, 2019), which was translated into 19 languages.

Camille de Peretti
LES RÊVEURS DÉFINITIFS
(The Ultimate Dreamers)
 Calmann Lévy, August 2021, 288 pages



- ◇ As moving as a successful romantic comedy and as tense as an unstoppable suspense, an ultra-contemporary novel that captures the deep questions that inhabit us.
- ◇ Perfectly endearing characters, whose most intimate daydreams, fears and hopes we share.
- ◇ Camille de Peretti continues her vast project of dissecting literary genres: here she plays with multiple narrative codes – from feel-good to surrealism, via cyberpunk!

Emma is a translator and lives in a small Parisian apartment with her fourteen-year-old son, Quentin. She is tired of translating meaningless drivel, and dreams of writing a great novel.

But her financial troubles get the better of her, and she is forced to accept a consultancy job with Kiwi, an Internet giant looking to develop a foolproof translation programme. But by working for this company, is she not contributing to her profession's demise?

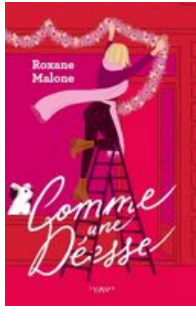
While Emma escapes these contradictions through intense reveries, Quentin embarks on extraordinary adventures in video games, imagining himself as a skilled gamer. Until one day, he is contacted by a mysterious organisation that wants to take down Kiwi. And so, mother and son, plunged into a form of virtual reality that could tear them apart, are reunited in the "real world" by events beyond their control...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Camille de Peretti was born in 1980 in Paris. She has written seven novels, including *THORNYTORINX* ("Prix du Premier Roman de Chambéry"), and *LE SANG DES MIRABELLES* (Calmann-Lévy, 2019).

Roxane Malone
COMME UNE DÉESSE

(Like a Goddess)

Calmann Lévy, October 2021, 342 pages



◇ **French Sales : Paperback (Le livre de Poche).**

Welcome to The Goddesses, the agency that puts women's happiness first!

Before you get married, you have a bachelorette party... So why not when you get divorced?

This crazy idea led Nina, a bubbly woman in her thirties, to set up The Goddesses, an agency that helps women get over break-ups, or take a little break from their busy family lives. Along with seventy-year-old biker and DIY enthusiast Marie-Jeanne, and Jade, her secretary, she manages to create a cosy space where women can boost their self-confidence and start a new life. Spa days, make-overs, shopping, pole dance lessons... There's something for everyone!

With Christmas coming up, the agency is buzzing. Between decorating, endless booking requests, organising a competition, dealing with disgruntled ex-husbands, and finding the perfect gift (in this case, a puppy) for her mother, Nina soon feels overwhelmed.

And as if that wasn't enough, The Goddesses is undergoing a tax audit, carried out by a rather good-looking inspector, with whom Nina struggles to maintain a professional attitude...

The Christmas holidays are set to be eventful!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Roxane Malone is a French novelist.

Lorraine Fouchet
À L'ADRESSE DU BONHEUR

(No place Like Home)

Héloïse d'Ormesson, March 2022, 250 pages



The Saint-James' childhood home in Groix is called "ker Joie" and it was sold ten years ago. When Pierre, the eldest son, discovers it is back on the market by reading the newspaper, he rushes to make an offer. Too late! Someone already bought it.

Pierre then decides to rent Ker Joie for a weekend to celebrate his mom's birthday, surrounded by all her children and grandchildren. Instead of buying Adeline a blanket or some slippers, her family offers her a "feeling jar", a bowl without a goldfish in which everyone wrote down their greatest memory with her. But Pierre was not the only one to read the newspaper and an accident from thirty-seven years ago shows up uninvited. Unexpected guests are coming to the island and disembark from the boat while Adeline celebrates her birthday and chooses a note in her jar that turns out to be like Pandora's box.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Lorraine Fouchet is a former emergency physician. She is the author of twenty novels, including ENTRE CIEL ET LOU (Between Heaven and Lou) published in 2016 and winner of the Brittany Prize and the Ouest Prize. She now lives between the Parisian suburb and the island of Groix.

Virginie Grimaldi
IL NOUS RESTERA ÇA
(We'll Always Have That)
Fayard, May 2022, 396 pages



◇ **Under option in: Ukraine (Old Lion), Russia (Eksmo).**

At 34, Iris's entire life can fit inside a single suitcase.

At 74, Jeanne sees her life as a thing of the past.

At 18, Theo, despite his irresistible sense of humor, expects nothing from his own.

But as a chance encounter teaches the reserved young woman, the charming elderly lady, and the outspoken apprentice pastry chef, it is the people who have nothing left to lose who have so much to give.

The author tells the story of three solitary souls, the meeting of three wounded spirits who have love to give – even when no one is there to receive it.

Because everything seems easier when the weight is shared, together, our three protagonists will discover that they, too, have something to give.

A touching and light-hearted account of an unexpected encounter of kindred souls.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Virginie Grimaldi is a best-selling author. Her publications include the feel-good lit' gems *Le Parfum du bonheur est plus fort sous la pluie* (Fayard, 2017) and *Il est grand temps de rallumer les étoiles* (Fayard, 2018). She has been ranked France's most widely read novelist since 2019.

Sophie Rouvier
COMME UNE ÉCLIPSE
(Like an Eclipse)
Fayard, April 2022, 230 pages



When love, tears, and unspoken words of life have taken their toll, can feelings we once believed unshakeable remain intact? A heartfelt and subtle story of a remarkable friendship made of shattered convictions and bursts of laughter.

Brune, Clément, Dimitri, Pio, and Fred have known each other since childhood. They have cemented their friendship by buying a house where they get together for vacations.

Twenty years later, the years have flown, and the ties that bound them have gradually weakened.

Dimitri, the charismatic leader of the gang, wants to reunite them all for his 45th birthday. The date of the reunion is not chosen at random: a total eclipse is expected that same weekend. A meeting between the sun and the moon – what better way to celebrate his birthday! But with the half-light of the eclipse, come unexpected confessions...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sophie Rouvier is a novelist and a screenwriter. Her fifth novel, *Sur les balcons du ciel* (Éditions du Rocher, 2020), received praise from best-selling French author Virginie Grimaldi: "This novel is a gem. Don't miss it!"

Laure Manel
LES DOMINOS DE LA VIE
(Dominos of Life)
Michel Lafon, May 2022, 384 pages



◇ **Option: Serbia (Vulkan).**

"Life begins again. Strangely similar. The same everyday life, the same familiar routine, reassuring. With an extra touch of serenity. And the extraordinary feeling that life is beautiful and that she knows it more than others."

Amélie, an interior designer married to her high school sweetheart and happy mother of a little boy, has just won a medical victory. She is cured. After the relief and joy, comes the time for questioning. Driven by a tremendous appetite to live, Amélie suddenly finds her life dull. Why, when everything is going so well, does she feel so bad?

She is determined to embrace this second life to the full and not to let reason, fear and doubt rule her. She dares to go on a quest of her own self. With small and big changes to face, will she find the happiness she is striving for?

What if life's trials and tribulations were a chance to change her destiny?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Following the runaway success of *La Délicatesse du homard* (300.000 copies sold) and *La Mélancolie du kangourou*, Laure Manel gave up teaching to become a full-time writer. With her subtle powers of analysis and finely wrought portrait of coupledom and family life, which she depicts with a tender yet sharp eye, Manel has an unrivaled ability to present us with profound reflections on life.

Zoé Brisby
LES ÉGARÉS
(Welcome to Paradise)
Michel Lafon, May 2022, 352 pages



- ◇ **With an irresistible blend of humor and drama, Zoé Brisby's latest novel probes the depths of human feelings.**
- ◇ **Welcome to Paradise is an adventure tale that cuts to the heart of who we are.**

Seven strangers. None of them have ever met, but each has received an invitation to take part in a survival course on the famous GR20 trail in Corsica. Who sent the invitation? What could link the participants? Nobody knows.

In the idyllic surroundings of the Corsican scrubland, the training camp will soon turn into a baptism of fire.

Once they're alone deep in the forest, will the 'competitors' make it out alive? And more to the point, will they manage to outlive each other?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Zoé Brisby lives and writes in Paris. An art historian by training, she paints a quirky narrative world full of characters as funny as they are touching. She is fascinated by human relationships, analyzing society with a keen eye and comic touch that make for a moving and uplifting reading experience. Her debut novel, *The Car Share*, won the Mazarine Book Day prize in 2018 and has been translated into English and German.

Camille Andrea
LE PLUS BEAU LUNDI DE MA VIE TOMBA UN MARDI

(The Most Beautiful Monday In My Life Fell On A Tuesday)

Plon, May 2022, 250 pages



- ◇ A deeply moving book, full of humanity, about the fragility of memory and the human soul.

Ten-year-old Noah enters Jacob's life with all the force of a storm. It is an encounter that will change everything and give rise to the most improbable of friendships.

A highly respected study has found that we form an impression of people within the first four-and-a-half seconds. Four-and-a-half seconds. That's how long the 10-year-old mixed-race Noah has to convince everyone in the neighbourhood that he will be the next president of the United States. That's not long, but it's long enough for Jacob Stern, a 75-year-old man of the Jewish faith. Noah has just entered into his life with the force of a storm, showering him with pretty words and grounds for optimism. It is an encounter between two generations, and two visions of the world and the future. A old man who has lost his zest for life and fallen into a destructive spiral, and an ambitious and brilliant young child who speaks like a 50-year-old politician. The only thing they have in common is the memories that they create together over chocolate doughnuts and big glasses of milk. It is an encounter that will change everything and nothing.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Camille Andrea is the pseudonym of a very well-known French writer, but neither their readers nor their publisher know their true identity. Their previous novel is entitled *LE SOURIRE CONTAGIEUX DES CROISSANTS AU BEURRE* (2020, Plon, 20,000 copies sold in France, rights sold in Italy, Germany, Portugal).

Camille André
LE SOURIRE CONTAGIEUX DES CROISSANTS AU BEURRE

(The Contagious Smile of the Croissants)

Plon, April 2021, 380 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold:** Italy (Garzanti), Germany (Nagel und Kimche).
- ◇ A fast-paced, pastry-based and spiritual plot that careens from the USA to Greenland and Peru in search of a miraculous coffee that makes people happy, into which the author has poured every wonderful thing he has learned about life.

At age 44, French pastry chef Pierre Boulanger has it all. At the head of a frozen-pastry empire in the United States, he rubs shoulders with the rich and famous; the most glamorous women in the world devour his famous croissants, and his wife is a brilliant lawyer to New York's high society who has given him an adorable little boy.

And then one day he buys a coffee from a pushcart in front of his luxury apartment building. The coffee is so delicious that he offers to buy it all, but the down-and-out vendor asks for a million dollars. A million dollars... for not just any old coffee, of course. A million dollars for the best coffee in the world, coffee that will change his life.

The magical encounter with an old hot-dog seller will shake up and permanently transform Pierre Boulanger's convictions about power, love and life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Behind the pseudonym Camille André hides a well-known French author whose identity no one – neither his editor nor his readers – knows. The only thing we know for sure: whatever the author's real name is, their novel is as irresistible as a pure-butter croissant straight from the oven.

Sophie Carquain
JUSTE À CÔTÉ DE MOI

(Near Me)

Charleston, January 2022, 224 pages



- ◇ The new novel by Sophie Carquain, author at Charleston editions of *Three girls and their mothers* (10,000 copies sold) and *Little stories to grow up at* Albin Michel editions (40,000 copies sold).
- ◇ A sensitive story that highlights the fascinating and little-known phenomenon of hikikomori. Around the world, more than a million men and women lock themselves in their homes, unable to go out and live in society.

An irresistible encounter between two beings hurt by life. A fresco painter who survived the Bataclan terror attacks and a reclusive teenager: two beings wounded by life who meet and accompany each other towards healing. A novel about art, openness to others and resilience.

When Susie Pritt is hired by the Wagner family to paint a mural for their missing son, she quickly realizes that this is not just a runaway story or a tragic accident. Niels disappeared into his room. For a year, he has been staying inside, no longer speaking to his parents or his sister, no longer communicating by any means. He is there, right next to his family, but he lives outside the world.

Haunted by her own demons, Susie takes upon her to bring the young man back to real life. While they mutually tame each other, these two beings wounded by life will accompany each other in their own way on the path to healing.

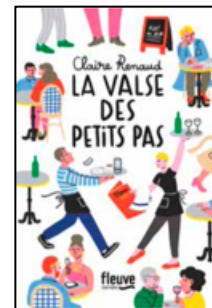
A sensitive and moving novel about openness to others, resilience and the power of art.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sophie Carquain, writer and journalist, has published more than 20 books, including *TROIS FILLES ET LEURS MÈRES* and *LE ROMAN DE MOLLY N.* published by Charleston, and *MANGER DANS TA MAIN* (Albin Michel). She is also a screenwriter (*Simone de Beauvoir, a disturbing young girl*, Marabulles).

Claire Renaud
LA VALSE DES PETITS PAS

(Small-Step Walz)

Fleuve, January 2022, 186 pages



- ◇ Rights sold in Germany (DTV), Italy.
- ◇ English detailed synopsis and interview with the author available.
- ◇ The protagonists observe and study each other in the confined atmosphere of this small Parisian bistro, but above all they LIVE.
- ◇ A true, rich and touching kaleidoscope.

