

# LESTER LITERARY AGENCY & ASSOCIATES



## FICTION SPRING 2022

Eastern Europe

Central Europe

Baltic countries

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RECENT SUCCESSES

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



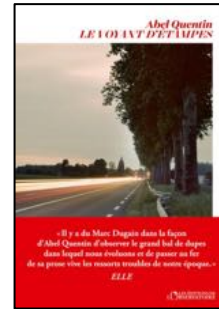
- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Rizzoli), Slovakia (Inaque), Germany (btb Luchterhands), Korea (Gimm-Young) Czech Republic (Odeon / Euromedia).**
- ◇ **20,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Running for 4 literary prizes: the Prix Renaudot 2021, the Prix de Flore, the Prix Interallié and the Prix Décembre.**
- ◇ **Hailed 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 ».**

*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.

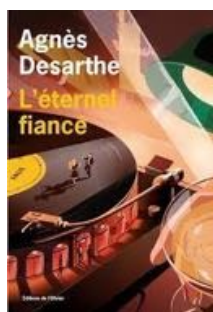
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Abel Quentin is a lawyer and the author of an acclaimed first novel, Soeurs (selected for the Goncourt Prize and finalist for the Goncourt des lycéens Prize in 2019).

« 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

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



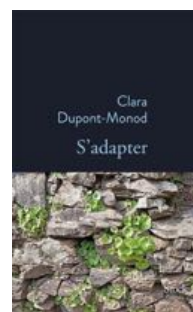
- ◇ **Rights sold: Bulgaria (Enthusiast).**
- ◇ **Shortlisted for the Prix Goncourt 2021 and the Prix Renaudot 2021.**
- ◇ **An author with regular sales, whose every novel is eagerly awaited. Recent successes: Ce cœur changeant: 45,000 copies / La chance de leur vie: 31,300 copies.**
- ◇ **A moving, 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



- ◇ **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)**
- ◇ **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.**
- ◇ **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.

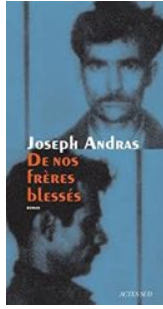
*"A breathtaking book about self-knowledge and the strength of sibling bonds" – Page des libraires*

*"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*

**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), Antígona (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 Hélière 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](http://regards.fr) and [lundi.am](http://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

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 Mennecy
- ◇ 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.

Mauricio Segura

### VIRAL

Boréal, February 2020, 306 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: Croatian (Leykam).
- ◇ TV series (Ugo Media).
- ◇ In a same vein as Australian TV series *The Slap* (Christos Tsiolkas), Mauricio Segura takes pleasure in debunking prejudices and preconceived ideas.
- ◇ It is a portrait of society that Segura makes, without ever falling into moral judgment.

*On a hot september morning, some bus passengers see their lives turned upside down by a video that is causing havoc on the web.*

One hot September morning, a video starts making the rounds, leaving discord in its wake. A young man wearing a djellaba boards a packed bus and gets into a heated argument with the driver. The scene is captured on cellphones, and shared by a journalist. The video goes viral, accumulating heated arguments and crude insults along the way. Did the man commit an act of violence against women, as Muslim men are so often accused of? Or was it the woman behind the wheel whose harsh attitude showed, once again, that old-stock Quebecers are inherently hostile toward immigrants?

In this exploration of several diverging points of view, Mauricio Segura gleefully roasts his contemporaries. Exploding prejudices and conventional wisdom, he draws a captivating portrait of today's Montreal, with all its miseries and hopes.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Born in Temuco, Chile, Mauricio Segura arrived as a child in Canada. His novel *CÔTE-DES-NÈGRES* was a great success and is on the program of high schools. He wrote a novel on the famous jazzman Oscar Peterson (OSCAR) and is considered an important author of migrant literature in Quebec. *VIRAL* is his 5th novel.

*"Segura's writing animates the portraits of each character; these reveal a part of personal and collective imaginaries, and test social dissonances." Vues transversales*

*"A novel where Montreal, diverse and digital, lives to the fullest." Radio-Canada International*

*"It talks about the very complex situation in which our Western societies find themselves in the Trump era and asks the question: do we know how to live with our differences?" Radio VM*



## RECENT SUCCESSES

**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 Axyntis/Conflicts best geopolitical novel prize in 2018, LE MONDE SELON KIM JONG-UN, with Dorian Malovic (Robert Laffont, 2018).

**Nicolas d'Estienne d'Orves**  
**EIFFEL**  
*(Eiffel)*  
Michel Lafon, April 2021, 300 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold:** Italy (Sperling & Kupfer), Spanish (Planeta), Brazil (Authentic), Sweden (Sekwa), Bulgaria (Kryg), Lithuania (Alma Litera), Hungary (Lira), Poland (Znak), Romania (Trei), Japan (Hayakawa), Serbia (Laguna), Czech (Albatros Media), Slovak (Albatros Media), Russia (Text), Arabic (under offer), Turkey (Nemesis).
- ◇ [Trailer](#) to the movie starring Romain Duris and Emma McKey (Sex Education)
- ◇ EIFFEL, the movie, a stellar co-production with Roman Duris (The beat that my heart skipped) and Emma MacKeywill (Sex Education), will premiere in Paris in May 2021.
- ◇ Tatiana de Rosnay (Sarah's key) contributed to the script.
- ◇ Distribution rights have been sold in 20 countries so far.

*Not long after having finished his work on the Statue of Liberty, at the height of his career, Gustave Eiffel is invited by the French government to design something spectacular for the Universal Exhibition, to be held in Paris in 1889.*

Eiffel is totally focused on the project to build the Metropolitan underground train system. But everything changes after a chance encounter with his childhood love, the beautiful Adrienne Bourges.

Their forbidden relationship gives him the inspiration that will alter the Parisian horizon forever.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Writer and journalist Nicolas d'Estienne d'Orves is the author of some twenty critically acclaimed essays and novels. A well-known dandy and intellectual figure in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, he writes for *Figaro Littéraire*, *Madame Figaro*, *Les Échos* and *Spectacle du monde*.

**Victor Dixen**  
**VAMPYRIA 1, 2, 3**

*(The Court of Darkness, The Court of Miracles)*

Robert Laffont, October 2020- May 2022, 300 pages, **15+**



- ◇ **EXCEPT FOR POLAND AND HUNGARY.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy, Russia (Eksmo), Czech Republic (Dobrovsky), US, UK, Germany.**
- ◇ The third book in the Vampyria saga is to be released in May: In this third installment of the Vampyria saga, Victor Dixen resuscitates the golden age of piracy with its tropical settings, its larger than life characters and its dark and mysterious spells. Embark on a breathtaking journey into the heart of darkness!
- ◇ French history buff Victor Dixen gives Louis XIV a new life as the original vampire.
- ◇ With its alternate history and face pace, the aesthetic of the novel's universe is reminiscent of Quentin Tarantino's films.
- ◇ The book is a prestigious object, with French artistic cartographer Misty Beee creating the maps and Nekro, and a talented Spanish illustrator, charged with making a strong visual identity.
- ◇ The inside cover depicts the gallery of characters in the form of cameos

*In the Court of Darkness, every misstep must be paid for in blood.*

In 1715, at death's door, King Louis XIV sealed a terrible deal with the Lords of Darkness. Transformed into an immortal vampire in order to reign forever, the Sun King becomes the King of Darkness, bringing about a new dark age in France. In 2015, accused of conspiring against the crown, Jeanne's family is killed in a bloody massacre. As the only survivor, the young commoner enters the prestigious Grand Equestrian School under a false identity. The school forms young nobles for their entry into the Court of Darkness. Jeanne has only one goal: vengeance.

