

A stylized graphic of books and a pencil. On the left, there is a stack of three books. A pencil is positioned diagonally across the top of the stack. To the right of the stack, there are two more books standing upright. The entire graphic is rendered in white on a dark blue background.

THE PUBLISHING POST

Issue 54



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EDITOR'S NOTE

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

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

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

The Publishing Post stands by the fact that 2022 is a time for breaking down barriers and encouraging diversity in the publishing industry. Learning about and being included in the industry should be for everyone.

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

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

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

Editor in Chief, Chelsea Graham

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

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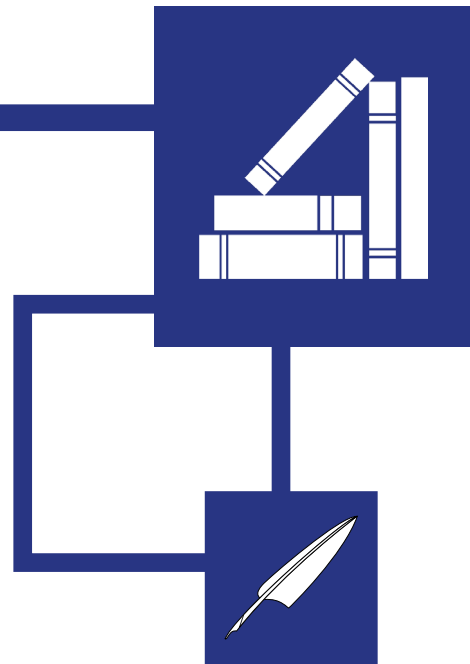
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Penguin Random House Goes To Court Over Simon & Schuster Merger

BY MEGAN WHITLOCK

Penguin Random House

On 1 August, Penguin Random House began its US trial against the Department of Justice, which intends to block its \$2.18 billion merger with Simon & Schuster announced in November 2020. If successful, the merger would see the “big five” publishing companies reduced to the “big four”, following in the footsteps of Penguin’s acquisition of Random House in 2013, and would leave the company controlling a predicted 50% of the bestseller market.

The antitrust suit, which comes in the wake of the Biden administration wanting to crack down on major competition-threatening mergers such as these, is taking place in Washington, and the outcome will be decided in November.

At the time of writing, famed horror writer, Stephen King, [has been the Department of Justice’s star witness](#). King took to the stand on 2 August to outline the threat that the merger poses to authors. He argued that as well as squeezing out competition due to their domination of shelf space, the “big five’s” conglomeration of smaller, independent publishing houses has led to a shrink in advances and a struggle for new, unestablished writers to break out and make a living.

This testimony echoes the dangers outlined in the Department of Justice’s filing, which claimed that the “big five” collectively account for 90% of the bestseller market (US statistics). The filing states that: “The proposed merger would further increase consolidation in this concentrated industry, make the biggest player even bigger, and likely increase coordination in an industry with a history of coordination among the major publishers” (*LA Times*). It also addresses the

threat to readers, suggesting that the merger will continue the alarming precedent of a reduced quantity and variety of books published, with fewer publishing options for authors wanting to write to different niches, thus limiting the types of stories readers get to hear.

However, Penguin Random House and Simon & Schuster intend to argue the opposite, that by “making the combined entity a stronger bookselling competitor, the merger will incentivize other publishers to compete even harder for consumer attention” (pre-trial briefing). In an era where Amazon dominates the market, they argue that a stronger bookselling force will right the current imbalance with online retail, as well as allow for more efficient publishing which could ultimately reduce book prices.

The trial is expected to last three weeks longer, and, regardless of the outcome, will set an important precedent for the future of the publishing market.



Books in the Hands of Children: PLS and Halstan Gather Books for Displaced Ukrainian Children



BY SHANIA N. SOLER

“Books not only entertain and educate us – they also unite us and bring us back to a feeling of home. This project is our victory on the cultural front, and it brings our primary victory closer.” [Olena Zelenska](#), Ukrainian First Lady

Millions of people have been displaced since Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Families have crossed borders and children have found themselves in unfamiliar settings, surrounded by unfamiliar people. To help reduce feelings of stress and anxiety while also counteracting the disruption to their education, Publishing Licensing Services (PLS) and Halstan have come together to produce 16,000 books for the displaced children of Ukraine. Sarah Faulder, Chief Executive of PLS, has [indicated](#) feeling “proud that PLS has been able to play a part, on behalf of publishers, in supporting the First Lady’s initiative to turn to the power of books to bring comfort to displaced Ukrainian children taking refuge in the UK.”

“This project aims to provide young readers with many much-loved books from their homeland so they can feel connected and hopefully find some comfort, while assisting with their education and development whilst they are away from home.” [Rupert Smith](#), Chief Executive of Halstan.

The books will be placed into the hands of refugee children arriving in the United Kingdom (UK) as part of the “Books Without Borders” initiative created by Olena Zelenska, the First Lady of Ukraine. The scheme has already worked to distribute 160,000 books around the world. The aim is to create a physical connection between the displaced children and their homeland.

As the First Lady explains, “[we] can bring the homeland to Ukrainian children in the form of books. We called this project ‘Books Without

Borders’ as Ukrainian books can travel with Ukrainians to any country where they are needed.” Ukrainian publishers have helped with the initiative by donating sixteen layouts for picture books and novels for children aged three to seventeen.