One evening in a Parisian restaurant...

Couples are having dinner. Each one is at a different stage of their love relationship: There is the couple who is seeing each other for the first time after having said a lot to each other by interposed screens, the short-lived couple of a womanizer, a couple of a young girl addicted to her lover whom she knows to be unfaithful, a woman who is going to announce her pregnancy to her husband, a couple who has just had a baby, a long-lasting couple whose wife finally decides to make herself heard by her husband, a widowed man.

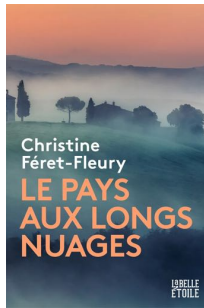
A choral novel in the form of a huis-clos, in which love in all its forms is honored.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Claire Renaud is an editor and an author of books for children.

Christine Féret-Fleury
LE PAYS AUX LONGS NUAGES

(The Country of Long Clouds)

Marabout via Gregory Messina, April 2022, 240 pages



- ◇ The new novel from the author of **LA FILLE QUI LISAIT DANS LE MÉTRO** (sold in over 20 languages)...

In Italy, Acia suddenly finds herself without work after the boss of the restaurant where she works disappears with all of the money. She takes off in her car without with a specific destination in mind. During a stop for lunch, she comes across a recipe book that has been left out on a bench. The name of a town is written on the inside: Palazzo. Acia takes that as a sign and decides to make her way to Palazzo.

Once she arrives, she is led to the best cook in town, a woman named Nebbe who is in desperate need of help to keep her restaurant in business.

Meanwhile, Kamar and her daughter flee the bombings, death and war of Syria to make their way towards Europe, and happen to end up in the the small Italian town of Palazzo.

These three women will join together to bring Nebbe's restaurant back to life and to create a new family for themselves in the most unexpected way.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Christine Féret-Fleury is an editor and author, and runs writing workshops. She has written nearly one hundred novels for children and adults (**LA FILLE QUI LISAIT DANS LE MÉTRO**, 2017, Denoël, **LA FEMME SANS OMBRE**, 2019, Denoël). Her first novel, **LES VAGUES SONT DOUCES COMME DES TIGRES** (Arléa, 1999) was the recipient of the prix Antigone.

Julien Sandrel
MERCI, GRAZIE, THANK YOU

(Thank You, World)

Calmann Lévy, March 2022, 360 pages



- ◇ From New York to Paris, passing through Florida and the salty marshes of Camargue, this motley crew embarks on a road trip rich in strong emotions, punctuated by Gina's secrets and the paroxysm of the history of Italian immigration...

It's never too late to say thank you.

Gina is a whimsical 85 year old woman living in Paris. She leads a modest life, full of little pleasures, including one that never changes: every week, she takes twenty euros from her small pension and plays on the slot machines. A little slice of freedom that nobody knows about. Not her 24-year-old granddaughter Chloe, who has come back to live with her following her mother's death, nor her best friend Olga, who lives in the apartment above.

Then, one day in June, Gina wins a million euros. She immediately knows what to do with this extravagant sum. She decides to retrace her past to share the money with each person to whom she wants to express her gratitude. Gina hasn't had an easy life, and for a long time, she's wanted to thank those who changed the course of her existence, sometimes within a few minutes, sometimes without even realising it. So, without telling anyone about the money or her intentions, Gina sets off, leaving a note saying that she's going on a trip back in time...

When Chloe discovers that her grandmother is gone and that she's meeting a private detective in a seedy part of Manhattan, she thinks that Gina has lost her mind and is putting herself in danger. So, Chloe decides to look for her, accompanied – against her better judgement – by Olga, Gina's overbearing best friend.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Julien Sandrel was born in Hyères in 1980. He has a scientific background and worked for a company for 15 years before publishing his first novel, **LA CHAMBRE DES MERVEILLES** (Prix Méditerranée des Lycéens 2019). A bestseller and worldwide phenomenon, sold in more than 26 countries, that is currently being adapted for film. His two next novels, **LA VIE QUI M'ATTENDAIT** et **LES ÉTINCELLES**, were successful in both hardback and paperback versions.

Carène Ponte
ET QUE QUELQUUN VOUS TENDE LA MAIN
(*And May Someone Offer An Olive Branch*)
Fleuve, April 2022, pages



◇ **Book**

trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sym8Q1pL4Kk>

Le Jardin des Cybèles is a rest home that welcomes people damaged by life. This summer, it opens its doors to two new residents: Valerie and Anna.

A few days after their arrival, they meet Charline, the owner of a nearby pastry shop. This warm place becomes a real refuge for the two women, who love to meet there to taste cakes while chatting.

But a dramatic news will upset Charline's life and disturb this fragile balance. Valerie and Anna decide to put their own suffering aside to support their friend in this terrible ordeal. All three embark on a trip to the seaside. During this impromptu stay, they intend to relearn how to enjoy life!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Winner of the Prix e-criture aufeminin, Carène Ponte is the author of UN MERCI DE TROP, TU AS PROMIS QUE TU VIVRAIS POUR MOI, AVEC DES SI ET DES PEUT-ÊTRE and D'ICI LÀ, PORTE-TOI BIEN. Her last three novels have sold over 60,000 copies and she is now one of France's most bankable authors of feel-good fiction. Her books have been translated into German and Italian.

Carène Ponte
VOUS REPRENDRÉZ BIEN UN PEU DE MAGIE POUR NOËL ?
(*A Little Magic For Christmas*)
Pocket, November 2021, 288 pages



◇ **12,000 copies sold.**

◇ **Rights sold in: Russia (MTS Library).**

A touching novel about second chances and relationships.

Behind a light and funny tone, real questions for each of us about what is really important in our lives

The new Christmas comedy by Carène Ponte!

Victoria Delmas is thirty-five, she runs her advertising agency with an iron fist. In her daily life, there is no room for improvisation, and even less room for human relationships, which she considers a pure waste of time. Until one December morning when her life is turned upside down. Victoria is hit by a bus. She falls into a coma and lands in a... Christmas recovery center! This mysterious organization offers her a deal: if she wishes to have a second chance, she will have to make amends with someone she has hurt in the past, and this before midnight on December 26th. But this mission is not that simple... Because if Victoria excels in her job, building relationships with her fellow human beings is not her forte. But if there's one time of year when you can hope for a miracle, it's Christmas!

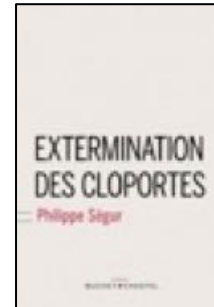
ABOUT THE AUTHOR: With nine novels, Carène Ponte has won over 300,000 readers with her light-hearted and humorous stories. In each book, she imagines universal moving characters with her modern, joyful and rhythmic style. After *The Light Was So Perfect*, published by Fleuve Éditions, here is her new Christmas comedy. All her previous titles are published by Pocket.

CAUSTIC HUMOUR

Philippe Ségur
LE GANG DU BIBERON
(The Baby Bottle Gang)
 Libella, February 2022, 224 pages



Philippe Ségur
EXTERMINATION DES CLOPORTES
(Exterminating Wood Lice)
 Buchet Chastel, January 2017, 290 pages



- ◇ Nobody ever said it was easy to be a modern family in the dying days of patriarchal society, in a world undermined by the fear of terrorism and collapse!

A road trip, a family saga and an amused portrait of an era, Le Gang du biberon is Philippe Ségur's tenth novel.

Alma, the mother, recently joined FUCK, a radical feminist movement that believes in zero compromise with the opposite sex. Granted, she's already married and recently gave birth to Lino, her third child. But she keeps a careful eye on both her own independence, and that of her daughters: Marnie, a gifted eight-year-old, and Lilirose, 4, a curly-haired tyrant. Hank, the father, takes his wife's revolutionary discourse philosophically. It's true that he's been having trouble shaking a case of post-partum depression, and his main concern is not dealing with the baby's midnight bottle. He dreams of escaping to more adventurous skies, far from the hassle of daily life.

One drunken night, Hank scores a major victory: though it's hardly his hoped-for trip to India, he does manage to convince Alma to leave the very next day for Spain, without a GPS or a cell phone.

The lack of an itinerary will be their only itinerary, and surprising twists and turns will pile up fast. All the faster, in fact, in that the parents soon realize that they've accidentally taken their three little terrorists with them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Professor of constitutional law and political philosophy, Philippe Ségur's debut novel, MÉTAPHYSIQUE DU CHIEN, was published in 2002 and translated in Germany, Korea, Portugal and Greece. It also received the Renaudot des Lycéens Prize. Then came AUTO PORTRAIT À L'OUVRE-BOÎTE in 2003, a wickedly funny, fierce and flamboyant second novel and then POÉTIQUE DE L'ÉGORGEUR in 2005 (rights sold to Germany, Spain, Greece and Poland), SEULEMENT L'AMOUR in 2006 and ÉCRIVAIN (EN DIX LEÇONS) in 2007 (rights sold to Spain and Poland). Film rights of Poétique de l'égorgeur and Seulement l'amour have both been optioned by French producers. In 2008 and 2012 he published VACANCE AU PAYS PERDU and LE REVE DE L'HOMME LUCIDE. EXTERMINATION DES CLOPORTES and LE CHIEN ROUGE both met critical success.

- ◇ [English samples available.](#)

- ◇ The book's central characters, a married couple, have well-ordered lives, while their ambitions turn out to be superficial. The cowardice and procrastination they display so systematically, day after day, makes them terribly endearing.
- ◇ Readers will recognize Philippe Ségur's signature style in this book that although it is droll, is also deadly serious, because it deals with sickness, the real-estate crisis, and the day-to-day effects of job insecurity.
- ◇ Totally surreal yet quite realistic. Anyone who has ever had to deal with a real-estate agent or a bank adviser will recognize – to the last comma – the double-talk with which those professions so skillfully pull the wool over people's eyes.

In a society in crisis, a man dreams of a better life, despite everything. And so begin the adventures of a future literary giant who wakes up one morning with a wood bug in his eye!

Aside from his passion for his wife, Betty, Don Dechine has one purpose in life: writing. The thing is though, that it isn't easy to write a sensational novel when you teach at a high school and after the day's indignities, you still have to deal with an obnoxious neighbor, the annoyances of apartment living, tax harassment and parking tickets. So how could anyone blame him for spending his evenings watching all seven seasons of The Sopranos? But that's not going to help make him rich and famous either. There is one possible solution: walk away from the rat-race and go to live in the countryside. As Don Dechine says, you can't really produce a masterpiece unless you're out in the country. And soon, equipped with invincible confidence and a sense of humor, Betty and he will go on a quest for the ideal house, try to get rid of their unsellable apartment and get lost in the ruthless and mysterious world of real estate.

A misleadingly light-hearted novel that uses humor to speak the truth about the gaping voids in modern society.

Marie-Renée Lavoie
DIANE DEMANDE UN RECOMPTAGE

(Diane Ask for A Recount)

Éditions XYZ, January 2020, 280 pages



- ◇ **OPTIONS: CZECH REPUBLIC (EUROMEDIA), SERBIA (CIGOJA ŠTAMPA).**
- ◇ **Rights sold:** English (Anansi), English Audio (Dreamscape), French Audio (Audible), German (Eichborn).
- ◇ TOP 10 of the July 2021 LoanStars picks! The 10 most anticipated books published monthly, as voted by library staff across Canada.
- ◇ This eagerly anticipated sequel to the critically beloved and bestselling *Autopsy of a Boring Wife* finds the saucy and ever-appealing Diane, now turning fifty and with the wreckage of her marriage behind her, setting off on a new hilarious journey for romance.
- ◇ Grounded and dense characters, perfectly chiseled sentences and a fine sense of humor even in the most difficult parts
- ◇ An acute sense of observation and characteristic energy, topped off with a dose of humour and tenderness.

After "Autopsy of a Boring Wife", Diane is back in this follow-up novel chronicling her adventures in the dating world as she embarks on a new career. Her marriage may be over, but she has more than enough love to go around and gives it away generously.

First, to her grown children, next to her best friend Claudine and her daughters, then to a classroom of children who soak up her attention, and finally to Madeleine, her sweet, wizened old neighbour whose big drafty house becomes a haven for stray cats. But there's still room in her heart for a man who can treat her like royalty... like the Lady Di she is.

"A bright, lively style. There isn't a dull moment as we follow Diane everywhere, even into the unlikeliest of situations..." Le Journal de Montréal

"Slapstick, funny, and absurd, but underlined with a tenderness and poignance that will have you rooting for happily ever after that."
—PickleMeThis

Marie-Renée Lavoie
AUTOPSIE D'UNE FEMME PLATE

(Autopsy of a Boring Wife)

Éditions XYZ, April 2017, 248 pages



- ◇ **English sample available.**
- ◇ **Rights sold in:** Czech (Euromedia), English (Anansi), French (J'ai Lu), Italian (Sperling&Kupfer), Romania (Trei), Serbia (Cigoja štampa), French Audio (Audible), Drama (C. Lalumière), Drama rights, English Audio (Dreamscape), French exc. N. America (J'ai Lu), French Audio (Audible), German (Eichborn).
- ◇ An astute commentary on women and girls, gender differences, and the curious institution of marriage in the 21st century.
- ◇ A remedy for depression tinged with bitterness, a balm for self-flagellation over the less-than-Catholic thoughts any woman may have experienced post-breakup while mourning the end of a relationship.