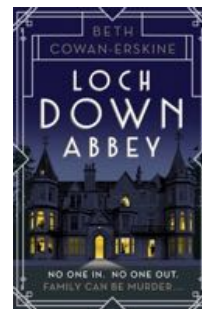
But between the sprawling intrigues of the living dead at Versailles, the betrayals of other aspiring equestrians, and a secret plot of rebellion, the reader is gripped by Jeanne's ability to survive and achieve her goal.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Born of a Danish father and a French mother, Victor Dixen discovered at an early age his passion for travel, for the discovery of the unknown, and for the stories brought back home at the end of each new adventure. This passion has never left him since, as he moved to Denver, Dublin, Singapore, and finally, New York City, where the twice winner of the Grand prix de l'Imaginaire now lives with his family. His bestselling trilogy PHOBOS was translated in many languages.

**Beth Cowan-Erskine**  
**LOCH DOWN ABBEY**

*(Loch Down Abbey)*

Messina / Hodder & Stoughton, April 2021, 300 pages



- ◇ **EXCEPT FOR POLAND AND HUNGARY.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Mondadori), Czech Rep (Dobrovsky), France (Pygmalion), Russia (Eksmo). 3-book deal with a publisher in Finland**
- ◇ **Optioned by for a TV series.**
- ◇ An entertaining romp and a fascinating insight into the weird and wonderful ways of the British aristocracy.
- ◇ Perfect for fans of *Downton Abbey*, Agatha Christie and Richard Osman's *The Thursday Murder Club*, **LOCH DOWN ABBEY** is a playful, humorous mystery that will keep you glued to the page!

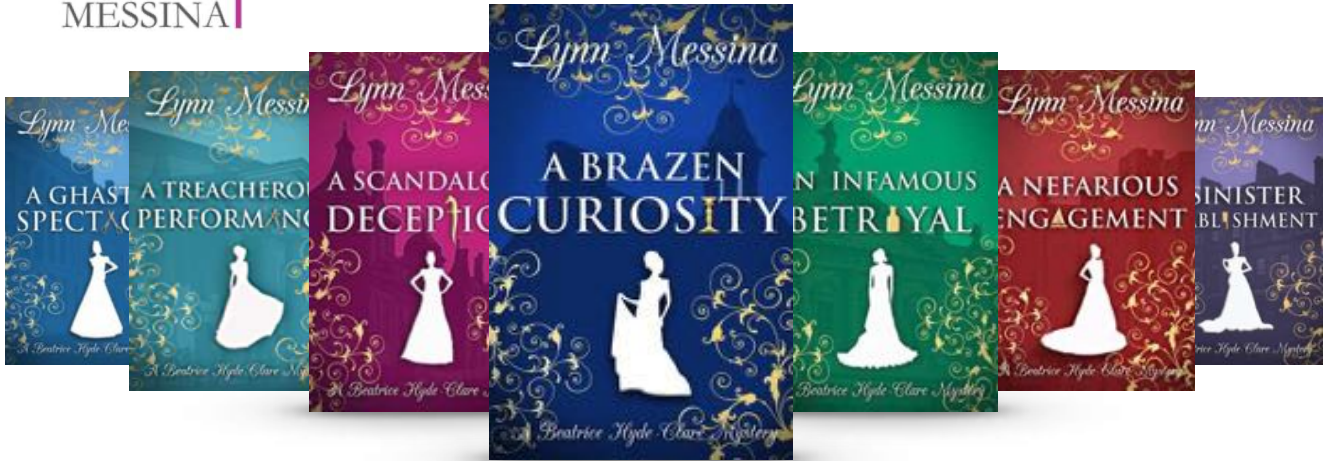
*A playful parody of that great British tradition of portraying nobility and domestics living under the same roof with weddings to plan, spouses to mourn, elaborate five course meals to serve (while masked), titles to fight over, affairs to conceal, honour to protect, illegitimate children to hide, deaths to investigate and much, much more.*

The noble family of Inverkillen lives upstairs at Loch Down Abbey and everyone else, well, they're downstairs of course. There are countless members of the family, most of whom stay at home tiring themselves out by doing what can only be described as nothing. It's the 1930s and a mysterious illness is spreading over Scotland; the Nanny is struck first and so someone in the family, maybe a parent for once, will have to look after the children. But no, that duty falls upon Iris, the family ward taken in from the orphanage as young girl. Then Lord Inverkillen is found dead but it's not the virus that killed him. No, he drowned while fishing in the river that runs through the estate. The inspector declares it an accident but Mrs MacBain, the head housekeeper, isn't so convinced. She'll have to do some digging in between chores. As no one is allowed in or out — because of the illness — the residents of the house are her only suspects.

Lord Inverkillen's death is just the beginning of the unrest the family will be forced to go through over the coming months. There isn't enough money to pay the death taxes so they may have to sell the house (gasp!). And to top it off, one by one the servants fall ill with the virus and leave the Inverkillen's mostly to their own devices. The horror! (Of having to make their own beds.)

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Beth Cowan-Erskine is originally from a small town in Wyoming. She moved to the UK in 2010 and started an Interior Architecture firm. She lives on a farm in the Cotswolds with her Scottish husband but longs for the Highlands. This is her first novel.





**HISTORICAL COZY**  
**LANGUAGE: ENGLISH**

**A BRAZEN CURIOSITY**  
A Beatrice Hyde-Clare Mystery

Lynn Messina

August 2018 / 225 pages  
Self-Published

**Rights sold (3 book deals)**  
Czech Rep: Dobrovsky  
France: Les Escales  
Germany: Thiele Verlag

**+300 000 readers....**

**"Messina's prose is witty and assured (she's read her Austen, her Wharton, her Noel Coward), and her novel is an irresistible frolic." — Publishers Weekly**

Twenty-six-year-old Beatrice Hyde-Clare would never dare to think about investigating the suspicious death of a fellow guest at a weeklong house party at a country estate in the Lake District. A spinster who has been living on the sufferance of her aunt and uncle since the age of 6, she would certainly not presume to search the rooms of her hosts and other guests looking for evidence. Reared in the twin virtues of deference and docility, she would never dare to question the imperious (and handsome) Duke of Kesgrave about anything, let alone how he chose to mark the obvious murder as a suicide.