Additional support was given by Canon Commercial Print Division and Premier Paper, alongside the Bookmark Reading Charity who donated an additional 1,000 books from their Bookbox campaign. [Bookmark Reading](#) is a literacy charity that provides volunteer-led reading support for children around the world. It recently launched an appeal to raise £1 million to provide book boxes to Ukrainian children aged five to nine arriving in the UK.



Industry Insights:

Oscar Janson-Smith

BY ELIZABETH OLADOYIN, ELIZABETH GUESS, HANNAH DEVINE AND LEYLA MEHMET

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Photo Credit: Oscar Janson-Smith

We interviewed Oscar Janson-Smith to learn more about his role as an Agent at Gleam Futures...

Could you tell us about your journey into agenting and to Gleam?

I left school relatively early, and wasn't in a position where I could afford, or justify taking, a gap year,

so I began working. I sent a significant number of what I now appreciate were ridiculously speculative applications to publishers over the years, but I never heard back. I think the industry was in a different

“My main advice would be to use the experience you do have, or can get, to your advantage, and know how and when to pivot.”

place back then, and there was more emphasis placed on university degrees. I handed my CV in at countless bookshops around London, too, but I didn't hear back from them, either. Needing an income, I ended up taking jobs in a DIY store in West Norwood, and a call centre in Wimbledon. I then managed to get work at an estate agency. I soon left estate agenting to set up a market stall selling clothes – which was fun, but it proved difficult to scale, so I found myself a job in advertising sales, and then used that experience to pivot into advertising itself. By leveraging my understanding of digital advertising and experience in sales and negotiation, I found my way into talent management, which eventually provided me with the opportunity to begin working on books – an opportunity I seized. I actually wrote to Gleam before they were actively hiring for my role, saying how much I'd love to work

for them – thankfully, they agreed to chat to me, and now I'm here, and enjoying every minute of it.

Is there any advice you'd give to current publishing hopefuls? Are there routes into publishing that aren't as “traditional” that you'd recommend?

I'd always advise people to embrace and pursue their interests, and not conform to what they believe the industry wants from them – liking books needn't constitute the entirety of your personality. Publishing will continue to grow through commissioning in a way that speaks to a broader section of society, so the more diverse the backgrounds and interests of people in the industry, the more likely this is to happen.

“Taking a job anywhere in, or around, publishing could well lead to your dream role; you just need to be patient.”

Speaking from experience, my main advice would be to use the experience you do have, or can get, to your advantage, and know how and when to pivot. There are plenty of former copywriters, journalists, and PRs in editorial roles these days, while the route into a publishing PR, marketing or sales role can be more of a direct transition from

another industry. The other thing is, keep reading! I know it sounds obvious, but reading widely is invaluable. Another thing would be to keep in mind you're probably not going to get to start commissioning literary fiction straight away. Taking a job anywhere in, or around, publishing could well lead to your dream role; you just need to be patient.

Could you tell us a bit more about what a literary agent does, and how it differs from working in a publishing house? What kind of skills do you need to be an agent?

My job is, essentially, to sell books and to develop the careers of my authors. I work with authors to edit and develop their writing, or ideas, into a proposal

and I've learnt so much from the people I've met. I also agent across branding, digital work, and live events, as so many of my authors do other things away from writing.

I think life experience, and exposure to a wide array of people and cultures, is a very important asset in agenting, as is proactivity and an awareness of what is going on in the world, and what people are talking about. I also firmly believe that the ability to write, edit and read with a critical eye are essential – however, I do not believe that these skills need to be accredited in any way.

What projects have you worked on that you're most proud of? What made them stand out?

Probably the *Sunday Times* number one, to be honest! Working with someone as inspirational as Tom [Parker] was a real privilege, and I'm so pleased that he got to number one, as he wanted it so badly. It was really touching to see how much it meant to him, and I'm glad that we were able to get there – I just wish he was around to see it. I also have a couple of very exciting projects yet to be announced, and in the works, which I cannot wait to begin talking about – including some fiction, which is an area I'm keen to do a lot more in over the coming years.

Underrepresented Publishing Down Under

BY EMMA REGAN AND JORDAN MAXWELL RIDGWAY

This year, *Grimmish*, a self-published novel by Michael Winkler was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin award, the first ever self-published work to make it onto the list. The award is given to a novel which is felt to have the highest literary merit in representing Australian life during any of its phases. Established in 1957, the award was last valued in 2016 at A\$60,000 (Australian dollars), the equivalent of £35,000. It is a huge prize with great prestige, and though *Grimmish* did not take the prize home, (this went to Jennifer Down's *Bodies of Light*), Winkler has won a publishing contract. There are some who are very hopeful about what the shortlist means for inventive, original and challenging writing.

In an article from the [Camden Haven Courier](#), Robyn Ferrell highlights the possibility that the traditional market is failing to “curate the literary” with competition in the form of “producing books digitally” as well as online campaigns. Ferrell also highlights how Winkler's achievement is no mean feat, not only because it is a self-published product but also

because Australian writing still struggles to compete in the English language market with their British and American counterparts still dominating.