Like a Québécois "Bridget Jones's Diary", the hysterically funny and ultimately touching tale of forty-eight-year-old Diane, a woman whose husband leaves her and is having an affair because, he says, she bores him.

All in all, there's really only one problem with marriage, and that's the exchange of vows. You can't take them seriously, these promises to love from this day forward, in sickness and in health, until death do you part. For the sake of being honest with generations to come who insist on marriage, I propose we rewrite the script to give it more of a 21st century, less fairytale feel.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Marie-Renée Lavoie is the author of LA PETITE ET LE VIEUX (Mister Roger and Me, House of Anansi press, 2012 – winner of Archambault's 2011 Prix littéraire de la relève and of Radio-Canada's 2012 Combat des livres) and LE SYNDROME DE LA VIS. She holds a masters degree in Quebec literature and teaches literature at the college level.

"Lavoie's fiercely hilarious take on the pains and triumphs of marital abandonment feels perfectly right."

"With great humour and tenderness, Marie-Renée Lavoie recounts Diane's journey to regain trust in both herself and the people around her. A piercing commentary on gender, marriage, and the nuances of self-love."

BIO & HISTORICAL

Mathias Malzieu
LE GUERRIER DE PORCELAINE
(The Porcelain Warrior)
Albin Michel, January 2022, 240 pages



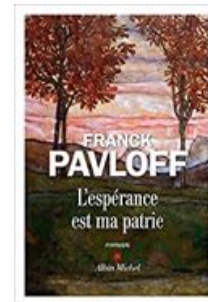
- ◇ **4,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Print run: 40 000 copies**
- ◇ **Mathias Malzieu writes a new page: from a childhood memory shared with his father, he weaves the novel of a childhood during the war, blending reality and imagination, humor and poetry. In *The Porcelain Warrior*, his most intimate novel, he questions the powerful links of filiation.**

The last months of the war seen through the eyes of a child.

In April 1944, the author's father -the little Mainou aged 9- had just lost his mother who died in childbirth. His father sent him, hidden in a cart full of hay, to his grandmother in Lorraine, on the other side of the French demarcation line. She ran a grocer's shop on the edge of what used to be the German border. It is those last months of the war, seen through a child's eyes, that Mathias Malzieu seeks to bring alive, blending his voice with his father's in a poetic and deeply moving novel. Mainou meets a family who were strangers to him then, discovers the power of imagination with Uncle Émile, finds the strength to mourn his mother and survive in occupied France.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Mathias Malzieu is an author and a leading light on the French rock scene with the group Dionysos. His book *LA MÉCANIQUE DU CŒUR*, translated in 20 countries and adapted for cinema, was successful with a wide public. *LE GUERRIER DE PORCELAINE* is his third book published by Albin Michel.

Franck Pavloff
L'ESPÉRANCE EST MA PATRIE
(Hope is my Homeland)
Albin Michel, January 2022, 256 pages



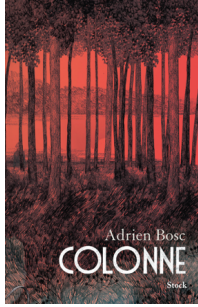
A miraculous journey to heal the wounds of the past.

Stig Nyman, a genealogist living in Stockholm, is sent on a mission to Estonia to untangle the maze of a complex succession. Its complexity stems firstly from Estonia's violent switch in the 20th century from Nazi rule to the yoke of the Soviets, and particularly because the deceased, a certain Toomas Lodaam, had an enigmatic personality to say the least. A collector and brilliant forger, he left two heirs, Louna and Lukas, both already knocked by life. To the shores of the Baltic Sea in the company of Stig, they follow in the footsteps of this mysterious father to find the link that binds them, in spite of everything.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Franck Pavloff authored *MATIN BRUN*, translated in twenty-five countries, which sold 2 million copies. The ensemble of his novelistic creation is coherent, of a constantly high standard.

Adrien Bosc
COLONNE
(Column)

Stock, January 2022, 176 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Ugo Guanda) and Spain (Tusquets, Castillan/Univers, Catalan)**
- ◇ The final part of a trilogy which began with *Constellation*, then *Capitaine* – describes the collision of different destinies in a temporary community, a cluster of life stories that scatter into separate, contradictory and yet united trajectories.

Adrien Bosc describes how Simone Weil took up arms alongside Spanish republicans. A life-changing experience for this great philosopher who died too young...

In August 1936, at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, the philosopher of Simone Weil, who was not yet thirty, joined the international forces of the Durutti Column, a famous column of anarchist fighters who rallied to the republican camp. She sustained serious injuries and was repatriated to France on September 25.

She spent forty-eight days in Spain. We know nothing, or almost nothing about this time. A passport, scattered notes in her “Spanish Diary”, some letters, a few photographs in uniform. Adrien Bosc brings together the pieces of the puzzle and retraces Simone’s movements in Spain. Amid the chaos of a cruelly divisive civil war, we discover an intense and tragic life in which this war was a tipping point: she said, “Other people’s misfortunes got inside my skin and my soul.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Adrien Bosc was born in 1986. In 2014 his first novel, *Constellation*, was awarded the Grand Prix for a novel from the Académie française as well as the Prix de la Vocation; he published *Capitaine* in 2018. He is the founder of Éditions du sous-sol and his books have been translated into 10 languages.

“Bosc manages to render Simone Weil as alive as her writings remain.” LH Le Magazine

Raphaël Aubert
QU'UNE SEULE ÂME SUR LA TERRE
(But One Single Soul on Earth)

Buchet Chastel, March 2022, 224 pages



An intimate 20th-century saga told through the thwarted fates of three musicians whose lives overlap with both World War II and the Cold War.

The novel opens with the famous concert conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler, a symbol of resistance to Nazism when the Bayreuth Festival reopened. A concert that was attended by Antonin Tcherniakovsky, a Soviet officer posted to Berlin.

Like so many others, Antonin Tcherniakovsky’s life was overturned by World War II. Although he had been preparing for a career as a violinist, history decided otherwise. Having enlisted in the Polish division, he was in France early in the war. After the defeat, he winds up interned in Switzerland, where he meets a young woman, Alberte, the novel’s other main character. She is teaching the interns French, but she too, had wanted to be a violinist.

The third major character is the narrator, who is unnamed. Perhaps because his own life story seems to elude his grasp. There are so many questions he would have liked to be able to ask Alberte, his mother, who hardly knew how to love him. And there’s that stranger from his past, who seems to have been there, at a distance, ever since. His quest, which has the feel of a thriller at times, takes him to both Rome and Berlin, and will, despite the obstacles, allow him to reconnect with his buried past.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Raphaël Aubert has written nearly two dozen books – essentially non-fiction essays. In 2014, he received the Vaud State Literature Prize, and in 2015, he was made a knight in the Order of Arts and Letters. He divides his time between Switzerland and France.

Raphaël Jerusalmy
IN ABSENTIA
(In Absentia)
 Actes Sud, March 2022, 176 pages



- ◇ Raphaël Jerusalmy orchestrates the brief and defining encounter between these two realities in a breathtaking novelistic tour de force.
- ◇ With his trademark free spirit and sense of subversion, the author strikes a sober and stubborn tone – a neutrality with undertones of emotion – to achieve this improbable, painful and yet transcendent escape through the power of dreaming.

At the Struthof (the only Nazi concentration camp established on French soil), the writer and political deportee Pierre Delmain has taken on a key role: with his own bare hands and drawing on his last reserves of strength, he is finishing off deportees when their health gets to the stage where they are unsuitable for the 'scientific experiments' being conducted in the camp. He does so with gentleness, empathy and humanity, but he cannot forgive himself for all that. And so he escapes through dreaming, quite literally. Delmain transports himself to the world of the knights of the crusades, and along the dusty byways of another age, amid different battles, he finds refuge in an alternative reality.

In Paris, amid the little streets of Saint-Germain-des-Prés and the boulevards around La Coupole brasserie, the art collector Saül Berstein, who is known to all as M. Paul, delays with the help of mesaline and through the contemplation of beauty the realisation just of how much violence and sheer ugliness surrounds him. Despite being abandoned by his young lover Francesco, and despite the yellow star that he obstinately refuses to wear to high-society lunches and evaluations of artworks, M. Paul forces himself to find reasons not to follow the example of his fellow writers and Dada artists, who have fled Paris and in some cases France altogether. A non-practising Jew, M. Paul does not believe in the Nazis either – until the day when he is arrested and deported to Auschwitz.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Raphaël Jerusalmy is the author of four novels published by Actes Sud – SAUVER MOZART (2012, Prix Emmanuel Roblès 2013, Prix de l'ENS Cachan 2013), LA CONFRÉRIÉ DES CHASSEURS DE LIVRES (2013), ÉVACUATION (2017, Prix Amerigo Vespucci), LA ROSE DE SARAGOSSE (2018) – that have established his reputation as an unpredictable writer whose works betray a subtle political engagement.

Eve de Castro
L'AUTRE MOLIÈRE
(The Other Molière)
 L'Iconoclaste, January 2022, pages



- ◇ A novel at the forefront of “The Year of Molière” that begins in January 2022, four hundred years since his birth.
- ◇ The first novel that dramatises this passionate controversy.
- ◇ Eve de Castro excels at bringing the 17th century to life, the period in which she has set her greatest literary successes.

Did Corneille write Moliere's most famous theatrical works? This is a novel about one of the most controversial of literary enigmas.

In the dead of night on 21st February 1673, a weeping crowd buried Molière at the Saint-Joseph cemetery. Considering he died in full swing of his activities, no manuscript was itemised on the inventory at his place of work. This mystery has never been explained. In 1919, Pierre Louÿs was the first to assert that a writing agreement existed between Corneille and Molière and that the tragedian was the ghostwriter of the actor's great works. The controversy burst into flames and has aroused passions for a hundred years.

Using a novel format, Ève de Castro plunges us into the heart of this enigma with details that official biographies have ignored. Who knows if Molière, an amazing actor, had any intellectual abilities to technically enable him to write without help? Who is aware that Corneille started his career by writing seven comedies, that he had a wicked sense of humour and that he was infatuated with Armande Béjart, Molière's wife?

Ève de Castro decided to construct a narrative of voices where each protagonist tells their point of view one by one. Little by little the mystery deepens. We imagine the epoch, we experience the two men's everyday existence; their shared passion for the theatre, for the king, and for the young Armande Béjart.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Eve de Castro is a historian, a novelist and a scriptwriter. She experienced spectacular success with her first novel, *Bastards of the Sun King* (Orban Editions). She has published several novels since then and has been awarded numerous prizes: *Have Mercy on the Hearts of Men* (J-C Lattès edition – The Prix des libraires), *We will be like Gods* (Albin Michel – The Deux Magots Prize), *The King of Shadows* (Robert Laffont – The Grand literary Prize of the National Academy of Pharmacy), *Plaything* (Robert Laffont – the Montesquieu Prize).

Hélène Gestern
555

Arléa, January 2022, 464 pages



◇ Longlisted for the **PRIX RTL - LIRE Le Magazine littéraire 2022**

◇ As often with this author, a classic novel doubles as an investigation. This is an investigation without an investigator. The pages unfold the resolution of an enigma that keeps the reader in suspense until the end.

After the beautiful biographical account of Armen Lubin, Hélène Gestern returns to the novel with this enigmatic 555.

Hélène Gestern takes us into the world of music, musicians, lutherie, with a power that belongs to her. It was by undoing the lining of a cello case that Grégoire Coblence, partner of a luthier, discovered an old score. After having it deciphered, he becomes certain that it was written by Domenico Scarlatti, the most illustrious of harpsichord composers. But the partition disappears. Five people, whose existence is intimately linked to the work of the musician, then set off headlong in search of the precious document, in a context where truth and lies, sincerity and pretense are constantly colliding. In the most disturbing of ways. But as always in the novels of Hélène Gestern, these five men and women, over the diabolical game of chess in which they will have to take part, are gradually led to question their past, their loves, their hopes and their mistakes, thanks to a quest that will permanently change their lives.

Scarlatti, brilliant composer with 555 sonatas, is the common thread of this “musical” novel. Its captivating music is the soundtrack. And it does not matter, ultimately, whether to add a 556th.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Hélène Gestern has published with Arléa Armen. *Exile and Writing* (2020; Arléa-Poche 2021), *Sleeping Water* (2018; Arléa-Poche 2020), *Un Vertigo* (2017), *The Smell of the Forest* (2016; Arléa-Poche 2018), *Portrait after injury* (2014; Arléa-Poche 2017), *Part of the fire* (2013; Arléa-Poche 2015), *Them in the photo* (2011; Arléa-Poche 2013). 555 is his eighth book.