And yet when she stumbles upon the bludgeoned corpse of poor Mr. Otley in the deserted library of the Skeffingtons' country house, that's exactly what she does.



**Lynn Messina** is the author of over a dozen novels, including *Fashionistas*, which has been translated into 16 languages. Her essays have appeared in *Self*, *American Baby* and the *Modern Love* column of *The New York Times*. She's also a regular contributor to the *Times Motherlode* blog. Lynn lives in New York City with her two sons.

|    |                     |  |   |    |
|----|---------------------|--|---|----|
| 9  | Anne Perry          | Open Road Media Mystery & Thriller, Ballantine Books | 5 | 76 |
| 10 | Robert Goldsborough | MysteriousPress.com/Open Road                        | 1 | 44 |
| 11 | Lynn Messina        | Potatoworks Press                                    | 5 | 89 |
| 12 | Stephen King        | Hard Case Crime                                      | 1 | 42 |
| 13 |                     |  | 2 | 66 |

#11 in U.S. market for historical mystery ebook sales

**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.

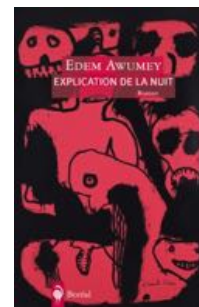
*In an African city somewhere between the Sahel and the Atlantic coast, cotton farmer Toby Kunta takes a journalist from Berlin hostage in a museum’s exhibition hall. He demands millions of francs in compensation for the farmers left destitute by the production of genetically modified cotton.*

As tensions rise inside the museum and Kunta and the chief of police are locked in a stalemate, 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 dictates 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.

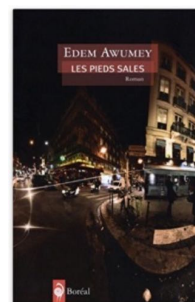
*Kerim Neto returns to his hometown, a city on Africa's Atlantic coast, to search for Mina, his former model, lover, and muse. But Mina has disappeared. He combs the streets and byways he has known, hoping to find her.*

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**  
**PARIS-BRIANÇON**  
*(On Board the Paris-Briançon Train)*  
 Julliard, January 2022, pages



- ◇ **70,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Russia (AST).**
- ◇ Ever the skillful explorer of the human psyche, Philippe Besson creates a suspenseful, artfully paced drama. A metaphor for the transient nature of life with its ever unexpected endings, this novel about destiny reminds us that nobody is master of one's own fate. And even if the outcome is always tragic, it is the journey itself that matters, that weaves together the threads of our existence. Through the delicacy and the pertinence of its observations,
- ◇ *Paris-Briançon* celebrates life, the miracle of chance encounters and the grace of these magical moments suspended in time when the whole truth can finally be told.

*During their journey on board a night train, a dozen passengers that would never have met under normal circumstances get acquainted, unsuspecting that some of them will never make it to their destination.*

When they board the intercity nr. 5789, one of the few night trains with sleeping compartments left, nothing connects the passengers that travel to the French Alps. Due to the temporary confinement of the train tracing through silent, sleeping territories, a dozen of them start bonding, letting intimacy and confidence build between them through the exchanging of words and secrets. By and by, behind the scenes, they reveal themselves, some to be vulnerable beings, victims even, of the ordinary evils or of the violence of our time, and all to be travelers trying to escape from their solitude, their routines and their lies. Little do they know, though, that in the early morning hours some of them will be dead. But what really matters are the things that they will have told each other during that night.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** One of France's foremost authors, Philippe Besson has already published more than 20 novels at Éditions Julliard. His first novel, EN L'ABSENCE DES HOMMES [In the Absence of Men], was awarded the prestigious Prix Emmanuel-Roblès, his second, SON FRÈRE [His Brother], was brought to the big screen by famous filmmaker and stage director Patrice Chéreau. Amongst his other successful novels, the most important are L'ARRIÈRE-SAISON, LA MAISON ATLANTIQUE, UN PERSONNAGE DE ROMAN, ARRÊTE AVEC TES MENSONGES, which is currently being adapted for the big screen, and LE DERNIER ENFANT.

**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-Roblès 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.*

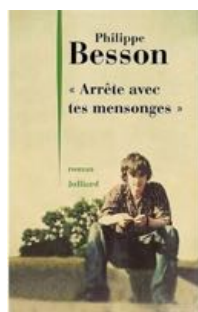
It also dares to introduce an asthmatic middle-aged Proust into its masterfully manipulated plot and invents a series of deeply felt letters written by him to the novel's young protagonist, Vincent de l'Etoile. In the summer of 1916, the emotionally precocious Vincent, who is the same age as the century, 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.
- ◇ 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, 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

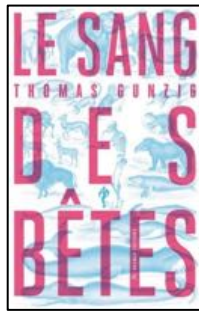
farm and sells the produce of his vineyard to local cognac distilleries, while his mother comes from a family of Spanish migrant labourers. Across the class divide Philippe yearns for Thomas's beautiful and unattainable self-possession, though he never dares look at him directly. He assumes that Thomas 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.



**Thomas Gunzig**  
**LE SANG DES BÊTES**

*(The Blood of Beasts)*

Au Diable Vauvert, January 2022, pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Italy (Marco y Marcos).**
- ◇ This brief and impeccable page-turner talks about body, couple, life, aging, loving, lasting, staying alive, without sacrificing talent and perfect rhythm, laughter, lucidity, disenchantment, happiness...
- ◇ Funny and deep, the most sensitive and personal of the Gunzig books.

*This short and impeccable novel chews on notions of the body, couples, life, ageing, loving, persisting and staying alive, alternating, with great talent and perfect comic timing, between happiness and disenchantment ... Funny and profound, it is the author's most sensitive and personal book so far.*

Tom, a salesman in a dietary supplement and protein store for bodybuilders, is in the throes of depression. Turning fifty opens his eyes to his orderly life with his wife Mathilde, which no longer makes him happy.

But he sees his life turned upside down when his son Jérémie, a sickly young man who has just separated from his girlfriend, returns to the family home, and his father, a Jew scarred by the Holocaust and sick with cancer. A complicated cohabitation is announced for Tom who only wishes peace and rest.

Witness to an act of violence, Tom saves a stranger from mysterious origins from the hands of a bully who mistreats her, bring home this woman without identity papers, and disrupt everyone's daily life.

Together with members of Tom's family, Thomas Gunzig gives a lucid description of our contemporary time and tendencies.

**Thomas Gunzig**  
**FEEL GOOD**

*(Feel Good)*

Diabla Vauvert, August 2019, 350 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Russia (Text), Italy (Marco y Marcos).**
- ◇ **12,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ A metafictional novel in which black humour and fatalism rub shoulders with a lust for life and unflinching hope.
- ◇ Alternating between hilarious passages on the literary phenomenon of the moment and lucid descriptions of his time, with great intelligence, Gunzig manages to entwine his novel with that of his heroine to better poke fun at literature and depict his era.
- ◇ Hilarious passages about both a current literary phenomenon (the feel-good novel) and the publishing world in general, rigid with absurd literary prizes, book fairs and rivalries, and its hierarchy between the "real" authors and the disdained ones. Both absolutely universal and thoroughly enjoyable.