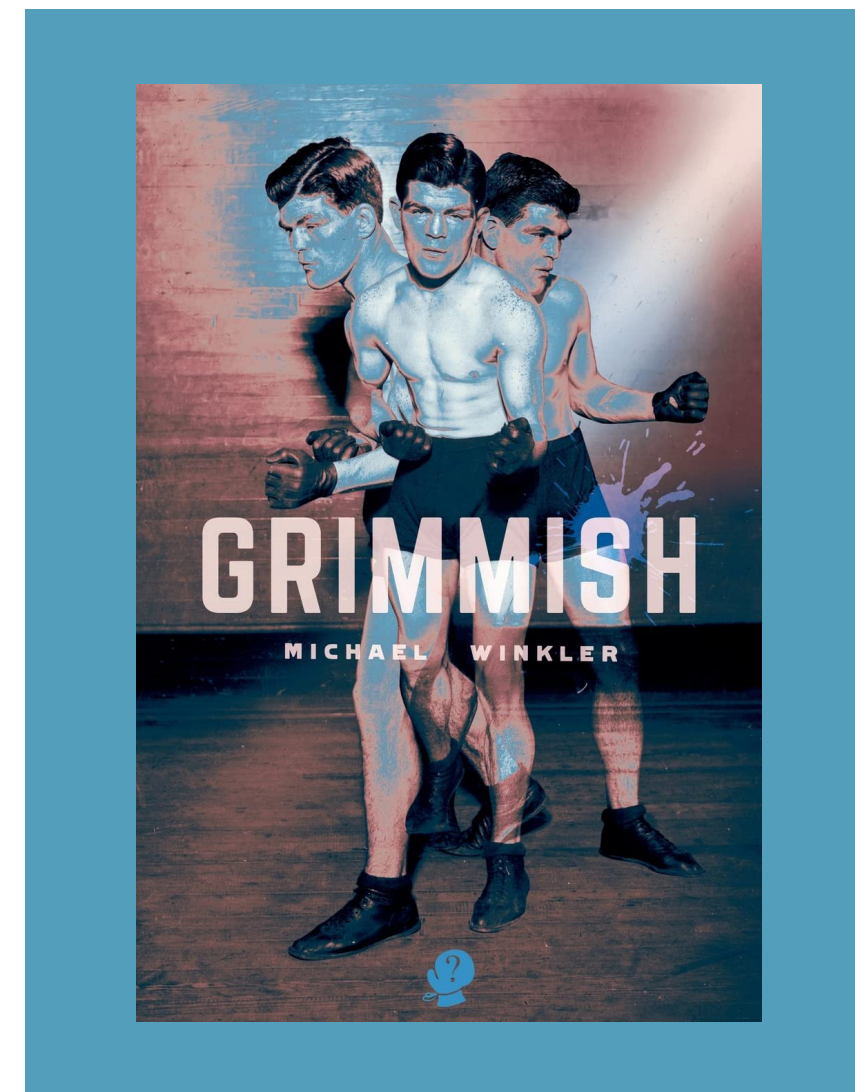
Grimmish has been described as an experimental, historical novel, based on the American-Italian boxer Joe Grim's tour of Australia in 1908 to 1909. An exploration of masculinity, reality and pain, its highest accolade besides the Miles Franklin shortlist comes from JM Coetzee: “the strangest book you are likely to read this year.” As testament to the hard fought battle Winkler has fought to get this novel published, he wrote an article for the [Sunday Morning Herald](#), titled *No one would publish my novel, and now it's up for the Miles Franklin*. In the article, Winkler details how he faced rejection time and time again, and turned to self-publishing feeling like it was his last choice.

There is merit to Ferrell's argument. The dominance of not only Amazon as a giant in the industry along with the gradual homogenisation of publishing as the “big five” collect more and

more indie publishers, can leave the aspiring writer disheartened to follow the traditional route to getting their work on bookshelves. As indie publishers disappear the likelihood of a mould-breaking work from a fresh perspective could begin to dwindle, replaced by trying to find the new shiny thing that will sell.

Furthermore, the market for Australian writers is one of the hardest to break into, especially through the means of traditional publishing. Writing has faced a long, slow decay in Australia, where it has been belittled down to the product it is selling rather than the story it tells.

If a writer is even lucky to have their manuscript selected for reading and an editor is thoroughly impressed with it, there is still an obstacle course the manuscript must go through before it can get published. These criteria can include simple things such as being too different and too original with your work, meaning your work can be held back as the book is “not suitable for the market.” As you can imagine, this means a lot of literary



fiction gets ruled out due to the innovative ways authors tackle the genre and what it is known for.

Moreover, the imbalance between publishers and writers has steadily increased over the years. Nowadays, publishers have whittled down the advances they give to their writers, making it incredibly hard to earn a living for a writer. A [study](#) from Macquarie University

in 2015 showed that authors typically earn \$12,900 per year; a collation of the author's sales, royalties from books borrowed from the library, and festival appearances. In 2020, a [survey](#) from the Australian Society of Authors showed half of the respondents barely made \$2,000 per year, with most authors requiring another job to keep them afloat financially.

The Australian Council have also cut funds for authors, despite the fact that grants given through the government were the backbone of small, local markets in Australian writing. It comes as no surprise then that indie publishing and self-publishing are the way forward for most Australian writers.

This is why Winkler's shortlist success is so important for the many self-published authors out there. It has opened the gates for other self-published books to be submitted for book prizes and showed readers how self-published books deserve as much praise and accolade as a book published by a publishing house. As a result of *Grimmish* being nominated we would hope that authors would be able to earn more through publishing their books too, despite there still being a risk of it not being “suitable for the market” traditional published and self-published alike.

Anticipated Back to School Page Turners

BY CHARLOTTE BARBER, EKTA RAJAGOPALAN AND GEORGIA WELLS
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***The American Roommate Experiment* by Elena Armas** **6 September, Simon & Schuster UK**

Following the success of *The Spanish Love Deception*, Elena Armas is back with another anticipated read: *The American Roommate Experiment*, which follows Rosie as she pursues her goal of becoming a romance writer.