Alexis Salatko

LA DERNIÈRE ENQUÊTE DE DINO BUZZATI

(Dino Buzzati's Final Investigation)

Denoël, January 2022, 200 pages



- ◇ Classified as a scandalously non-partisan writer (and therefore right-wing), Buzzati never ceased to surprise his readers, breaking all of the codes of classic narration and waging a relentless war on its etiquette.
- ◇ After Céline and Django Reinhardt, successfully adapted for film, Alexis Salatko pays homage to another giant of the 20th century for the fiftieth anniversary of his death.

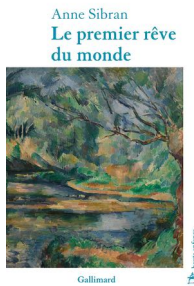
Summer 1970, the great Italian writer, Dino Buzzati, 64 years old, has only a few months left to live.

Instead of reacting to the news with fear, Buzzati almost feels relieved. Finally, the enemy is standing there in front of him! The wait is over; the wait that will have marred his entire life... And like Drogo, his hero in *The Tartar Steppe*, he finally smiles at life, just as the clock is about to run out. He doesn't talk to anyone about his cancer and without changing his routine, goes to 28 via Solferino, the headquarters of *Corriere Della Sera*, the newspaper where he's worked for 40 years. His old accomplice Montanelli, now editor-in-chief, tells him about the latest story: in a little village in the south of Italy, something very strange has happened. The inhabitants of a run-down building were found frozen, like statues, with no reasonable explanation. It sounds like something that Buzzati might have dreamed up, and who better than Dino to go investigate? He hesitates, but then agrees, unable to resist the call of mystery... Besides, he wants to finish his reporting career with a bang.

Little by little, Buzzati's investigation will become an investigation on himself as the people that he meets and the events that he experiences remind him of his life and work. At the crossroads between metaphysical detective novel and romanticized biography, we walk the fine line between dream and reality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Alexis Salatko is a scriptwriter and writer. Among others, he is the author of *HOROWITZ ET MON PERE* (Jean-Freustié Award, Saint-Emilion Literary Grand Prize, Fayard, 2005), *UN FAUTEUIL AU BORD DU VIDE* (François-Mauriac de l'Académie française Award, Reine-Mathilde Prize, Fayard, 2006), and *FOLLES DE DJANGO* (Robert Laffont, 2013).

Anne Sibran
LE PREMIER RÊVE DU MONDE
(The World's First Dream)
Gallimard, February 2022, 252 pages



◇ **ONLY FOR POLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES**

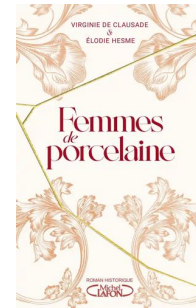
- ◇ Anne Sibran unravels a poetic imagination, with a luminous style, that depicts how, from the differences and shared dream of these three characters, was born a different view of the world.

This novel's three protagonists should have never met.

Paul Cézanne, the painter at the peak of his creativity, was criss-crossing the countryside near Aix, in his constant search for a new way of looking, both naïve and pure. Barthelemy, a brilliant ophthalmologist, lived as a child with blind people in the institution directed by his father. A gifted student, he dedicated himself to studying the eye and successfully developed cataract surgery. During the Paris Commune of 1871, he provided care to the injured demonstrators, and as a result was forced into exile in the Americas. There, he met Kitsidano, a young Native American, blind at birth, but who was able to see what could not be seen, and became his wife. The three of them met in Paris, at Barthelemy's practice where Paul Cézanne went for consultations. Their friendship was born out of their shared passion for "the first sight". If Cézanne was fascinated by Barthelemy's work, he was equally struck by the astonishing personality of Kitsidano with whom he shared an almost shamanic sensitivity, and who would eventually refuse the surgery which could give her back her eyesight, preferring instead to retain her inner vision.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Anne Sibran is a novelist, author of radio plays and young-adult books. She lives between France and Ecuador.

Virginie de Clausade & Élodie Hesme
FEMMES DE PORCELAINE
(Porcelain Sisters)
Michel Lafon, March 2022, 416 pages



The true story of the uprising by female workers at the Haviland porcelain factory, Limoges, in 1905 – one of the first major feminist campaigns for equal rights and the abolition of droit du seigneur.

1905. Limoges. Industry is booming and workers are paying the price. Anne and Clotilde, two sisters who were orphaned and separated as children, no longer recognize each other. As adults, their lives couldn't be more different. Anne is a worker at the Haviland porcelain factory. Clotilde is the boss's wife. But a sexual assault case is about to stoke the flames and bring them back together. Penot, the factory foreman, has overstepped the mark one too many times...

Headed up by Anne, a protest movement demanding the 'right to dignity' storms Limoges, where the rebels take the fight to the gates of the city.

Anne and Clotilde live through it all on opposite sides of the divide. Against a backdrop of riots, mishaps, true love and workers' union, the sisters must protect the secret of their sisterhood and, above all, confront the system and the status quo to make their voices heard.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Virginie de Clausade is an actor and author. FEMMES DE PORCELAINE [Porcelain Sisters] is her fifth book. Élodie Hesme is an actor and screenwriter who has made her name through numerous television series and films. She is also a songwriter, whose credits include lyrics for Céline Dion, Johnny Hallyday and Tina Arena. This passion for writing has similarly inspired her career as a novelist. FEMMES DE PORCELAINE [Porcelain Sisters] is her third book.

Rebecca Benhamou
LES HABITUÉS DU TEMPS SUSPENDU
(When Time Stands Still)
 Fayard, March 2022, 360 pages



◇ **Under option in Russia (Knizhniki)**

Based on the life of the author's grandfather who left Algeria and never returned, Rebecca Benhamou's debut novel oscillates between the fantasies of the countries we lose and those of the countries we inherit.

One December morning, a young cello player named Lila plays a piece by Bach for the regulars of Le Temps Suspendu, a café on the Left Bank in Paris. The music takes Salomon, a retired watchmaker, to a place on the other side of the Mediterranean that he had fled fifty years earlier and believed long forgotten – a place from which Lila's father came as well. Thus begins a dialogue in which our two uprooted protagonists share stories of exile, war, the passing of time and love. Along the way, it's an entire life and a country – whether idealized or dreamed – that come alive... But when the possibility of going back arises, Solomon does not know what to do. At his age, why spoil memories by confronting them with reality?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Journalist and writer Rebecca Benhamou was born in 1986. She was named one of Vogue magazine's 5 must-read debut writers of 2019. Her publications include *L'horizon a pour elle dénoué sa ceinture* (Fayard, 2019) and *Sur la bouche. Une histoire insolente du rouge à lèvres* (Premier Parallèle, 2021). *Les habitués du Temps suspendu* is her debut novel.

Sarah Briand
LES PÉPINS DE GRENADE
(Pomegranate Seeds)
 Fayard, April 2022, 240 pages



Salomé's world is turned upside down the day she meets a mysterious GI named Andrew. Her relationship with the American soldier disrupts her daily life and her work at a major television network in Paris and gradually leads her on a search for identity. Who is the enigmatic Andrew? When her search for answers takes her to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, Salomé discovers the disturbing trace of an ancestor of her own...

The story of her great-uncle André, imprisoned by the Germans during the Second World War and now recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations" had never been mentioned in her family. What is the truth behind the family secret so carefully buried in the valleys of the protagonist's native Ardèche?

As Salomé looks for answers, the shared fates of Andrew and André become increasingly clear, from the trauma of war to that of forbidden love. An inspiring and intimate debut novel weaving the stories of ordinary people with greater historical truths.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sarah Briand is a journalist for France 2 TV and a director for the documentary series *Un Jour Un Destin*. She is also the author of the biographies *Simone, éternelle rebelle* (Fayard, 2015) and *Romy, une longue nuit de silence* (Fayard, 2019).

THRILLER

Elena Sender
REPLAY
(Replay)

Albin Michel, February 2022, 464 pages



- ◇ The novel does focus on rapports of domination. Tristan's domination over Lois, the virtual world over the real, artificial intelligence over flesh.
- ◇ When we hear about projects of virtual universes, of 'the metaverse', it is urgent to pose the question of the ascendancy of technologies over our life, to fix the ethical limits.
- ◇ Elena Sander signs an astounding psychological thriller that questions our hyper-connected society, where artificial intelligence succeeds in dictating our lives, and who knows? ... perhaps soon our deaths.

IMAGINE IF YOU COULD... Be someone else? Correct past mistakes? Obtain happiness thanks to artificial intelligence? AND IF... All this was possible in a virtual world, in a game where all moral barriers were removed?

The day she fell under the charms of Tristan, a seducer, creator of absolutely brilliant virtual games, Lois's life – dull routine until then – toppled into another dimension. This man dragged her into a sophisticated virtual reality game that let her relive the past, correcting her mistakes. Like Alice plunging down the rabbit hole to land in an unknown world, Lois went deeper and deeper... Will she let herself be destroyed by this deadly game, a threat to her mental health and that of millions of players? Lois is a modern woman in her thirties, single, a little bit lost, who's looking for the great love of her life in a big city (Paris), with the means offered by her times, including on-line dating. She's the girl next door who lacks self-confidence. She falls in love with Tristan, a game designer who creates virtual universes in which he evolves like a fish in the ocean. But his genius is equalled only by his perversity. When he makes a gift of his latest game RePlay to Lois, he's taking control of her. A cat and mouse chase begins, in both worlds, the real and the virtual.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A qualified biologist and scientific journalist, filmmaker and novelist, Elena Sander signs an astounding psychological thriller that questions our hyper-connected society, where artificial intelligence succeeds in dictating our lives, and who knows? ... perhaps soon our deaths.

"A subtle, futuristic 'post-Covid' novel."

"A perfectly controlled technological crime novel." "Today's ethical questions posed."

Jean-Luc Bizien
LE BOTANISTE
(The Botanist)

Fayard, March 2022, 464 pages



The passionate and idealist naturalist William Icard lives and works in an indigenous village in the heart of the Amazon rainforest. But the community's peaceful existence is turned upside down when a commando group attacks the village, destroying everything in its path.

Ten years later, an environmental NGO has brought legal actions against a palm oil multinational. But the proceedings come to an abrupt halt when four members of the jury are kidnapped and then mysteriously resurface, a day later, on social media – stranded in the middle of the rainforest!

In an unprecedented reality TV experience, viewers breathlessly follow the plight of the hostages, discovering in the process the pristine beauty of the tropical forest. Will the Botanist leading the operations be able to rally the world's population to his cause before being captured by the police... or killed by the multinational's henchmen? The race against the clock is on.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Award-winning author and member of the French writers' guild Ligue de l'Imaginaire, Jean-Luc Bizien has received numerous literary prizes, including the Gérardmer Fantastic Arts, Prix du roman d'aventures, Prix Lion noir, Prix Sang d'encre 2016 and Prix Dora-Suarez 2021.

Mody
LES PAPILLONS NOIRS

(Black Butterflies: The Story of Albert and Solange)
JC Lattès, September 2022



- ◇ The event not to miss next fall 2022 : 6 episodes first on ARTE, then worldwide on Netflix.
- ◇ The novel is a key part of the series and will be published simultaneously with the tele series this fall.

With this novel, discover the backstory of Albert and Solange, stars of the series that will be on TV screens worldwide this Fall, and their secrets, stretching from their miserable childhood to their sexy and depraved adulthood.

The audio-visual thriller series “Les Papillons noirs” imagines an older man, Albert Desiderio, who reveal his secrets to a famous author who goes by the penname of Mody, seeking inspiration for his next novel. The result of their encounter is a passionate, romantic and bloodthirsty tale of a serial-killer-couple in 1970s France, that of Albert and his only love Solange.

Imagine a French version of Bonnie and Clyde. A love story in which desire and death go hand in hand. At the very beginning two outcast and abandoned children meet, they seek shelter in each other and become one. Their unity pitches them against the rest of the world and they believe that maybe together they can overcome the shadows of their past. But their love may be strong and it may be deep, but it is also darker than the deepest night... made of vengeance and retribution.

Giacometti - Ravenne
669

JC Lattès, April 2022, 432 pages



- ◇ 500 000 faithful readers.
- ◇ First volumes translated, among others, into English, Chinese And Japanese.
- ◇ Can be read as a “stand alone”.

Through Geneva, Nazi Germany and occupied Paris, Tristan must continue his struggle against the dark forces that threaten the course of History. A new opus in the successful saga The Black Sun by this incomparable, masterful duo of star authors.

Tristan thought he could spend a few quiet days in Geneva but is caught up despite himself in a bloody operation with Laure, who now works for de Gaulle, before being kidnapped by Skorzeny to serve the Nazis once again. Tristan must face off with Himmler’s new favorite recruit – an academic in the process of creating a new order of witches to serve the Reich.

Meanwhile in Paris, a special envoy of Hitler and a Nazi collaborator aristocrat are viciously murdered. Each time, the number 669 appears at the scene of the crime.

In a Paris electrified by approaching D-Day, and amid daily clashes between the Gestapo and the French police, Tristan must quickly get to the bottom of the crimes that are piling up: if not, the French capital will be hit by ruthless Nazi repression and Laure will be tortured and executed.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Eric Giacometti is a writer and ex-journalist. He is also the scenarist of the illustrated album series, Largo Winch.