*After the success of LA VIE SAUVAGE, this Belgian author's latest novel, a cross between realism and satire, offers an impressively clear-eyed view of today's world.*

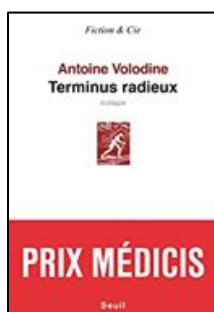
Alice, a shoe shop sales assistant, has always been economically insecure. But she can't take having to count every penny and not being able to provide a better life for her son anymore. A crazy idea thus starts to form: kidnap a rich kid from a wealthy nursery and demand a ransom. Unfortunately, nothing goes according to plan and she soon finds herself with a baby that nobody wants to claim on her hands. Tom, a middling author, bumps into Alice one day and her kidnapping story gives him an idea: he suggests making a novel out of it and sharing the profits.

Alice, unconvinced, makes him a counteroffer: under his tutelage, she will write a "feel good book", following the popular style of today, a bestseller likely to sell hundreds of thousands of copies and take her off the poverty line once and for all ...

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Thomas Gunzig was born in Brussels in 1970. He is the author of several collections of short-stories acclaimed by the critic. MORT D'UN PARFAIT BILINGUE won the 2001 Prix Rossel in Belgium. LE PLUS PETIT ZOO DU MONDE (rights sold in China and Bulgaria) followed by KURU, (finalist in the Prix de Flore, 2005). LA VIE SAUVAGE (2017 sold 10.000 copies).

*"It is funny, spirited with a scathing irony on the book publishing industry." Voici*

**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 ANGÉS 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*

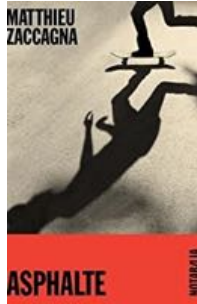
## EMERGING VOICES

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.”

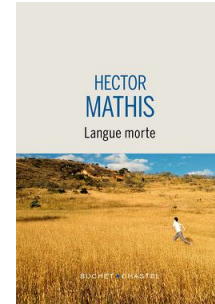
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Matthieu Zaccagna was born in 1980. After studying business and communication, he moved to Paris, where he held all sorts of jobs in the cultural sector. Since 2006, he has been contributing to producing concerts at the Cité de la musique-Philharmonie de Paris. Asphalte is his first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

Hector Mathis

### LANGUE MORTE

(Dead Language)

Buchet Chastel, January 2022, 256 pages



- ◇ The birth of a world. A disenchanted 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 Dorothée, 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 Ferréol**  
**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-Ferréol, 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.

**Eloi Audoin-Rouzeau**  
**OUVRE TON AILE AU VENT**

(*Open Your Wing To The Winds*)  
Phébus, August 2021, 144 pages



- ◇ **Rights sold: Russia (No Age / Polyandria).**
- ◇ **Longlisted for the Prix du premier roman.**

*In the near future, a bird-borne epidemic strikes the planet. Raising farmyard birds has been banned, and French society is writhing under draconian restrictions.*

Once a year though, the population still gets a chance to celebrate: a specially raised duck is released from the roof of the famous Tour d'Argent restaurant in front of an excited crowd. The winner of the hunt through Paris will be able to savor the animal at a dinner with the French president. But this year, the duck puts up more of a fight than usual. Its flight through Paris is an opportunity to meet with people who stay on the margins of all the hullabaloo. Eventually, an empathetic Parisian decides to save the flying scapegoat at his own risk, becoming an ordinary hero by bringing it to Ireland, a depopulated country that has become a sanctuary for wild birds.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Éloi Audoin-Rouzeau was born in Paris in 1990. After studying at Sciences-Po Aix and Trinity College (Dublin), he worked for the FAO in Rome and Mali, before devoting himself to writing. His first book, BELLEVILLE AU CŒUR (Slatkine et Cie, 2018), on the cusp between fiction and an eyewitness account, describes the life of a homeless Parisian.

## 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 (Akademska Knjiga), Turkey (Can Yayinlari).
- ◇ First print-run: 60,000 copies.
- ◇ The charge is powerful, against politics, militaries and bankers.
- ◇ 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.

Anne Delaflotte Medhevi

## LE LIVRE DES HEURES

*(The Book of Hours)*

Bouchet Chastel, January 2022, 256 pages



- ◇ Under option in Czech Republic (Argo).
- ◇ With its historical setting, portrait of a woman, love of color and life, and descriptions of mediaeval bookmaking... Anne Delaflotte-Medhevi'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 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

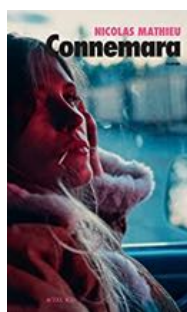
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Anne Delaflotte-Medhevi was born in the Burgundy region in 1967. She grew up near Saint Sauveur en Puisaye, studied political science and international law, and moved to Prague, where her partner opened a bookstore in the early '90s. There she learned the bookbinder's trade and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

## HIGHLIGHTS

### 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.

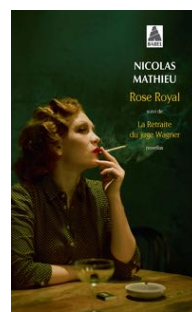
And yet he has a cast-iron belief that anything is still possible.

**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* suivi de *LA RETRAITE DU JUGE WAGNER* (Babel, 2021).

### Nicolas Mathieu LA RETRAITE DU JUGE WAGNER

(Judge Wagner's Retirement)

Actes Sud, May 2021, 50 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: US (Other Press).
- ◇ This novella in a noir register retells the eternal story of an old man and a kid against a backdrop of car parks and B-roads, social media and an obsession with cars and bikes.

*Freely inspired by the remarkable career of Judge Thiel – the first to have brought a serial killer to justice in France (the Bastille killer Guy Georges) and one of the leading counter-terrorism magistrates – the portrait of an ageing man who was brought low by political machinations but ultimately is still an honest and upright man.*

Judge Wagner has little else to do but drink and constantly revisit the triumphs of the past: the major criminal and terrorist cases in which he excelled a decade ago. And this is what he is doing on one particular day in the Alsatian town of Colmar, drinking at a Christmas market and maintaining a sceptical distance from the festivities, the twinkling lights and the odour of mulled wine. In the pocket of his overcoat is the reassuring Manurhin, a revolver that the authorities allowed him to keep for his own protection. In Corsica, the threats scrawled on the walls are a reminder that he made enemies in his work who will never forget for as long as he is still alive. On Christmas Eve as the judge is on his way to his sister's, two kids in a souped-up orange Honda Prélude hold him up, and for a moment he is convinced that this dark vendetta is finally going to reach its climax on a B-road in the middle of winter. But his attackers, armed with a hunting gun, content themselves with relieving him of his wallet and his revolver. The judge sees the incident as an opportunity to don his old investigator's hat once again and track down the flamboyant orange vehicle. After a few days of online research into the little world of blowhards, would-be hoodlums and joint-smoking, scooter-riding teenagers, he manages to identify his two assailants, Rollo and Johann. He decides to make contact with the latter, who seems to be the more malleable and less stupid of the two, and a strange little relationship develops between this ageing magistrate with a liking for drink and a rather lost lad who lives with his grandparents, skips school and tries to get by with various little scams. Both get something out of it: a way of overcoming solitude, a favour given, the hint of a brighter future, and the chance to open a book to get some education.