After quitting her job to focus solely on writing, Rosie is struggling with a terrible writer’s block. On top of the stress of writing the next bestseller, the roof of her New York apartment has crumbled, leaving her no other choice but to use her friend Lina’s apartment whilst she is out of town. What Rosie wasn’t expecting, however, was the apartment already lent out to Lucas, Lina’s cousin who Rosie had been harbouring a crush on for some time.

Determined to come to her rescue, Lucas lets her stay with him whilst she looks for temporary housing and

to help combat her writer’s block. He offers to help her meet her approaching deadline by taking her on a series of dates, ones that should provide all the romantic inspiration needed for her work. But Lucas’s time in New York comes with an expiration date, and Rosie is starting to wonder if six weeks will be enough time for both her work and her feelings.

***Undoctored: The Story of a Medic Who Ran Out of Patients* by Adam Kay** **15 September, Orion Publishing**

After the success of *This is Going to Hurt*, translated into thirty-seven languages and adapted into a major BBC television series, Adam Kay returns with *Undoctored*. It is the story of a doctor who hangs up his scrubs but the world of medicine follows him.

Thought to be painfully powerful and rib-crackingly

funny, Adam Kay revisits his past profession and manages to open old wounds. From opening to stitching wounds, Adam Kay ensures he makes everyone stick with him through this journey. Shattered and emotionally wounded from his time working for the NHS, Adam Kay moves forward whilst thinking back to his time on the frontline.

It’s about opening old wounds and examining the present-day scars. It’s about blowing up your life and stitching it back together. It’s about being a doctor and being a patient.

***The Bullet that Missed* by Richard Osman** **15 September, Penguin Books**

This September Richard Osman returns with his third instalment of *The Thursday*

Murder Club series, the new addition titled *The Bullet that Missed*.

Just another average Thursday for your average person, however things are never average for The Thursday Murder Club: the self-titled team of four retirees who are determined to prove that fighting crime has no age limit!

A decade-old cold case is rediscovered, however they are left knowing there has been a murder but with no body and no answers. Elizabeth is paid a visit by an unwelcome acquaintance leaving her in the vulnerable position knowing that she can either kill or be killed. As the cold case heats up, Elizabeth struggles to decide what to do next. Meanwhile Ron, Ibrahim and Joyce are running around town searching for clues. Will Elizabeth escape the threat on her life? And can the gang solve this new mystery?

Described to be “as gripping as it is funny” by *Evening Standard*, Osman’s newest installation of *The Thursday Murder Club* series is one not to be missed at the beginning of the new academic season.

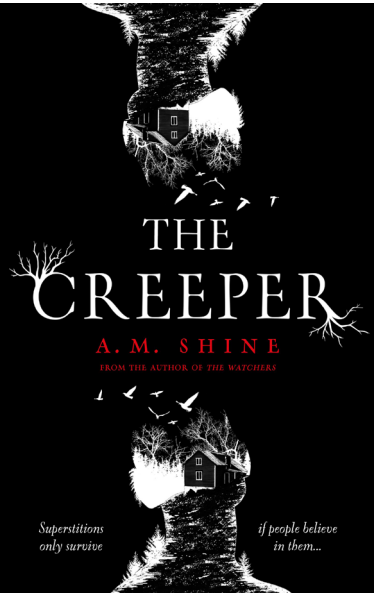
***The Creeper* by A M Shine** **15 September, Head of Zeus**

The Creeper lurks in the shadows, unseen but threatening. And as long as the tales live on, so does he.

In an isolated village lost within rural Ireland lives a collection of people too afraid to leave their houses after sundown, each night locking the doors and hiding away. It has no history, no stories. Nobody talks – except for one little girl. She tells tales to newcomers to ensure that they have no intentions of returning. Tales of the nameless fear that stalks the streets. Tales of The Creeper.

Fascinated by the peculiar behaviour of the town, renowned academic Dr Sparling visits the town to attempt to understand what exactly is going on. Historical researchers Ben and Chloe cannot believe their luck that they have been chosen to join Dr Sparling on his investigation, that is until they discover the reason behind the town’s lack of visitors. That night, they catch sight of a sinister figure watching them. The nameless fear in the night. The Creeper. And each night he ventures closer and closer to the researchers.

The Creeper is the second full-length novel to be published by one of the most highly anticipated emerging authors on the horror scene in Ireland. A. M. Shine’s writing demonstrates his masterful control over fear and suspense in his new horror novel.



Non-fiction Round Up

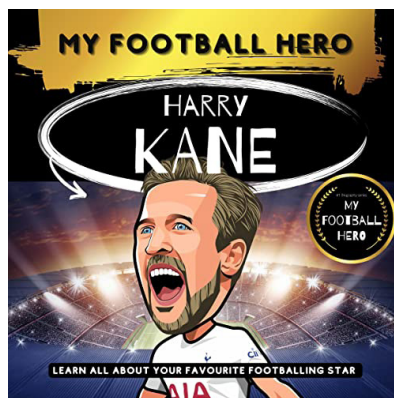
BY PAULINE BIRD, EMILY DE VOGELE AND CAMERON PHILLIPS

With school starting again in a few weeks, we wanted to share some of our favourite non-fiction titles from the past few weeks, to get you in the mood again for education and the upcoming autumnal season.