Jacques Ravenne is a writer, Freemason, specialist of the French Revolution and author of historical books.

Sonja Delzongle

ABÎMES

(Abyss)

Denoël, March 2022, 400 pages



- ◇ Reading tip of one of the greatest masters of French Thriller, Bernard Minier (no need to introduce him and his novels anymore: 4 million copies sold, translated into 22 languages...): *ABYSS* by Sonja Delzongle is his very recommendation. According to him, this is “the thriller you must read”.
- ◇ A booklet and, for the most curious among you, who cannot wait to solve the case, a 4-page English reading are available!
- ◇ The Pyreneans, an unsolved mystery that villagers tried to hide under the snow and a gallery of unreliable characters: it is impossible to resist!
- ◇ A major promotional campaign is in the works for this title: from its release to the “Quais du polar” Festival in 2022.
- ◇ Unforgettable characters, an ambiance full of mystery, the past knocking at the door: Delzongle at her finest.
- ◇ Sale figures: *LE DERNIER CHANT*: 9,000 copies, *L’HOMME DE LA PLAINE DU NORD*: over 30,000 copies, *BOREAL*: 50,000 copies, *DUST*: 45,000 copies, *CATARACTES*: 20,000 copies, *QUAND LA NEIGE DANSE*: 20,000 copies, *RECIDIVE*: 20,000 copies.
- ◇ In the heart of a landscape as bewitching as it is frightening, frost hides many mysteries: this thin layer of ice either covers a dead body or features reflections, which surprise, as many of the protagonists are not who we think – or they think – they are.
- ◇ On the backdrop of Pyrenean legends, old beliefs and new lies, Sonja Delzongle gives life to multifaceted personalities that page after page reveal their humanity and their animality, animating a breath-taking intrigue in which every single chapter challenges our certainties.
- ◇ Through its powerful story, its highly unsettling atmospheres and its masterfully described setting, Sonja Delzongle’s new crime novel is addictive: on of those books you cannot put down, which make you miss your bus stop or prevent you from switching the light off...

Welcome to Mont-Perdu... It is a story of a revenge, which stains with blood the white snow coat that covers the Monte Perdido. And of other purities tarnished by the devilish perversion of the one, who should have known how to inspire with care and benevolence, rather than throw others

into the abyss. Since in this story abysses are not only those that cause vertigo on the top of the Pyreneans. And not only avalanches carry off, destroy and suffocate: there are violence, toxic influences, memories, unspoken words and illusions.

December 1999. Viktor Mendi, a rich hotelier, and his wife Dolores crash in their tourist plane in the Pyrenean mountains of Mont-Perdu, at the border between France and Spain.

Twenty-four years later, Mathias, a sheep farmer, discovers seven snowmen in his snow-covered field. The snowmen form a circle, in the middle of which someone has written, “We’ll get you.” Mathias is convinced that someone is trying to intimidate him; a hunting aficionado, he has just organized a beat to kill the wolf that massacred part of his flock. In the process, he also butted heads with the green party led by the mayor’s daughter. But when he calls his friend Ekain, his friend asks him to come over right away. When he arrives, Mathias sees that Ekain also has a circle of seven snowmen, but this time, “You’re dead” has been written in the center of their macabre ring. As the Preacher isn’t a hunter and isn’t after the wolf, Mathias’s theory no longer makes sense. Ekain thinks that something from their past has caught up to them. And he mentions Millaris, a mythical giant from the Pyrenees whose legend is linked to the first snow.

Meanwhile, Antoine, the son of Viktor and Dolores Mendi, arrives in the region and returns to the crash site where his parents died when he was only eleven years old. While there, he will also make a discovery that might drag the whole village in its wake. Because he has his share of carefully guarded secrets too. In the course of his research, Antoine Mendi meets Miren, a strange young woman who is part of a small self-sufficient community living in the middle of the forest. Antoine and Miren are both struck by mutual and unexpectedly powerful feelings. Will they be able to act on them? Nothing is less certain...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1967 to a French father and a Serbian mother, Sonja Delzongle grew up between Dijon and Serbia. She has led a Bohemian lifestyle, between various jobs (from working in Afro-Asian artisanal trade to running a bar) and writing. She now divides her time between Lyon and la Drôme.

Across France, bookshops are dedicating entire tables to this great crime author, and bookstagrammers do not hesitate employing laudatory words:

“An exceptional novel”

“If you are looking for a mind-blowing reading, this is the one”

“Noir, sublime, powerful”

“Totally addictive”

“An unmissable book”

Niko Tackian

RESPIRE

(Breathe)

Calmann Lévy, January 2022, 250 pages



- ◇ **18,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **French sales: Audiobook (Audiolib) Paperback (Le Livre de Poche)**

He wanted a fresh start, to disappear. He woke up on an island, where he was supposed to begin a new life. A paradise with a taste of hell.

When he awakes from an induced state of unconsciousness, Yohan discovers that he's been transported to an island in the middle of the ocean – but which one? -, covered in a huge forest and long dunes. He is given a house, a new name and even a job - that of detective. The island is almost deserted, but the abandoned houses along the village's main road prove that more people lived here until recently. The map that Yohan was given with the house only shows a small part of the island, and the other inhabitants refuse to answer his questions about the rest.

At first, Yohan is full of energy, invigorated by this new adventure. But little by little, fear begins to take hold. Ever since he woke up, everyone seems to be warning him against something. But what? And he has other questions too... Where does the only grocery store on the island get its supplies from? How is it possible that everything is free? Can it really last a lifetime? Who is at the head of this organisation and what do they have to gain?

And why does Yohan feel like he's being watched all the time?

The chance discovery of a letter and a map, hidden by the island's former detective, set Yohan on a path in search of the truth. A dangerous, foggy path, on an island where no one is an ally, and nothing is as it seems...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Niko Tackian was born in 1973. He is a French novelist, screenwriter and producer. He created the France 2 series, Alex Hugo, with Franck Thilliez, which has high viewer ratings. His first novel, published in 2015, was awarded the Prix Polar du Public des Bibliothèques at the Festival Polar de Cognac. His bestselling thriller AVALANCHE HÔTEL was awarded the Prix Ligue de L'Imaginaire-Cultura in 2019.

Sylvain Forge

SARA

Fayard, March 2022, 468 pages



In his gripping new thriller, Sylvain Forge, who has received many awards for his books, once more brilliantly combines suspense and scientific and technological research.

Nantes has become a hotbed of political struggle. Faced with a dramatic increase in crime, the city has elected a new mayor, the unabashedly populist Guillaume de Villeneuve, who has promised to clean up the city with SARA, a network of intelligent surveillance cameras.

When the mysterious disappearance of a world-renowned robotics expert with ties to the new mayor throws a wrench into the works, Chief Inspector Isabelle Mayet is put on the case. Torn between her responsibilities as a young mother and her duties as a cop, she will need all the help she can get from a brilliant young cybersecurity expert and from her new and somewhat unorthodox deputy officer.

But the investigation spells trouble for the Nantes police when the allegedly all-powerful AI starts discrediting and even threatening members of the force.

Applauded by some and vehemently contested by others, the divisive surveillance system raises the difficult question of striking the right balance between individual liberties and security.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sylvain Forge is a cybersecurity specialist, theater lecturer, and author. In 2018, he was awarded the Prix du Quai des Orfèvres for Tension extrême (Fayard). His other publications include Parasite (Mazarine, 2019), Un parfum de soufre (Prix Plume d'argent 2016 du thriller francophone), and Sauve-la (Fayard noir, 2020), winner of the Prix Cognac du meilleur roman francophone and the Prix du roman Cyber 2021 (ANSSI et Agora 41).

Emmanuel Bourdieu
JE SUIS LE DERNIER

(I Am the Last One)

Payot Rivages, February 2022, 176 pages



Opening with the trial of a farmer accused of having dismembered a woman jogger, this noir novel explores the genealogy of violence in the family of the perpetrator, whose inexplicably barbarian act seems to be an emanation of the distant past rearing its ugly head once again.

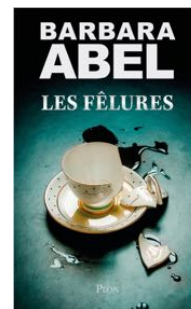
A psychoanalyst, expert witness in court, receives a fascinating case: Charles Blancard, a farmer, stands accused of having killed and dismembered a woman jogger. The unsavory farmer has given six different versions of the crime and says that he can't remember the circumstances. The expert, who is supposed to evaluate his mental state, but who's having enough trouble dealing with her own depression – can't help seeing him as a manipulator. Still, Charles did make one confession that she finds intriguing: "I am the last one." Meaning he is the youngest son, but also the last generation on the family farm, the last of a line of violent men, and the last man. So she decides to explore the genealogy of violence in the family of the murderer, whose barbaric act seems to have reared up from the mists of time.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Emmanuel Bourdieu, son of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, was born in Paris in 1965. Philosopher, playwright, screenplay writer and director, he has worked with Arnaud Desplechin, Denis Podalydès and Éric Rochant, among others. he has made seven feature films, including VERT PARADISE, LES AMITIÉS MALÉFIQUES (Prix de la Critique at the Cannes Festival) and LOUIS-FERDINAND CÉLINE. JE SUIS LE DERNIER is his debut novel.

Barbara Abel
LES FÊLURES

(The Fissures)

Plon, March 2022, 432 pages



Barbara Abel's take on Romeo and Juliet...

When Juliet wakes up and realises that her Romeo, having believed she was dead, has taken his own life in desperation, she kisses her love one last time before killing herself with his dagger. Unlike Juliet, when Fanny, the heroine of Barbara Abel's latest novel, opens her eyes, she knows despite the chaos reigning in her head that she shouldn't still be there. And yet Fanny's story will turn out just as tragically as Juliet's. She and Martin formed a perfect couple of the kind you rarely come across, but one day they are found in their bed, having committed suicide. Or least attempted to: Fanny wakes up on a drip in a hospital, though Martin has not been so lucky (unlucky?). Her shock is matched by that of friends and family.

How can she make them understand this apparently mad act? Had can she justify the terrible decision that they took?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in 1969, Barbara Abel lives in Brussels and is a successful author. The film *Duelles*, adapted from her novel DERRIÈRE LA HAINE, is currently being remade in the United States with Jessica Chastain and Anne Hathaway in the leading roles with Russian rights sold to Eksmo.

Christophe Carlier
UN PRÉNOM EN TROP
(One Name Too Many)
 Plon, March 2022, 300 pages



◇ A bewitching thriller where the psychological influence, from a distance, frightens as much as it fascinates.

What if we were under the influence of a stranger who does everything to ruin our lives?

About this man who one day meets Rebecca, a beautiful young woman, in a nightclub, we will know neither the name nor even the contours of his body. But we'll find out all about what is going on in his head. As soon as he sees her, and because she pays no attention to him, this man will hunt down Rebecca, find out everything about her and make sure to become «present» from the depths of her hiding place. He will contrive to ruin her existence since, he's sure, she did not «want him».

Rebecca will gradually feel trapped and as if threatened: an anonymous but frightening message for her birthday, flowers that don't fade, a dead mouse... seemingly minor worries that no one takes seriously... except Violette, the devoted assistant. But what if, finally, Violette was the other side of the coin?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Christophe Carlier, has already written several other works translated in: Germany DTV (L'ASSASSIN À LA POMME VERTE under the title *Der Mörder mit dem grünen Apfel*), in Spain, Maeva (RESSENTIMENTS DISTINGUÉS under the title *Saludos nada cordiales*), and in Italy, Guanda (RESSENTIMENTS DISTINGUÉS under the title *Saluti (poco cordiali)*).

Marlène Charine
LÉONIE
(Leonie)

Calmann Lévy, March 2022, 324 pages



For the past six years, Leonie has lived locked up in a house while Diane has taken care of her brother, the policeman in charge of investigating Leonie's disappearance, trapped in his own body.

Every morning, Léonie waits for Raymond to unlock her bedroom's heavy red door. She has been doing so for the past 5 years.

Raymond abducted her after a party one night when she was seventeen. And she has lived in his basement ever since, with a metal restraint around her ankle, fastened to a rope. Nobody ever came to rescue her. None of her seventeen attempts to escape worked. But on the 2,190th morning, Raymond collapses. A heart attack. As soon as she's sure that he's dead, Leonie frees herself and runs to the bay windows looking onto the garden. She could find a road and stand there with her arms wide open until a car comes. She could tell them that she's Leonie Marchal, the girl who disappeared six years ago, that she was kidnapped and held prisoner, but still alive. She opens the door and puts a foot outside.

But then, she panics. She can't do it. She can't leave. Raymond's mental hold over her is still too strong. So, she ends up all alone in a house in the middle of nowhere with a dead body. Free, but a prisoner.

Meanwhile, in a nearby hospital, Diane is reading police reports to her brother, an excellent cop before his mind and body were shattered in a paragliding accident. She reads the case files that he would have liked to solve, especially the one about Leonie's disappearance...

Which is when one, two and then three dead bodies are found in the forest...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Marlène Charine was born in 1976 in Lausanne. Despite her rigorous scientific profession, she has always been a lover of words, and tried her hand at several different genres writing short stories, before finding her area of expertise in the thriller, that she enjoys spicing up with fan-tasy. She lives with her family in the North of Switzerland.