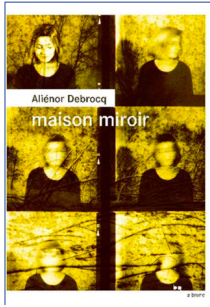
But one afternoon, Johann steals the Manurhin for a second time behind Wagner's back in order to impress a girl – at the very moment when the Corsicans have decided to make good on their pledge.



## 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 couped 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 35<sup>th</sup> 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

**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 Magicien of Auschwitz)*  
**LE MANUSCRIT DE BIRKENAU**  
*(The Birkenau Scrolls)*  
Pocket, April 2021, 448 pages



**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

- ◇ 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?

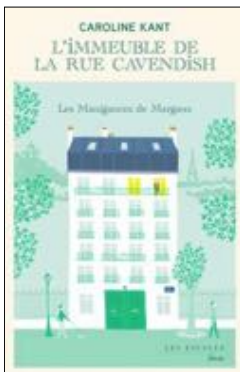
**THE BUILDING ON CAVENDISH STREET**  
**BY CAROLINE KANT**

**FICTION**  
**LANGUAGE: FRENCH**

**PUBLISHER:**  
**LES ESCALES**

*L'Immeuble de la Rue Cavendish* is a **6-book series** launching **Les Escales' series**. These first two books are being published in **April 2022** with a first print-run of over **10 000 copies** each.

Each novel is narrated from the point-of-view of one of the residents of this typically Parisian apartment building in the neighborhood of the Parc Buttes-Chaumont where neighbors are almost like family, for better and for worse. The main character of one book becomes a secondary character in the next. Between the new residents moving in, those who disappear from one day to the next, those who fall in love and those who...well...you'll have to read to find out. One thing's for sure, there's always something exciting happening inside...



**Les Manigances de Margaux**

After a painful breakup, Margaux, 20s, moves into an apartment that her Uncle lends her on rue Cavendish. Near Buttes-Chaumont, the building is always bustling, between the unpleasant concierge who insists on being called Madame

Nathalie, the crazy old man on the 2nd floor and the intolerable kid on the 4th, Margaux hardly finds the time to indulge in watching the horror movies she so enjoys.

Thankfully, she can count on her neighbors: Victoire, Charlotte and Markus are always there for her over a round of drinks. Especially after Margaux meets the hot neighbor who lives across the street.

But things get complicated when worrying noises come from the couple who live in the apartment upstairs and Margaux decides to meddle.



**Charlotte se cherche**

Charlotte has gotten herself a new job working for a wedding planner. Now she can support her family while her husband Alexandre starts his new company. She even managed to negotiate Wednesdays afternoons off so that she could spend time with

her two children.

Goodbye to the uncertain life of a freelancer and hello to a steady income, paid vacation and coffee breaks! Except that her co-worker Laetitia isn't too happy with Charlotte's arrival and her behavior becomes more and more difficult to deal with as she tries to sabotage Charlotte in the eyes of their boss.

To make matters worse, Charlotte argues more and more frequently with Alexandre while she gets closer and closer to Thomas, the sexy neighbor who just moved into the building. Just how far will she go? And just how far will Laetitia go to make her regret taking this job?

**Caroline Kant** used to live on Rue Cavendish for a long time. She has since left the city and spends her time between writing and other diverse jobs.

## LITERARY / 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.
- ◇ Awarded the Prix Ouest 2022.
- ◇ Shortlisted for the Prix France Télévisions 2022, Prix des Libraires, Prix Europe I GMF and Prix du Roman qui fait du bien.
- ◇ 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.



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.

*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.*

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?

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 DÉSARMÉ**  
*(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.*

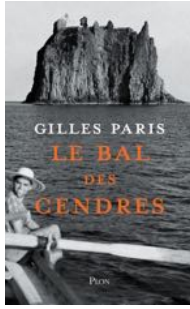
He is a diplomat. He knows all the texts of the major international treaties by heart, paragraph by paragraph, but he dreams of being a poet. She is a film editor, who sees the world in terms of shot/reverse shot. She knows it is impossible to edit life the way you can film, except when memory and writing 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).



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.

Solène Kakowski  
**IL FAUT BEAUCOUP AIMER LES GENS**  
*(You Have to Love People a Lot)*  
 Plon, May 2022, 258 pages



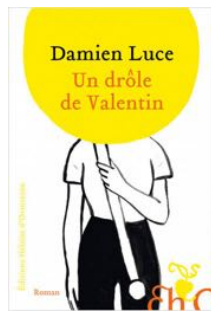
◇ **A novel that shows we are all connected and that the good things we do to one person has a great impact on others as well.**

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 7<sup>th</sup> novel. She creates a complicity with the readers with a universe full of soft magic which is a marvelous invitation to dialogue between beings.

**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 non conformists 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.

**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?*

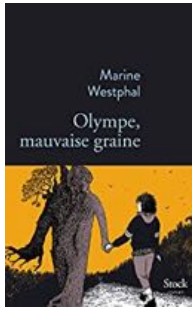
Élodie has given up on love after a painful breakup. Then one day, she meets Emmanuelle, a 35-year-old architect formerly married to a Japanese businessman and the mother of a son, Thomas, who lives with his father.

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.

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.

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.

**Isabelle Autissier**  
**LE NAUFRAGE DE VENISE**  
*(The Sinking of Venice)*  
 Stock, May 2022, 272 pages



- ◇ 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.

**Isabelle Autissier**  
**SOUDAIN SEULS**  
*(Suddenly, Alone)*  
 Stock, May 2015, 252 pages



- ◇ Rights sold: English / UK & Commonwealth (Pushkin Press), Czech Republic (Argo), Germany (Mare), Italy (Rizzoli), Japan (Shueisha), Korea (Jaem & Moeum), Netherlands (De Bezige Bij), Romania (RAO), Russia (Phantom Press), Slovakia (Inaque), Spain (DeBolsillo).
- ◇ 45,000 copies sold!
- ◇ A film adaptation is in pre-production, with Jake Gyllenhaal and Vanessa Kirby attached to star, Thomas Bidegain directing. Artémis Productions in Belgium is to lead, with Alain Attal, Riva Marker, and Gyllenhaal listed as producers.
- ◇ Isabelle Autissier is the first woman to have sailed around the world solo in competition. She is the chair of the World Wildlife Federation France and has published novels, short stories, and essays.
- ◇ The survival theme in a thrilling adventure novel with a strong psychological tension.