***My Football Hero: Harry Kane: Learn All About Your Favourite Footballing Star: Biography for Kids* by Rob Green, narrated by Steve King**

Why do you read and what prompts your book choices? For me, reading – whether reading or listening to a book – is all about escapism. This means I’m often drawn to historical fiction or fantasy genres that transport me to another world away from my everyday life. However, reasons for reading can vary from person to person. Some want humour while others want to learn. We can even find that our own choices differ depending on the context. For many children however, the motivation to read can be both intrinsic (like my examples) or extrinsic e.g. a desire to please parents and carers or teachers. If we want children to enjoy reading for pleasure

(and enjoy the numerous life-long benefits associated with this) then it is the intrinsic motivation which we need to encourage.



One way to support this is to provide texts which children enjoy reading or listening to. Audiobooks come in a wide range of genres and this includes a vast non-fiction collection. For me, this would not be my go-to choice. However, my eldest son loves non-fiction – particularly biographies. As he is an avid football fan, I thought a biography of a football player

might be a great listen for him. I discovered a series entitled *My Football Hero* and I selected the most recently published – the Harry Kane one for him.

It proved a great choice. It was a short listen – about an hour – and is divided into easily digestible short chapters which takes us through Kane’s life. I liked that it clearly demonstrated the hard work Kane put in to achieve his success. I felt it could be quite inspirational for our young people who enjoy football and want to improve their skills. My son also enjoyed it and is requesting more from the series. Always a winner in my book!

***Know My Name*, by Chanel Miller, narrated by Chanel Miller**

If you’ve been reading our magazine for a while, you know historical non-fiction is usually my go-to. However, there’s one non-fiction that

I listened to outside of my comfort zone that I haven’t been able to stop thinking about, and that’s *Know My Name* by Chanel Miller.

CHANEL MILLER



Chanel Miller was previously known as Emily Doe, her victim impact letter went viral online after the trial of Brock Turner where he was found guilty of sexually assaulting her. However, much to society’s uproar, he was only sentenced to six months in jail. Her letter changed California law and was read on the floor of the US Congress.

After years of living in the shadows and keeping her identity a secret, Miller came forward to reclaim her name and her story.

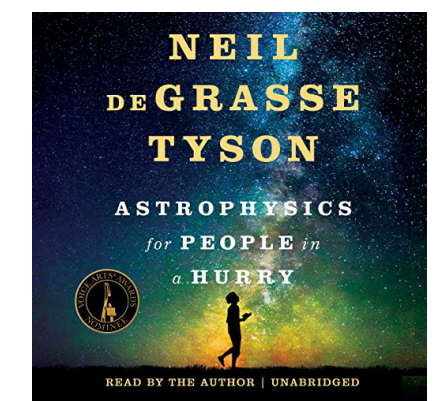
I knew this would be a heavy listen going in, but nothing prepared me for the emotional impact this would have on me. Miller narrates her own book, which makes it feel all that more personal to the listener. She walks us through the night and the incident, traumatic detail by traumatic detail. She doesn’t shy away from the brutal horrors and awful experiences she faced in the wake of her attack.

The sound of her reading back the most devastating night of her life is something that will stay with me forever. I do not have the words to encapsulate how haunting and ground-breaking this book is. It’s a difficult listen, one that you should only start if you’re in the right headspace, but one that is beautiful despite all odds.

***Astrophysics for People in a Hurry*, by Neil deGrasse Tyson, narrated by Neil deGrasse Tyson**

I’ve always been attracted to things I do not understand, and the cosmos is right up there. I am also a huge

fan of people who are able to communicate complex topics in simple and non-patronising ways. Neil deGrasse Tyson absolutely does this in this magnificent work that covers topics the speed of light, dark/ antimatter, and something as everyday as gravity. Tyson does a great job in keeping his tone jovial whilst sticking on topic, never straying too far into the elementary or inane. He is so passionate about this work and the cosmos, and it infectiously oozes from the recording. The next hundred years for space travel and exploration, considering the last hundred years and the exponential potential of technology could be mind boggling, and this book is a great platform for anyone like me who was baffled by science as a child.



Latest Acquisitions & Adaptations

BY GEORGIE CUTLER AND EVA LEE

Acquisition News

Penguin Picks Up Queer Love Story from Young Adult Writer

Writer Jen St. Jude has partnered with Penguin as they have acquired the rights to her debut novel *If Tomorrow Doesn't Come* from Bloomsbury US. The book covers mental health and identity following the journey of Avery Byrne, a queer teenage girl who is in love with her best friend. Following her struggles, she learns that the world will only have days to live as an asteroid is on the way. This emotional yet powerful book will send out an important message to readers and will be published in May 2023 by Bloomsbury Children's in the US and Penguin Random House in the UK.

#Merky Books Signs its First Rom-Com by Taylor-Dior Rumble

Penguin Random House's imprint #Merky Books looks to enter the rom-com world with Taylor-Dior Rumble's debut novel *The Situationship*. The imprint started by Stormzy has gone from strength to strength since its launch in 2018, publishing underrepresented voices and their uplifting stories. Rumble describes the process as a "dream

come true," working with "a team that really understands [her] voice and vision" ([The Bookseller](#)). #Merky Books' Tallulah Lyons acquired the world rights to Rumble's novel from United Agents' Seren Adams.

The Situationship revolves around Tia Martin, a woman dissatisfied with the way her life is going. She feels out of her depth at work and her ex-boyfriend has just returned from a trip to America with a new girlfriend. This is the moment Nate enters her life. Nate is the tempting photographer who could be the answer to everything. Will she be able to mix work with pleasure? We can't wait to find out in August 2023.