Christophe Agnus
L'ARMÉE D'EDWARD
(Edward's Army)

Robert Laffont, February 2022, 522 pages



- ◇ A real page-turner in the tradition of Millenium or It happened at Night
- ◇ A novel that blends mystery with geopolitics.

The biggest manhunt in history is about to begin....

An event that will change our world

Day 1. 0030 hours Eastern Time, an undisclosed location. A war room somewhere on this planet; a group of young people, their eyes fixed on their screens. For four years, they have been secretly organizing an unimaginable operation with disproportionate means.

0804 hours, Ubatuba, Brazil. Fernando Pereira de Almeida, a senator and businessman goes for his daily morning swim in the ocean when all of the sudden, he is getting sucked to the bottom...

1100 hours, Jupiter International Golf Course, Florida. The President of the United States has been rearranging his schedule to go golfing. On the first hole, under the watchful eyes of his bodyguards and the crowd, he disappears as if he were swallowed by the earth under his feet... The same day, more than twenty important personalities – politicians, businesswomen and –men, rap and television stars – disappear suddenly and surreptitiously.

Who is behind these kidnappings? What are the claims of this mysterious organization called “Edward’s army”? And what will become of these VIPs left all to themselves in hidden locations?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Christophe Agnus is a former special reporter, a French internet pioneer as well as the directing manager of Groupe Media. He lives between the South-West of France and his native Bretagne. *Edward’s Army* is his first novel.

Jérôme Camut & Nathalie Hug
NOS ÂMES AU DIABLE
(Our Souls to the Devil)

Fleuve Noir, March 2022, 364 pages



- ◇ With extreme talent and through thorough descriptions, Nathalie Hug and Jérôme Camut have created an extremely oppressive atmosphere.
- ◇ Neither of the characters will leave the readers indifferent.
- ◇ A brilliant finale!

Imagine a world where innocence would not exist anymore...

Sixtine, 10 years old disappears in broad daylight in July on a beach of the Oléron Island. The life of her mother Jeanne completely falls apart. She blames herself for letting her work take so much place in her life, and feels she has been a bad mother to her daughter. She blames her husband Richard, who should have been watching the little girl, and who failed his father and husband duties once more.

The police investigation leads to Serge Drot, a man known by the forces for the rape of four little girls. Getting over this tragedy will be all the more difficult, as the body of her daughter is nowhere to be found. And what if Sixtine were still alive? What if the truth lying behind this was beyond anything Jeanne could ever imagine?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jérôme Camut and Nathalie Hug are the authors of 12 novels they wrote together, and that have sold nearly 500,000 copies.

Olivier Norek
DANS LES BRUMES DE CAPELANS
(In the mists of Saint Pierre)
 Michel Lafon, July 2022, 400 pages



◇ **English sample available.**

After a criminal investigation gone wrong led to the death of a unit officer, Inspector Coste has resigned from the force and handed in his badge. So, what is he doing six years later on a windswept island plagued by snowstorms and fog between Greenland and Canada? Why is his house surrounded by a battalion of security cameras and equipped with bulletproof windows? Why has he been forced to go undercover and to lie to his nearest and dearest? And why has he taken a woman into his home who was a key witness in a case involving the disappearance of nine young girls?

When the impressive capelin fog rolls in, shrouding the island for three long weeks and concealing a predator desperate to silence the star witness, Coste, in turn, will find himself hunted and forced to realize that he is – and always has been – a cop at heart.

In the mists of Saint Pierre, he will also come to realize that sometimes there's no escaping destiny, try as you may.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Olivier Norek is a lieutenant in Greater Paris police investigation Bureau with 18 years' experience. His previous six widely acclaimed best-selling thrillers, all published by Editions Michel Lafon, have sold over 1.5 million copies in France alone and won several prestigious literary prizes including the Grand prix des lectrices de ELLE, Prix du Polar Européen Le Point, Prix des Maisons de la Presse, Prix Relay and Prix Babelio for Crime 2019. He is translated in 12 languages.

Reviews for previous novels in the Capitaine Coste Trilogy :

"A powerful addition to his Banlieues Trilogy." Financial Times

"There's no denying the visceral excitement and latent compassion of this policier par excellence." The Times

"This is a prime example of crime fiction as social history, but it is far more gripping – and moving – than any work of history." Literary Review

Olivier Norek
IMPACT
(Impact)
 Michel Lafon, November 2020, 368 pages



◇ **Rights sold: Poland (Kobiece).**

◇ **TV & Platform rights bought by Gaumont**

◇ **Olivier Norek's debut novel CODE 93 has recently been published in the UK by MacLehose Press (under the title *The Lost and the damned*) and selected by The Times as one of the best crime novels for the end of the year 2020.**

◇ **An action-packed eco-thriller that also documents the state of our planet.**

◇ **A duo of investigators, Diane and Nathan, who will have to reconsider their own value systems and everything they had believed in up until then.**

◇ **A book that makes you think, and that makes you wonder what it would take to make you cross the line and become an outlaw for a cause.**

◇ **A plea in favor of our planet, and even an activist's guide to future actions, bursting with real data and facts, all referenced at the back of the book.**

Olivier Norek with a new disruptive novel to keep you on your toes. Deeply upsetting, politically uncorrect and fascinating, as always.

His son has been killed. This story has not one but thousands of murderers.... and millions of victims. In order to bring to light the threat to humanity, he will have to kill too.

This is the story of a monster waiting to be born. Soon will be the day. And you might find yourself on his side.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Olivier Norek is the author of 6 crime novels, all published by Editions Michel Lafon. He has won 20 literary awards in France and sold over 1 million copies.

Sébastien Le Jean
LE GRAND EFFONDREMENT
(The Great Collapse)
 Liana Lévi, April 2022, 400 pages



Two police investigators plunge deep into the world of survivalism. It's a descent into the hell of irrationally behaved criminals, convinced of the imminence of the Great Collapse. A gripping thriller you can't put down.

On the day of his son's birth in Paris, Commander Ronan Sénéchal of the crime squad receives an urgent call. François Dampierre, the CEO of a major automotive conglomerate, is murdered in a bunker reserved for millionaires on the day of the Collapse. The killer leaves a message on the body of his victim: «The end is nigh, the guilty will pay.» At the same time, in Lyon, Captain Irina Kowalski is investigating the murder of a young, nineteen-year old YouTuber, Nicolas Brous. On the fringes of radicalized survivalist circles, he'd read the manual by the firebrand guru Bruno San Remo, and then joined a secret militia, the Sentinels. Soon, the leads of the two investigators converge on the same suspect: Ludovic Hoffman, formerly of the SWAT team, now working privately. He proves elusive. When he resurfaces, it's as a hostage-taker and whistleblower: his victims, whom he films, can't survive the conditions which tomorrow await humanity. Incapable of stopping his rogue experimentation, Kowalski and Sénéchal realize he's a pawn in the game of a company specialized in geo-engineering that promises the sale of a «climate shield.»

A gripping debut novel about our innate ancestral fears, that of the collapse of all humanity.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sébastien Le Jean, at thirty-eight, today lives and works in Paris. From his youth, an avid reader of «noir» literature and crime fiction, he particularly values works that hold a mirror up to the society we live in. The threat of the rising power of survivalist sects--a theme until now unexplored--has not escaped him.

Alexis Laipsker
LES POUPEES
(The Dolls)
 Michel Lafon, February 2022, 400 pages



◇ **Nominated for Prix Le Point du Polar Européen 2022**

“They’ll say I am crazy, that I kill for fun. You alone will know my secret. Are you ready? Ready to play!”

A psychic on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

A surly old-school cop.

A young shrink who is nobody's fool.

A series of gruesomely staged murders.

And a chilling race against the clock...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Alexis Laipsker, a journalist and TV presenter specialized in poker, made his crime fiction debut with the bestselling *Et avec votre esprit*, winner of the Pocket Nouvelles Voix du polar award. In 2021, he confirmed his talent with a second, equally chilling crime novel, *Le Mangeur d'âmes*, a nail-biting thriller that will leave readers begging for more.

Céline de Roany
DE SI BONNES MÈRES

(Such Good Mothers)

Presses de la Cité, March 2022, 240 pages



Céleste Ibarbengoetxea. An unpronounceable name, a bruised face, and a terrible past: held captive and physically abused, she survived by demonstrating an inhuman capacity for violence. Since then, some people view Céleste as a monster, including herself. And yet is because she is a loving wife, a caring mother and a committed colleague that she succeeds in solving one of those tragic cases that leave an indelible mark on a police officer.

In the regional park of Brière near Guérande, two islands are home to a small community where natives and newcomers congregate around a restaurant and a bistro. But this seemingly friendly little world is also home to a cold-blooded criminal who mutilates pregnant women. Dispatched to the scene, Céleste Ibar, a police captain from Nantes, and her faithful lieutenant Ithri Maken try to make the most of the clues left behind by the murderer. But how do you unmask a monster who looks just like everyone else? Thanks to the arrival of an unexpected ally and their own doggedness, the two officers manage to pick up the trail of the killer, but too late – a final murder is committed, leaving both of them agonising over their own shortcomings and blindness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Céline de Roany has a doctorate in international law and has published academic works on environmental, maritime and fishing law. A former university lecturer, since 2015 she has been based in Queensland, Australia, with her husband and three children. The first Céleste Ibar investigation, LES BEAUX MENSONGES, was published in 2021, and Céline de Roany is already working on the third investigation in the series.

Céline de Roany
LES BEAUX MENSONGES

(Pretty Lies)

Presses de la Cité, September 2021, pages



◇ [English sample chapter available.](#)

The maiden investigation for Céleste Ibar, formerly of the serious crime squad and now a police captain in Nantes following an incident that has left deep scars.

Following an extremely brutal experience, Céleste Ibar decides to leave Paris and the serious crime squad where she has served for a decade. Still suffering from the after-effects and bearing on her disfigured face the scars of her violent kidnapping, she dreams of returning to a normal, peaceful life. But hardly has she taken up her new post as police captain in Nantes than she is ostracised after arresting a man for domestic violence who turns out to be one of her new colleagues. She is sent to confirm the suicide of Anne Arnotte, a rich industrialist of the Nantes upper bourgeoisie. The case at first appears straightforward but troubling elements come to light: there are objects missing, the victim has strange marks on her body, and her fortune has been bequeathed to a stranger. Céleste imposes herself through her singular personality, her acerbic style masking a deep humanity. She uncovers deeply buried secrets that are still haunting the living and shines a light on the dark underbelly of a world where appearances rule, and can also kill...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in Nantes in 1972, Céline de Roany has a doctorate in international law and has published academic works on environmental, maritime and fishing law. A former university lecturer, since 2015 she has been based in Queensland, Australia, with her husband and three children. In 2019, she self-published the novel *Special K*, which was shortlisted for the Grand Prix des Enquêteurs (Robert Laffont/Le Figaro Magazine). Her heroine Céleste Ibar already features in a new intrigue and she is in the process of writing further adventures featuring her.

Anouk Shutterberg
BESTIAL
(Like a Beast)
 Plon, May 2022, pages



A gripping thriller that plunges us into the darkest depths of human nature.

The first was Fanny in 2007, and then it was the turn of Pénélope, Jessica, Ambre and Agnès. Thirteen years later, the same thing happened to many other girls. They all had the same profile: pretty and just 12 years old. All of them disappeared overnight from the same Paris neighbourhood. The ‘Vanished of the 9th Arrondissement’ was a case that the police had been getting nowhere with for years. They must have missed something, Commissioner Jourdain was sure of it, but what? Contending with one macabre discovery after another, will Jourdain and his team succeed in tracing the vanished girls?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: With the idea of one day becoming a gallery owner, Anouk Shutterberg has worked in several Parisian art galleries. She is also the author of *Jeu de peaux*. *Bestial* is her second novel.

Anouk Shutterberg
JEUX DE PEAU
(Skin Game)
 Plon, April 2021, 280 pages



◇ **A French Mo Hayder.**

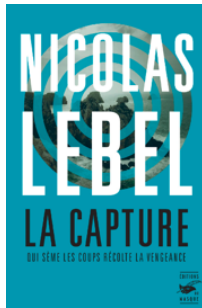
An extraordinary auction is being held at Sotheby's: pieces of human skin tattooed with the signature of a famous artist. Where do they come from and who has had the nerve to put them up for sale?

At age 33, Juliano Rizzoni is the wonder boy of the international art scene. A jet-setting extreme pleasure-seeker, Juliano can be seen in tabloid gossip pages as often as he is in art galleries. Having been initiated in Japan into the violent but time-honored Irezumi tattoo technique, he has started creating amazing images on the backs of his lovers, male and female.

When bits of tattooed skin bearing the artist's signature are dropped off anonymously for auction at Sotheby's Paris, Police Commissioner Stéphane Jourdain and Inspector Lucie Bunevial are put on the case, which soon turns into a multiple-homicide investigation... without the victims' bodies. A terrifyingly atypical case that will lead them to the other side of the planet.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Having trained as a lawyer, Anouk Shutterberg works in communication. *JEUX DE PEAUX* is her first thriller. She is France's answer to Mo Hayder.