*Louise is an experienced mountaineer, Ludovic a well-built young man. They give up their Paris apartment to travel the world together on their sailboat. The island where they land to the south of the 'roaring forties' captivates them with its wild beauty. Only, there's a little black cloud appearing on the horizon. The storm hits and destroys everything, their boat disappears. They find themselves suddenly alone.*

For only company they have penguins, sea lions, elephant seals and rats, and then there's the old whaling station abandoned decades ago. Their lovers' adventure is turning into a nightmare. How will they survive in such a strange, alien environment? And for how long? How will they fight hunger and exhaustion?

And if they survive, how will they return to the human world? How will they describe the indescribable?

*"Isabelle Autissier sails at literature as she sails at sea around the globe, with passion"* Figaro littéraire

*"Captivating. Embark on this novel and you won't be able to put down."* L'Obs

*"A provocative novel, half way between Jules Verne and Stevenson."* Le Parisien Magazine



**Serena Giuliano**  
**SARA PER CHE TI AMO**  
*(Sarà Perché Ti Amo)*  
 Robert Laffont, March 2022, 224 pages



- ◇ **EXCEPT FOR POLAND AND HUNGARY.**
- ◇ 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**  
*(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*

CONTEMPORARY

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



*A 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.

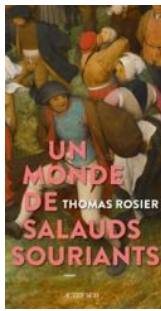
At the start of the book we learn that he has been calling her Ingrid for a very long time and that she now has the run of the whole house, not just the cellar. Forty years have passed, and she has only left the house once in that time, accompanying him in the car. She has forgotten her Danish and now 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.

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



- ◇ **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

**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.



**Gabriela Manzoni**  
**UNE HÉRITIÈRE**  
*(Groomed for Success)*  
 Séguier, February 2022, 160 pages



- ◇ This debut novel of a rare intensity is characterised by black humour, an acerbic tone, a knack for a telling phrase, but the harsh satirising of our age is also accompanied by a constant hint of tenderness and melancholy.
- ◇ Though Nora is an ‘heiress’ in Bourdieu’s sense of the world, she is also – and perhaps above all – a descendant of Cécile from *Bonjour tristesse* and Frédéric Moreau from *L’Éducation sentimentale*.

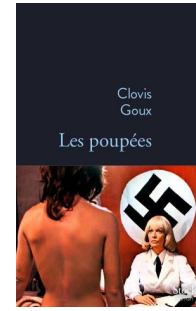
*Nora is a ‘heiress’ in the Bourdieu sense: born into privilege, she has since her earliest childhood been programmed for just one thing: success at any price. But along the way, there the love affairs, the books, the encounters, and perhaps even the search for a sense of purpose above and beyond the commonplace ambitions.*

At the age of 17, Nora Lefebvre is bored with her stultifying adolescent existence. She lives with her parents who accord her little attention. But when she begins her last year at school, an encounter breaks the monotony: her philosophy teacher, Anna Berl, initiates her into love, books and the exclusive social circles of the local bourgeoisie. Nora learns everything that young people who want to ‘succeed’ need to know: feigning an interest in emerging artists, winegrowers, and analysts wedded to the Freudian Cause. A few years later she becomes a philosophy teacher. But in Paris her teaching responsibilities soon take a back seat to going out. By chance, she crosses paths with the head of the one of the most prestigious publishing houses. The man, who has just hit sixty, asks her to become his personal secretary and help him to write his memoirs, which include details of his sexual fantasies... A network of dangerous liaisons develops between Nora, Anna and Maurice and a brutal game of ambition, desire, betrayal and vengeance plays itself out.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Gabriela Manzoni started by reworking (in a comical way) American comics and sharing the results with her followers on social media. In 2016, two hundred of these vignettes were collected into a book published by Séguier (COMICS RETOURNÉS).

*“Manzoni is a cultured and solitary dandy who has deliberately avoided getting a proper job, [...] an aesthete who has elevated idleness, sarcasm and melancholy to an art form.” ELLE.*

**Clovis Goux**  
**LES POUPEES**  
*(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.

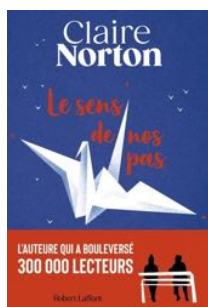
Los Angeles 1968. The B-series producer Bob Cresse is in preproduction on a film that will, in his words, “revolutionise the history of cinema”. The first feature film to depict Nazi sex slaves, *Love Camp 7* would turn this pioneer into a pariah.

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).

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 subub 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 previous 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.

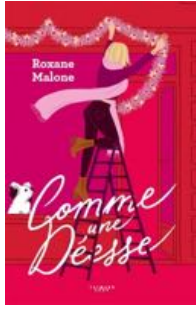
Can Lucie silence the demons that consume her soul by helping her strange roommates?

**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.

**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



◇ **Option in:** Poland (Sonia Draga), Estonia (Varrak), Ukraine (Old Lion), Serbia (Carobna Knjiga), Croatia (VBZ), Czech Republic (Grada), Macedonia (Tri Publishing), Albania (Botart), Russia (Eksmo), Lithuania (Baltos Lankos), Latvia (Zvaigzne), Slovakia (Albatros Media).

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 unshakable remain intact? A heartfelt and subtle story of a remarkable friendship made of shattered convictions and bursts of laughter.*

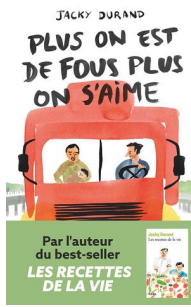
Brune, Clément, Dimitri, Pio, and Fred have known each other since childhood. They have cemented their friendship by buying a house where they get together for vacations.

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!"

**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 Muguette, 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...

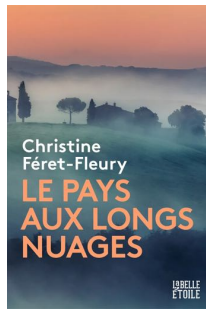
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Camille de Peretti was born in 1980 in Paris. She has written seven novels, including *THORNYTORINX* ("Prix du Premier Roman de Chambéry"), and *LE SANG DES MIRABELLES* (Calmann-Lévy, 2019).



**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)...

*Three women join together to bring a restaurant back to life and to create a new family for themselves in the most unexpected way.*

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.

**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.

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 law- yer 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.

**Claire Renaud**  
**LA VALSE DES PETITS PAS**  
*(Small-Step Walz)*  
Fleuve, January 2022, 186 pages



- ◇ [English detailed synopsis and interview with the author available.](#)
- ◇ **Rights sold in Germany (DTV), Italy**
- ◇ 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.

**Camille Anseume**  
**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 Anseume 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*.