From Book to Screen: What to Watch?

Korean Adaptation of *Little Women*

TVN, a South Korean cable channel, is to broadcast the Korean adaptation of the novel *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. It will feature similar elements to the book but will have a Korean spin to it. The story will focus on the lives of three sisters living in poverty as they get caught in an incident involving a wealthy family, all while trying to find a way to support themselves. It will star Kim Go-eun, Nam Ji-hyun and Park Ji-hu who will act as sisters. You may recognise some faces as it will feature stars from *Squid Game* and *All of Us Are Dead*, both popular series on Netflix. It will release on 3 September 2022 with twelve episodes and will be broadcast internationally on Netflix.

The School for Good and Evil on Netflix

Netflix has acquired the rights to release an upcoming fantasy film based on the novel by Soman Chainani, with Paul Feig set to direct the film alongside David Magee for screenplay. The story follows Sophie and Agatha; both taken and enrolled into the School for

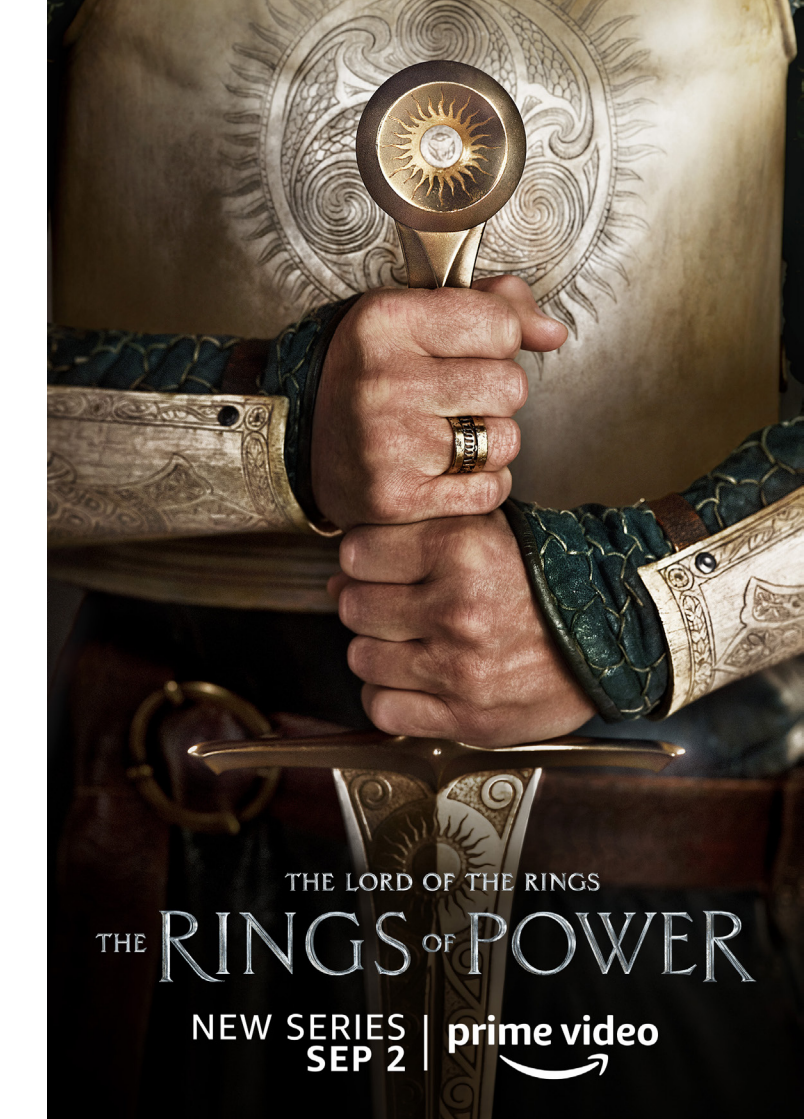
Good and Evil, they battle on opposing sides and put their friendship to the test as they find a way out. The main cast will see Sophia Caruso, Sofia Wylie, Laurence Fishburne, Michelle Yeoh, Kerry Washington and Charlize Theron. Netflix will release the film on 21 October 2022.

The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power is Coming to Amazon Prime

In September, Tolkien fans will be able to watch the highly anticipated *Lord of the Rings* prequel on Amazon Prime. This is the first series to be released from Amazon's 2017 project to adapt material from J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* as a multi-series television adaptation. The show will feature the likes of Morfydd Clark, Robert Aramayo, Benjamin Walker, Charles Edwards, Ismael Cruz Córdova and Will Fletcher. The prequel is based on Tolkien's writings on the Second Age. These writings can be found in *The Fall of Númenor: And Other Tales from the Second Age of Middle-Earth*, a book set to be released by HarperCollins later this year. You can watch *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* on Amazon Prime from 2 September 2022.

In the Works

Keanu Reeves is set to star in and executive produce the adaptation of *Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson. The non-fiction book, originally published in 2003, focuses on the World's Columbian



Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893. It interweaves the narratives of the visionary architect Daniel H. Burnham and the serial killer Dr. H. H. Holmes, combining the stories of the World's Columbian Exposition, commonly known as the White City, with the World's Fair Hotel, known as the Murder Castle. This is a long-awaited adaptation; Leonardo DiCaprio having acquired the film rights

to Larson's book in 2010. It was originally set to be adapted into a feature film with Paramount that Martin Scorsese would direct. However, in 2019 Hulu announced the television series featuring DiCaprio and Scorsese as executive producers. They have since introduced Sam Shaw as the writer and showrunner and Todd Field as the director. The series is set to be released in 2024.