Nicolas Lebel
LA CAPTURE
(The Capture)
 JC Lattès, March 2022, 288 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Czech Republic (Albatros Media)**
- ◇ Nicolas Lebel leads the reader on a wild chase where everything is shadow and reflection. The legendary humor and unsurpassable ingenuity of the author are as strong as ever.
- ◇ The new voice of French thriller! When Harlan Coben meets Simenon.

The new voice in noir novels is back with a “huis-clos” investigation. A thriller mixed with crime and adventure. Addictive!

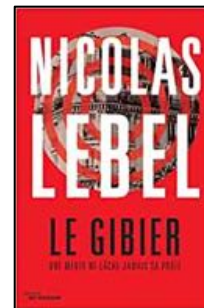
Murder after murder, nothing seems able to stop the Furies, a band of elusive hitmen. But it is without taking into account lieutenant Yvonne Chen.

On the island of Morguélen, the number of inhabitants can be counted on one hand and the new arrivals are quickly noticed. Chen is certain to recognize two of them and is immediately on their tail, but she is mistaken. The two men are OCLCH agents, an organization that combats crimes against humanity. For 8 years they have been observing the community priest, Father Petrovacz, a Hungarian who never leaves the island and who they suspect is a war criminal from the war in Croatia. But they are missing proof and time is running out: in a few weeks he can no longer be prosecuted for the crime they suspect him of. Lieutenant Chen has an inkling that the priest is a target of the Furies and offers her help in order to nab the Furies and get her revenge.

Nicolas Lebel leads the reader on a wild chase where everything is shadow and reflection. The legendary humor and unsurpassable ingenuity of the author are as strong as ever.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Nicolas Lebel has published seven novels. He received numerous awards for his series of the Captain Mehrlicht, amongst which the Prix des lecteurs du livre de Poche 2019. *Le Gibier* (Le Masque, 2020) was praised by the critics.

Nicolas Lebel
LE GIBIER
(The Hunt Game)
 JC Lattès, March 2021, 396 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Czech Republic (Albatros Media)**
- ◇ **Shortlisted for Landerneau Polar Prize!**
- ◇ Imagine Harlan Coben meets Simenon. The first for the action and the second for the French touch, an excellent construction and great storytelling.
- ◇ Discover a new detective duo : the irresistible and sentimental detective Starski and the caustic lieutenant Yvonne Chen, with a dry humor.
- ◇ Ghosts from the past lead us to the time of the Apartheid, with a story weaving together royal hunts from the great French kings era in a very contemporary plot.

A brilliant thriller and a fast-paced investigation lead by an unforgettable pair of detectives. Dive in this perfectly mastered investigation and jump in on a hunt across Paris, that seems to keep going from dead end to dead end.

Detective Paul Starski has known better days: his beloved dog just got poisoned, and his wife is filing for divorce. While still in a gloomy mood, he is called to a crime scene in an apartment in Paris in the 17th district, along with his partner Yvonne Chen. There, they find the corpses of an overwrought cop and of a South-African businessman. A double murder staged as a suicide. The many clues lead to the brilliant biologist Chloé de Talense. As it happens, the young woman is Starski's former high school sweetheart.

Convinced that she is innocent, the detective will do everything in his power to find out who is after her. However, the investigation gets more and more complicated when new murders are committed, and all evidence points to the biologist. Chloé seems to be the prey of a bloody hunt across the capital, organized by the mysterious “Grand Veneur” (The Great Hunter).

Starski slowly realizes he is always one step behind the killers. Worse, he might have become their prey himself...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in Paris, avid traveler Nicolas Lebel has published seven novels. He is the best-selling author of the “Mehrlicht” series, that has received many awards, including the Livre de Poche readers’ award (L’HEURE DES FOUS, 2019), soon to be adapted for television. *THE HUNT GAME* is his eighth novel.

CRIME / NOIR/ SUSPENSE

Éric Fouassier
LE BUREAU DES AFFAIRES OCCULTES
(The Occult Affairs Office)
 Albin Michel, May 2021, 368 pages



- ◇ **60,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Japan, Greece.**

The first title of a crime series featuring a recurrent hero: Valentin Verne.

Autumn 1830. Emotions are running high in Paris, a city still reeling under the shock of the revolutionary days in July when a series of strange deaths threatened to destabilise the regime. Valentin Verne, a young police inspector, finds himself transferred to the Crime prevention brigade to solve these crimes.

But who is he really, this inspector? A man who is fascinated by science and obsessed by hunting a child killer nicknamed the Vicar. Why? Who is the hunter? Who is the prey? From Paris' shadiest districts to the salons of the high society, from Vidocq's spies to Messmer's breath-taking discoveries, the author leads us into a crime novel that will become addictive.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Éric Fouassier teaches the history of medicine at university. Fascinated by enigmas and secret codes, he writes historical novels, including a crime trilogy devoted to the Chevalier Bayard.

Orso Tosco
LONDON VOODOO
(London Voodoo)

Minimum Fax, January 2022, 205 pages



- ◇ **English sample chapter available.**
- ◇ **By combining horror, grotesque and surreal elements, Orso Tosco wrote an acid and powerful noir, full of New Weird themes, where the line between reality and fantasy definitely falls apart.**
- ◇ **Where deformation and hallucination seem to be the only possible ways to narrate the exasperated and devastated reality in which we are used to live.**
- ◇ **Take a look to the beautiful booktrailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUDAiFr0w6U>**
- ◇ **Playlist created by the author: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3mfMgpkIBXHUfiArvdrFXr?si=d50dcf44146a4993>**

An absurd, senseless series of attacks and murders darkens London. Neither foreign secret service nor terrorists are the perpetrators, but normal people who suddenly do things of an unprecedented and inexplicable violence.

Air is toxic, threatening, charged with anger. The country is in chaos. Prime Minister creates a new special police, the Section, to whom he gives full powers. Eva B, the woman who runs it, instructs two of her best men to conduct investigations: the Pig and Dennis Tabbot. They are very particular police officers: enormous, unusually agile, completely insensitive to pain, devoid of any morality and very skilled torturers. And, above all, they are expert in a dirty and fierce magic power, the urban voodoo. It is expected that they will stop this long trail of blood. But every effort seems to be undermined against a multiform and invisible enemy, always one step ahead. It is not sufficient to connect the dots on the map, you have to understand who has drawn it, before UK will go on fire like the rest of Europe.

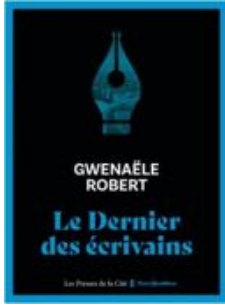
ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Orso Tosco is a writer, a poet and a screen player. He published short stories in Watt and other reviews. For minimum fax he published *Waiting for The Castaways* (2018) and, with Cosimo Argentina, *From Hell* (2021). Interno Poesia published his collections of poems *Figure Amate* (2019).

"Half way between Tarantino and Boyle, Orso Tosco created a brilliant noir novel that readers will hardly forget once they reach the last page and close the book." Milano Nera

Gwenaële Robert
LE DERNIER DES ÉCRIVAINS

(The Last of the Writers)

Presses de la Cité, March 2022, 224 pages



- ◇ A short mystery novel (with two twists!) that takes place in Brittany with this so special rainy and windy atmosphere near by the capricious sea...
- ◇ Here Gwenaële Robert, with her literary but direct style, plunges us in an assumed tribute to Georges Simenon. (city: Saint-Malo/Brittany)

A press agent agent investigates the mysterious disappearing of a Nobel Prize writer inside the walls of Saint-Malo. The elegant first release of the collection "Terres sombres" (the literary suspense meets the writer's world).

Pierre Le Guellec has just been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The prize is eight million Swedish kronor and sales promise to take off. The opportunity for this indebted man born in Saint Malo, descendant of the last Newfoundlanders, to take his revenge on fortune and to cherish some dreams...

But Le Guellec, dropped off on December 8 at Rennes airport by Marie, his press agent, never arrived in Stockholm. Was the disappearance deliberate? Worrying? Definitive? Who had an interest in seeing the Nobel Prize winner disappear?

In the privateer's refuge of Le Guellec, on the walls and beaches of Saint-Malo, Marie searches for the trail of a man that some considered the last of the writers. And ends up discovering a man full of shadows who, strangely enough, helps her shed light on her own life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Gwenaële Robert is a professor of literature and lives in Saint-Malo. She has published three novels: TU SERAS MA BEAUTÉ (2017), selected for seven literary prizes and winner of the Draveil prize, LE DERNIER BAIN (2018) winner of the 2019 Brittany prize and NEVER MIND (2020).

Olivier Gallien
DANS LA NEIGE ARDENTE

(In the Burning Snow)

Robert Laffont, January 2022, 224 pages



In a world of fire and brimstone, two beings are trying to survive. The Laffont imprint "La Bête Noire" (The Bane) initiates the New Year 2022 with the first hard boiled novel of a new and exciting French voice.

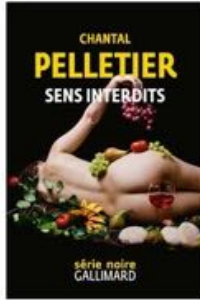
Hugo lives behind an armored door, observing the collapsing world outside from the security of his hideout until the day he has to go outside, to the other side of the city, right through its pandemoniac heart.

Pauline has joined a group of rebels, young people who hide out in the cellars and sewers of the city, seeking shelter from exploding bombs. But someday, they will have to come out of hiding and to prepare for the future....

In a dying world, everyone struggles to find sanctuary. Will they be able to tip the scales in their favor and to get away from the massacre?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in the Paris region in 1986, Olivier Gallien experiences a chaotic childhood. After years of truancy, he starts travelling the world, accepting all sorts of odd jobs: toll booth worker at night, usher in a movie theater, waiter in New York... All these multiple experiences inspire him to write and to explore different modes of literary expression. Although he likes experimenting with other languages of art like photography, music and film, his first and foremost passion is and stays writing. In the burning Snow is his first novel and his first publication in the "Bête Noire" imprint by Robert Laffont.

Chantal Pelletier
SENS INTERDITS
(Forbidden Senses)
 Gallimard, January 2022, 244 pages



◇ **ONLY FOR POLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES**

2046. The world population is increasingly controlled: regulated screen time, ration books, limited carbon footprint... One struggles to avoid restaurant point recovery courses, food reformatory institutions, or even punitive TV coaching sessions.

This ultra-monitored, repressive world is also a breeding ground for the emergence of all sorts of extremist groups, with claims ranging from food and diet to climate, as well as politics – not to mention the unlikely alliances between them. The discovery of the body of a woman tied up to a chair in front of a bourride (a Provençal fish stew seasoned with aioli), in all likelihood force-fed to death, leads food police officers Anna Janvier and Ferdinand Pierraud onto the trail of a dangerous guru. But their investigation also reveals the victim's links to a mysterious group, which in these times of severe loneliness, gathers around a table d'hôte.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Traveller in writing as well as in life, Chantal Pelletier happily navigates from short stories to theatre and from novels to thrillers. Her last novel, NOS DERNIERS FESTINS, was published in the Série Noire collection in 2019.

Michèle Ouimet
L'HOMME AUX CHATS
(The Cat Man)
 Boréal, November 2021, 288 pages



- ◇ **TV rights sold (Sphère Media).**
- ◇ **Audio rights sold to Radio Canada.**
- ◇ **A noir novel that takes us on a dizzying plunge into the depths of a serial killer's psyche.**
- ◇ **In her first thriller, Michèle Ouimet brings us from laughter to horror, from scenes of violence to tenderness.**
- ◇ **With its direct, merciless style, L'Homme aux chats grips the reader from the very first page.**

Montreal is in a state of shock. The body of a fourth woman, brutally tortured and killed, has just been found in an alley. This is clearly the work of a prolific, meticulous, perfectionist killer in thrall to a gruesome ritual. But neither the police nor the media have been able to unearth a single clue to lead them to the murderer.

Journalist Marie Pinelli is pressured by her boss Jean- Marc to get the scoop. Why are the police fumbling the case? Why has the body of a disembowelled cat been found next to each victim? What is the significance of the neatly folded clothes? Marie groans. Her herniated disks are agonizing, the sexism of her bosses is exasperating. Nevertheless, her journalistic instincts take over. She will move heaven and earth to crack this case, even if it means putting her own life in danger by getting too close to the psychopath.

In her first thriller, Michèle Ouimet displays a peerless talent for bringing likeable characters to life, portraying the hectic atmosphere of the newsroom and capturing the less-than-heroic drudgery of police work. Notably, we are introduced to François Prévost, who is in charge of the investigation and cannot help but be moved by the human drama that he witnesses every day.

With its direct, merciless style, L'Homme aux chats grips the reader from the very first page.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michèle Ouimet was a journalist at La Presse from 1989 to 2018. She has written two novels, LA PROMESSE (2014) AND L'HEURE MAUVE (2017), as well as an autobiographical work describing her career as a foreign reporter, PARTIR POUR RACONTER (2019), all published by Boréal.