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



◇ 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

Marie-Renée Lavoie

DIANE DEMANDE UN RECOMPTE

(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 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: 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

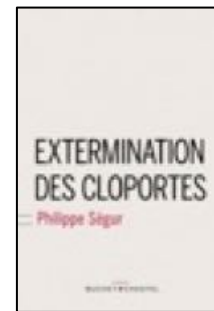
*"Lavoie's fiercely hilarious take on the pains and triumphs of marital abandonment feels perfectly right."*

*"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."*

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, 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.

BIO & HISTORICAL

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 Moliere” 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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.*

A mystery that unleashes passion In the dead of night on 21st February 1673, a weeping crowd buried Moliere 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. Deciding to turn it into a novel 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 Moliere, 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, Moliere's wife?

A construction of narrative voices 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 Coblenz, 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.

**Raphaël Aubert**

**QU'UNE SEULE ÂME SUR LA TERRE**

*(But One Single Soul on Earth)*

Buchet Chastel, March 2022, 224 pages



*An intimate 20<sup>th</sup>-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.



**Alexis Salatko**  
**LA DERNIÈRE ENQUÊTE DE DINO BUZZATTI**  
*(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.

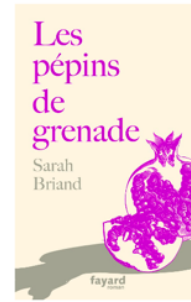
*Summer 1970, the great Italian writer, Dino Buzzati, 64 years old, has only a few months left to live.*

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 PÈRE* (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).

**Sarah Briand**  
**LES PÉPINS DE GRENADE**  
*(Pomegrenade 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...

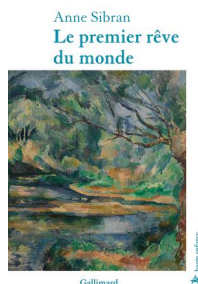
The story of her great-uncle André, imprisoned by the Germans during the Second World War and now recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations" had never been mentioned in her family. What is the truth behind the family secret so carefully buried in the valleys of the protagonist's native Ardèche?

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).



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



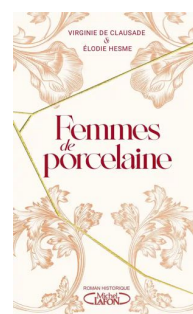
- ◇ **ONLY FOR POLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES**
- ◇ Anne Sibran unravels a poetic imagination, with a luminous style, that depicts how, from the differences and shared dream of these three characters, was born a different view of the world.

*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.

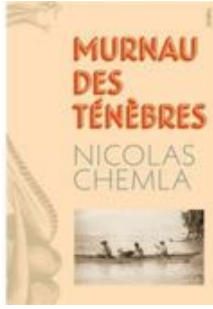
Anne and Clotilde live through it all on opposite sides of the divide. Against a backdrop of riots, mishaps, true love and workers' union, the sisters must protect the secret of their sisterhood and, above all, confront the system and the status quo to make their voices heard.

**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.

**Nicolas Chemla**  
**MURNAU DES TÉNÈBRES**

*(Murnau of Darkness)*

Le Cherche Midi, August 2021, 240 pages



- ◇ **Longlisted for the Prix Renaudot 2021.**
- ◇ Nicolas Chemla is an anthropologist and a writer. All his books have been unanimously acclaimed by critics, qualified of «achivements», «virtuoso novels».
- ◇ A truly bewitching novel, always on the border between dream and reality.
- ◇ Behind the novel, a biography (on the filmmaker Murnau) and a philosophical essay.
- ◇ To tell this story is to follow in the footsteps of the great tales of travel and exploration, to question the very act of creation, to be at the heart of «the stuff that dreams are made of.» And who doesn't want to escape to dream?

*Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau was the greatest silent film director of the 1920's. His movie « Tabu » cost a fortune to the studios, the shooting was a disaster, whatever, the film is a masterpiece.*

Murnau staged a desecration without knowing that he himself would be a future victim. The filming, which took place on a forbidden is- land in Tahiti, would have provoked the Polynesian spirits. The legend claims that Murnau paid the highest price as his car went off the road and died on the way to the first screening. Last but not least: his grave was desecrated in 2015, and his skull mysteriously «disappeared».

Thirteen years ago, Chemla has the crazy idea to go writing in Murnau's cabin in Tahiti. No sooner does he arrive on the scene than an emaciated old man approaches, half-naked, tattooed. He appears, in the night- fall, as «a living image of death» and begins a story of unbelievable precision about Murnau's epic in the Pacific: how is this possible? He just confirmed that he was well over a hundred years old.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Nicolas Chemla is an anthropologist and a writer. His first novel, Monsieur Amérique (2019) was hailed by critics. Jérôme Dupuis (L'Express) saw it as «an achievement» and gave it a score of 17/20. In 2014, his first essay (Luxifer) received the prize for the best essay on luxury.

**Oscar Lalo**  
**LA RACE DES ORPHELINS**

*(The Orphan Race)*

Belfond, August 2020, 288 pages



- ◇ **English sample available.**
- ◇ **Full German, Swedish and Italian translations available.**
- ◇ **Awarded the Prix d'honneur Filigranes 2021 and the Prix littéraire du 2<sup>e</sup> roman 2021.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Korea (Marco Polo), Russia (MTS Library).**

*In this novel about the unspeakable, Oscar Lalo explores a historical fact that has rarely been addressed in literature – the Third Reich's “Lebensborn” maternity homes, in which a generation of “racially pure” Aryan children was manufactured – children who would become orphans and later be forgotten.*

My name is Hildegard Müller and this is my diary. I'm a daughter of the Third Reich and one of history's forgotten people. The only race to which the SS gave birth was the race of orphans. Who is Hildegard Müller? When he meets her for the first time, the man commissioned to tell her story learns that she is 76 years old and can barely read or write. That she knows nothing about her parents and can hardly remember her childhood. He realises that her life story is true but resistant to being told. Together they try to fill the vacuum through writing, seeking inspiration from the greats of literature. And yet Hildegard Müller is by no means suffering from amnesia – she is simply guilty of having been born in 1943 of unknown but impeccably Aryan parents in a Lebensborn, the nurseries created by the Third Reich to propagate the 'master race'. Hildegard Müller was to have been the pride of humanity, but she ended up becoming its dregs, with all proof of her conception going up in smoke on the orders of Himmler shortly before the end of the war. Before she dies, Hildegard wants to be able to tell her own children where they come from. And so with her empty diary in front of her, and with her scribe, as she likes to call him, poised with his pencil beside her, she tries to respond to that overwhelming need of every orphan: to make amends for the past.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Oscar Lalo is the author of CONTES DÉFAITS (Belfond, 2016). LA RACE DES ORPHELINS is his second novel.