Highlights In The Charts

Notes on Heartbreak by Annie Lord

Review by Natalie Beckett

In *Notes on Heartbreak*, Lord writes about conversations with her mum, chats with old friends, the embarrassing things she once said to a boy in a nightclub and the charming story she told a different boy on a first date that wasn't meant to be a date. But mostly, Lord writes about the moments she shared with a boy named Joe, whom she dated for five years in her early twenties. Through moments in time Lord builds the story of two people falling in and out of love and everything that happens in between.

Whilst Lord's experience is undoubtedly unique, heartbreak is universal. So naturally, throughout the book I'm constantly faced with things I resonate with because I've experienced them and so have my friends, their friends, my mum and her mum and that girl that I sat next to on the tube yesterday. You get the picture. This universality, accompanied by Lord's unguarded tone and fitting

quotes from other writers, make the book so digestible. As soon as you find the first "No way! That happened to me!" moment' you turn the page to find out what your next shared experience will be with the author.

While reading this book I have one recurring thought: Lord is giving heartbreak the justice it deserves. Thirty-five chapters of justice. Broken down into four parts: Salt, Skin, Fog and Concrete, Lord gives us the full lowdown on how to mend a broken heart, never shying away from the sometimes cringe-worthy details. I admire her candour and courage as a writer. In the acknowledgements she thanks her ex for not suing her and I'm tempted to compare her work to Nora Ephron, mentioning something about how everything is copy, but it feels overdone.

As Lord pours over old emails; becomes obsessed with getting his stuff out of her bedroom and starts talking about her ex on first dates, she accurately depicts what Kylie was talking about when she said "I just can't get you out of my head,"

whilst also normalising the lasting impact that first love can have on a young person. Breakups are seen as part and parcel of being young. So, when they happen to those around us, we encourage friends to move on, start dating again and make a profile on Hinge. After six months, we say they need to get over it. Lord is changing this narrative, recognising the complexity of falling in love with someone before you have established who you are as a grown adult. She writes, "I didn't know who I was going to be when this person, who contributed so much to my composition as a human, disappeared." In a recent episode of the *Honey & Spice Sessions* with fellow author Bolu Babalola, Lord admits that in her next relationship she will keep more to herself. I'm reminded of when she writes, "I'm glad that he made me who I am, I'm glad that I've been left alone to be her too."

If you're going through heartbreak and need a firm reminder that you are in fact not losing your mind, or you just want to read some great writing about young love, go and read this book. It's brilliant.



Why Did You Stay? A memoir about self-worth by Rebecca Humphries

Review by Arabella Petts

A validating and empowering memoir, *Why Did You Stay?* is Humphries' story of her relationship with her partner, referred to only as "Him" throughout the book.

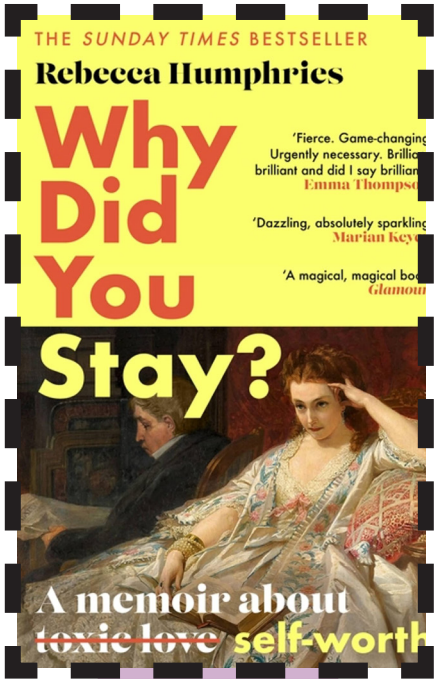
When paparazzi caught him kissing his *Strictly Come Dancing* partner, she realised the gaslighting she'd experienced during their time together was just that. Turning down offers from the papers to tell her side of the story, she instead posted a letter on Twitter sharing her experience of the last five years and offering advice for women who were experiencing exactly what she'd just escaped: a toxic, oppressive relationship. The tweet went viral and a stream of support poured in, but amongst the praise was one simple question with a far more complex answer – "If he was so bad, why did you stay?"

With chapters alternating between why she stayed and why she left, it shows how

skewed your perspective of a relationship can be when you're in it and how easily "lines can be crossed" if you don't keep a strong sense of self-worth. The two sides allow the reader to reflect on their own relationships. She also visits other formative relationships with men; going back to her adolescence and looking at her teenage years, telling us how those issues have affected her in adulthood.

Even coming from traumatic origins, she manages to create a humorous and creative read, stepping away from typical self-love stories and giving an insightful and important analysis of toxic relationships. Telling a powerful story, it's clear that Humphries only wants to help others and isn't afraid of the backlash she may face.

An age-old question given to those in toxic relationships, *Why Did You Stay?* takes that question and owns it.