Sophie Endelys
L'ÉCLATANTE REVANCHE DE SUSAN BOYER
(The Dazzling Revenge of Susan Boyer)
 Presses de la Cité, June 2022, 304 pages



An investigation into the past of an enigmatic woman in her fifties, who disappeared at the age of 18. This novel recounts a Machiavellian machination, remarkable for its virtuosity and full of wit.

Susan Boyer, the only daughter of the wealthy Belgian couple Hélène and Gilbert Boyer, is abducted under mysterious circumstances in 1985. The ransom demanded is a sumptuous piece of jewellery owned by the family which is a copy of a famous royal necklace. But the handover goes badly wrong – the police are accused of intervening ineptly, while the parents are accused of acting impetuously and against the advice of the authorities. The upshot is that the ransom is never recovered and all trace is lost of Susan. What has become of her? Could she have been behind her own disappearance – was she an accomplice of the kidnappers? Does one have the right to mourn her fate, or should one cast judgement on her?

Thirty-four years later, the necklace will feature in a subtle but implacable plot that will finally lift the veil on the actors in this drama. A book full of engaging and intriguing characters, an ironic tone, and delicious dialogues – all of Sophie Endelys' trademarks are present and correct.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Born in Paris and currently based in Normandy, Sophie Endelys has two parallel careers as a magistrate and a writer.

Johana Gustawsson
TE TENIR PAR LA MAIN PENDANT QUE TOUT BRÛLE
(Holding Your Hands While Everything is Burning)
 Calmann Lévy September 2021, pages



- ◇ **Foreign rights sold in English (worldrights) to Orenda Books.**
- ◇ **In France, Pocket rights have been sold.**

Three interweaved time periods, three women fighting to regain control of their lives. By any means.

Lac Clarence, Quebec, 2002. Maxine Grant, a police inspector and, at times, overwhelmed single mother, is called to a crime scene. Pauline Caron, her former schoolteacher, is sitting on the porch of her house in shock, barefoot in the snow and covered in dry blood. She is silent except for one word that she repeats over and over again: Maxine. Inside the house, they discover a macabre scene... Philippe Caron, a charismatic and well-respected literature professor, is lying in a pool of his own blood, covered in stab wounds. Forensics also find seven mummified hands mounted on a base in a glass display. Could Pauline, this gentle and down-to-earth woman, be guilty? Who were the Carons really?

Paris, 1889. Lucienne Lelanger watches on helplessly as her private mansion is engulfed by flames. She refuses to believe the police reports claiming that her daughters died in the fire. So, she joins a secret society in the hope that spiritism and black magic will help her find them.

Lac Clarence, 1949. Lina, a troubled twelve-year-old teen, is constantly teased by her classmates. To keep an eye on her after school, her mother, who is raising her alone, brings her along to her shifts at the "Mad House", a nursing home. There, Lina meets a very old patient who listens to her and imparts advice...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Johana Gustawsson made herself a name on the international crime novel scene with just three novels. Her series Roy & Castells has been translated into 11 languages and is currently being adapted for TV, into 4 x 52 minute episodes (international coproduction with France TV and Benijay Studios). Filming of the first episode "Block 46" will begin in Spring 2022, with Alexandra Lamy in the role of Emily Roy.

Margot et Jean Le Moal

Margot and Jean Le Moal is a pseudonym, chosen by a couple who write together. She is from Alsace, he is from Brittany, and Le Moal is actually his grandmother's name. Their regional differences and habits, which they often played with, brought this endearing main character to life.



March 2022
226 pages

Pretzels and Salted Butter, Book 1 An Investigation in Locmaria

Bretzel et beurre salé T1 - Une enquête à Locmaria

A delightful Breton flavoured cozy mystery!

Who is the mysterious new owner of the most beautiful house in Locmaria, on the Pointe de Kerpel in Brittany?

For weeks, everyone in this peaceful village in Finistère was waiting and watching. Until one day in the midst of a storm, an elegantly-dressed woman from Luxembourg, Cathie Weil, appears out of nowhere. A fifty-something-year-old divorcee, with a strong personality, who has decided to start a new life in Brittany, at the complete other end of France, to open an Italian restaurant in Locmaria.

Most of the locals welcome her with open arms, excited by this little ripple of change. But others are less enthusiastic and make no effort to hide it. So, when a village collapses after a sourdough party, Cathie is immediately accused of poisoning her.

French sales: Paperback (Le Livre de Poche), Large Print (Olivier)

Pretzels and Salted Butter, Book 2 A Hard Pill to Swallow

Bretzel et beurre salé T2 - Une enquête difficile à Locmaria

Locmaria, a quiet Breton seaside resort? Cathie Weil starts to have serious doubts when she finds a dead body washed up on the beach by her house. With rumours about Cathie spread through the village. After all, there had never been any suspicious deaths in the area (before she turned up. And isn't it odd that she arrived at the same time as a new drug trafficking ring? And as, once more, Cathie is caught in the centre of a gross mistake.

When someone close to Cathie is arrested and she begins to receive threats herself, she has no other choice but to investigate. With the help of her enthusiastic friends and Yann, a journalist who is secretly in love with her, she comes head to head with her unscrupulous enemies. And shows them that nothing can break an *Adolphe* with a flock of Bretons by her side!

French sales: Paperback (Le Livre de Poche), Large Print (Olivier)



June 2022
230 pages



April 2023
230 pages

Pretzels and Salted Butter, Book 3 Don't Judge a Book by its Cover

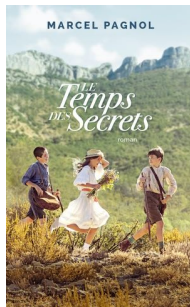
Bretzel et beurre salé T3 - Châtel ne fait pas le moine

Emotions are running high in Locmaria, Brittany. The abbey's land and ruins have been put up for sale. A Luxembourg property developer wants to turn it into an estate for foreign millionaires. And their representative is no other than Patrick Kaiser, Cathie's ex-husband, a vulgar and unpleasant individual. A committee is formed to block the project, but the leader's body is found dead in the woods shortly afterwards. Everything points to Patrick Kaiser, who is arrested.

Patrick is a scoundrel man of the worst possible kind, but Cathie can't imagine him as a murderer. So, she puts her feelings to one side and launches her own investigation to prove his innocence and find the real killer. As for the committee, Father Louis Tréguier takes over, determined to find elements that would classify the abbey as a historical monument and stop the sale of the land. And his discoveries far exceed his expectations.

MODERN CLASSICS

Marcel Pagnol
LE TEMPS DES SECRETS
(The Time of Secrets)
 Grasset, March 2022, 262 pages



- ◇ Incited by the readers, Pagnol decides to transform his legendary autobiographical diptych *La Gloire de mon père* and *Le Château de ma mère* into a tetralogy. It is in the line of these novels that falls *Le Temps des secrets*, and later *Le Temps des amours*. A genuine formative novel, like *Kim* or *the Jungle Book*, and a jewel of 20th century French literature.
- ◇ The publication of *Le Temps des secrets* coincides with the takeover of Pagnol's works by Editions Grasset.

On the occasion of the film premiere of Les Choristes, directed by Christophe Barratier and adapted from the book, Grasset republishes the classic novel of Marcel Pagnol Le Temps des secrets, originally published in 1960.

Marseille, summer 1905. Young Marcel had just finished his primary education. In three months, after the summer holidays in La Treille, he will start high school. During this summer he discovers nature, open skies, but most importantly Lili, a friend who is always ready for adventures. But the age of carelessness gives way to the age of secrets. Indeed, Lili must work in the fields with her father, and Marcel meets Isabelle, the daughter of the poet Loïs de Montmajour, whose portrait is proof of the author's vis comica. Young Marcel betrays - momentarily - Lili's friendship for the illusion of love.

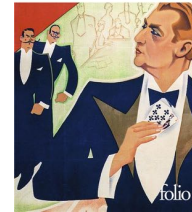
In October, Marcel enters the Lycée Thiers in Marseille, and its adult world with very strict rules. But luckily he meets Lagneau, an inimitable young man that will become Marcel's friend.

The plot expands, and the novel ends without being completed, in anticipation of *Le Temps des amours*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Marcel Pagnol (1895-1974) was a French writer, playwright, filmmaker and producer. In 1957, he started writing his *Souvenirs d'enfance*. In *LA GLOIRE DE MON PÈRE* (*The Glory of my Father*), *LE CHÂTEAU DE MA MÈRE* (*My Mother's Castle*), *LE TEMPS DES SECRETS* (*The Time of Secrets*) and *LE TEMPS DES AMOURS* (*The Time of Loves*, unfinished and published after his death), he revives the small Provençal world with great vitality and imagination. He was elected to the Académie française in 1946.

Sacha Guitry
MÉMOIRES D'UN TRICHEUR
(Memories of a Cheater)
 Presses de la Cité, January 2022, pages

Sacha Guitry
 Mémoires d'un tricheur



- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Adelphi).**
- ◇ This ironic and witty monologue –the only novel of the author at its peak, was published by Gallimard in 1935 and adapted for the screen by the author a year later under the title *Roman d'un tricheur*, the first of a long series of fiction films.

Sacha Guitry's only novel, a masterpiece of wit and verve that has been adapted for the screen under the title Roman d'un tricheur.

It all starts with a little boy who is punished twice for stealing. On the one hand he is deprived of mushrooms... On the other hand, he becomes an orphan: the eleven members of his family died because of a poisoned dish.

As a consequence, the little boy decides to start a career of professional cheater. This book is his confession.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sacha Guitry (1885-1957) created his first play at the age of 17, which was followed by a large number of successful dramatic works that he often performed himself: *FAISONS UN RÊVE* (1916), *MON PÈRE AVAIT RAISON* (1919), *DÉSIRÉ* (1927), *N'ÉCOUTEZ PAS, MESDAMES!* (1942). His work also has a cinematographic counterpart, just as extensive and brilliant: *LE ROMAN D'UN TRICHEUR* (1936), *LA POISON* (1951), *SI VERSAILLES M'ÉTAIT CONTE...* (1953).

"It is so Guitry that it could have been an autobiography, but it is obviously not. In the ocean of his theatrical and cinematographic creations, these writings shine like an atypical jewel. But it is also so perfectly coherent." VSD

"An excellent opportunity to savour his aphorisms as one would enjoy sweets." Point de vue

Maurice Leblanc
VOICI DES AILES
(Here, Take Wing)
 Libretto, February 2022, 96 pages



- ◇ Readers will discover a novelist whose ideas were quite bold for his day, who extols nudity in body and mind, advocates for free love and all sorts of emancipation, and doesn't hesitate to make his female characters the better people.

One of the “sporty” novels by the creator of Arsène Lupin (1898) back into the spotlight: a love song to the glory of bicycles.

Two fashionable couples who have decided to tour Normandy and Brittany by bike assume at first that they have overestimated their strength... but then it is decupled thanks to an unexpected elixir: Love. All four of them soon realize that their original pairing wasn't the right one. So they exchange partners – not without some hesitation and sneaking around at first. And then they ride as though they had wings on their feet.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Maurice Leblanc (1864-1941), “the French Conan Doyle,” wrote dozens of detective and adventure novels. He created the ever-popular character Arsène Lupin, gentleman- thief, who was recently brought back into the spotlight by the Netflix series.

Jacqueline Harpman
MOI QUI N’AI PAS CONNU LES HOMMES
(I Who Have Never Known Men)
 Stock, 1995, 272 pages



- ◇ [Full English translation available.](#)
- ◇ **Rights sold: Brazil (Dublinense), Hungary (Metropolis Media), Italy (Blackie Edizioni), Spain (Alianza, Castilian/Periscopi, Catalan), Turkey (Can), UK (Vintage) and US (Transit books).**
- ◇ **50,000 copies sold in France.**
- ◇ A philosophical exploration of human consciousness, both collective and individual.
- ◇ Part thriller, part mystery, this novel shows us the power of one person without memories to reinvent herself piece by piece, emotion by emotion, in the process teaching us much about what it means to be human.
- ◇ Set in an upsetting apocalyptic world that questions the most existential questions.
- ◇ The haunting and unforgettable account of a near future on a barren earth where women are kept in underground cages guarded by uniformed groups of men.

Forty women have been locked in a basement for years. What will happen when, one day, without explanation, they are set free?

Forty women are locked in a basement, under the surveillance of stone-faced guardians who feed them. The youngest – the narrator – has never lived in the outside world. The others, although they don't recall the circumstances which led to their imprisonment, recount their memories of a life with husbands, children, towns... Mysteriously freed from their prison and let out into a deserted world, they roam far and wide in search of other humans – and answers. Yet all they find are other basements, identical to their own, populated with dead bodies. The young narrator will prove to be the key to the group's survival. We have talked about Kafka, Paul Auster, and *The Tartar Steppe* in relation to this work, a text simultaneously nightmarish and tranquil, impassive and moving. It is narrated by the youngest of the women, the only one with no memory of what the world was like before the cages, who must teach herself, without books or sexual contact, the essential human emotions of longing, loving, learning, companionship, and dying.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jacqueline Harpman was a Belgian psychoanalyst and novelist. She is the author of several best-selling works published by Stock, many of them translated. Amongst her works, *ORLANDA* won the Médicis prize in 1996. She died in 2012.

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