*« Un témoignage poignant [...] Une écriture amère pour ce roman bouleversant qui traite de la question de l'identité et de l'absence de racines. » Fnac*

## THRILLER

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 breathtaking 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”*

**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.

**Sylvain Forge**  
**SARA**  
*(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.*

In a city confronted to rising violence, the newly elected mayor implements SARA, a network of intelligent cameras that can spot anything or anyone in less than two minutes. When a world-renowned expert in robotics suddenly disappears, commanding officer Isabelle Mayet and her team start an investigation that will question their abilities to confront artificial intelligence. Applauded by some, fiercely criticized by others, the surveillance system is deeply controversial: how far is everyone willing to compromise their freedom in the name of security?

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Sylvain Forge was awarded the 2018 Prix du Quai des Orfèvres for TENSION EXTRÊME (Fayard), 140,000 copies sold, currently being adapted for television.

**Emmanuel Bourdieu**  
**JE SUIS LE DERNIER**

*(I Am the Last One)*

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.

**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*).



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.
- ◇ From Mexico to an island in Bangladesh, passing through the USA and Brazil, a submarine and a sailing boat, the book is structured like a 24-hour timer over several days.
- ◇ Amongst others, the book's components are artificial intelligence, crypto-currencies and a global reality TV show, as the explosive force of viral images on social networks are used by the terrorists to strike at the corruption of political and economic elites.
- ◇ A masterful and above all original thriller, anchored in the present and bringing to light the ever present threat of climate change.

*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.

◇ Option Publishers: Russian (Azbooka), Czech (Prah), Lithuanian (Baltos Lankos), Hungarian (Könyvmolyképző), Polish (Kobiece).

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 :

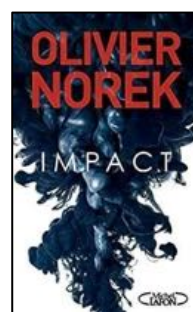
"A powerful addition to his Banlieues Trilogy." *Financial Times*

"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).

◇ IMPACT by Olivier Norek – 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 incorrect 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 Maksen 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.](#)

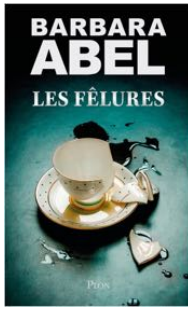
*The maiden investigation for Céleste Ibar, formerly of the serious crime squad and now a police captain in Nantes following an incident that has left deep scars.*

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.

**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.

**Barbara Abel**  
**DERRIÈRE LA HAINE**  
*(Behind The Hatred)*

Pocket, Marche 2013, 352 pages



- ◇ [English sample available.](#)
- ◇ **80,000 copies sold.**
- ◇ **Rights sold: Russia (Eksmo), Romania (Crime Scene Press).**
- ◇ The book was adapted on screen in 2018 in a French movie named « *Duelles* ». Now an American remake in English is officially on its way with a promising cast: Anne Hathaway & Jessica Chastain. Olivier Masset-Depasse is the director. He was recently awarded 9 prix Magritte (Belgian Oscars) including best film and best director
- ◇ The cocoon-like atmosphere in protected suburbs, where the pace is easy, serves as a backdrop to tragic stories where madness and the evil flourish. We suffocate in the open !

*What happens when tragic loss turns friendship and trust into hatred, jealousy and bitterness? When desire to replace that loss becomes insane and murderous and when a tranquil, ordinary existence in a tranquil, ordinary town is transformed into a subterranean hell animated by the deepest, darkest horrors of which the human heart is capable?*

Is it really just a figment of her imagination or has her friend really become her worst enemy? The story of two couples and neighbors, who live in semi detached houses. They are the same age, are very good friends, have a child at the same time, and live in perfect harmony. Until a tragedy happens.

From that day forward, their life is eaten by guilt, suspicion, paranoia and hatred.

A sequel called *APRÈS LA FIN* (Behind the Grief) was released a year later.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Barbara Abel has always been passionate about both theatre and literature. She wrote her first play at age 23. She won the Cognac Prize for her first novel, *L'Instinct maternel* (Le Masque, 2002). Her books have been adapted for film and television, and translated into several languages. After *Je sais pas* (Belfond, 2016) and *Je t'aime* (Belfond, 2018), *Et les vivants autour* is her 13th novel.

*"If you like Desperate Housewives, you will like Derrière la Haine."*  
 Elle

*"A plot behind closed doors, characters close to us, Barbara Abel delivers a chilling story as it looks so real."* Point de vue



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

**JEU 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 Buneval 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. *JEU DE PEAUX* is her first thriller. She is France's answer to Mo Hayder.

NOIR & COZY CRIME

Orso Tosco  
LONDON VOODOO

(London Voodoo)

Minimum Fax, January 2022, 205 pages



- ◇ English sample chapter available.
- ◇ An acid and powerful noir, full of New Weird themes.
- ◇ 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.

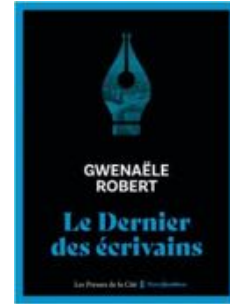
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Orso Tosco is a writer, a poet and a screen player. He published short stories in Watt and other reviews. For minimum fax he published *Waiting for The Castaways* (2018) and, with Cosimo Argentina, *From Hell* (2021). Interno Poesia published his collections of poems *Figure Amate* (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).*

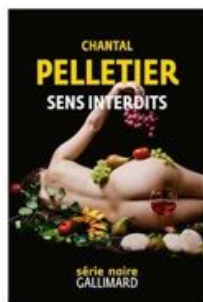
Pierre Le Guellec has just been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The prize is eight million Swedish kronor and sales promise to take off. The opportunity for this indebted man born in Saint Malo, descendant of the last Newfoundlanders, to take his revenge on fortune and to cherish some dreams...

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).

**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



◇ **Rights sold: World English (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 sale 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 Garmoran in Brittany?

For weeks, everyone in this peaceful village in Finistère was waiting and watching... until one day in the middle of a storm, an elegantly-dressed woman from Strasbourg, Cathie Watt, 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 Brestois-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 courtyard party, Cathie is immediately accused of poisoning her.

French sales: Paperback (La Librairie de Pêche), Large Print (Jouklub)

## Pretzels and Salted Butter, Book 2 A Hard Pill to Swallow

Bretzel et beurre sale T2 - Une pilule difficile à avaler

Locmaria, is quiet like seaside resorts? Cathie Watt starts to have serious doubts when she finds a dead body washed up on the beach by her house. When rumors 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 so, once more, Cathie is caught at the centre of a good mystery.

When someone close to Cathie is arrested and she begins to realize 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 Alsatian with a flock of Britons by her side!

French sales: Paperback (La Librairie de Pêche), Large Print (Jouklub)



June 2022  
230 pages



April 2022  
230 pages

## Pretzels and Salted Butter, Book 3 Don't Judge a Book by its Cover

Bretzel et beurre sale T3 - Châtié ne fait pas la morale

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 terrible 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 Léo Trouguet 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

Sacha Guitry  
MÉMOIRES D'UN TRICHEUR  
(Memories of a Cheater)  
Presses de la Cité, January 2022, pages



- ◇ **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'ETAIT 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



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