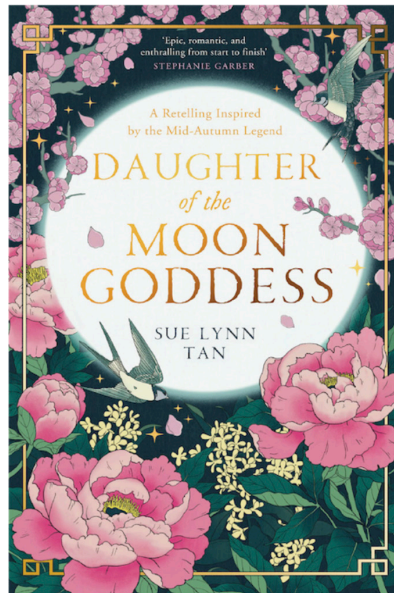
Dragons to Gods: Top Eight Books on Folklore and Mythology

BY SHANIAH SHIELDS, MICHELLE YE, LEANNE FRANCIS AND JIA WEN HO
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The realm of folklore and myth is shrouded with intrigue. Sometimes it's meant to impart a lesson, other times it's to extol a great deed. These ancient stories, told for generations, morph and take form in the books on our shelves. We want to celebrate the books inspired by legends, capturing our own culture and helping us relate to the cultures of people around us.

Daughter of the Moon Goddess by Sue Lynn Tan

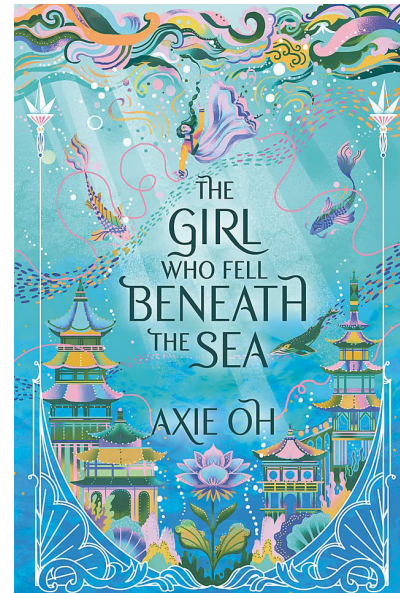
Sue Lynn Tan's *Daughter of the Moon Goddess* retells the Chinese myth of the moon goddess through the eyes of Xingyin as she travels through the Immortal Realm to save her family. Xingyin encounters friends, foes and everything in between as she tries to navigate a complex political landscape. Tan weaves a variety of myths into the narrative, effectively incorporating the expansive mythological universe of the moon goddess. Against these many backdrops, the reader is given a comprehensive tour of Chinese mythology, while also following Xingyin's



journey of self-discovery. The sequel, *Heart of the Sun Warrior*, will be available in November.

Gods of Jade and Shadow by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

The award-winning *Gods of Jade and Shadow* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia, set in the 1920s, explores Mexico's geographical and mythological landscapes. Casiopea Tun works as a servant in her wealthy grandfather's house but is swept up into a quest with the Mayan god of death, Hun-Kamé. Moreno-Garcia

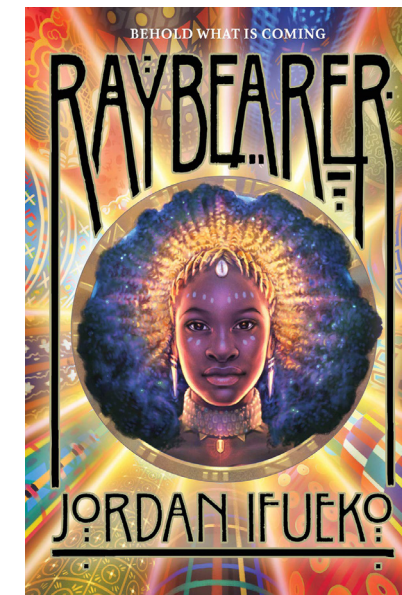


delves into myths, legends and history to create a sprawling narrative that moves from Mexico to Xibalba. Ultimately a journey of self-determination, Moreno-Garcia frames familial tensions and the need for independence within Mayan mythology and culture.

Children of Blood and Bone: Legacy of Orisha by Tomi Adeyemi

Winner of the Waterstones Children's Book Prize Older Fiction Award 2019, *Children of Blood and Bone* is the first part of an epic fantasy trilogy that is set in the mythical

African kingdom of Orisha. The book follows Zélie, the daughter of a great maji, on a journey to restore magic that was stolen from her people. Steeped in West African mythology and Yoruba culture, this is not one to be missed. The explosive second novel, *Children of Virtue and Vengeance* is also available.



The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea by Axie Oh

The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea is a captivating novel that blends mythology and folklore with magical fantasy. Mina's homeland has been devastated by deadly storms for generations and, to appease the Sea God, a maiden is thrown into the sea every year. Many believe that Shim Cheong, Mina's brother's beloved, is the legendary true bride, but Mina throws herself into

the water instead to save her brother. Shim Cheong is one of Korea's most famous legends and Oh fashions a vibrant spirit world whilst preserving the classic tale.

The Library of Fates by Aditi Khorana

Described as a "[romantic coming-of-age fantasy tale steeped in Indian folklore](#)," *The Library of Fates* is inspired by Indian and Macedonian history. Aditi Khorana introduces us to the peaceful kingdom of Shalingar, under siege by the ruthless Emperor Sikander. In an attempt to rescue her home, Princess Amrita enlists the help of the oracle Thala, who instructs her to find the fabled Library of All Things – a place which has the power to reverse their fates and restore her beloved kingdom.

A Thousand Beginnings and Endings by Various Authors

Edited by Elsie Chapman and Ellen Oh, Co-Founder of We Need Diverse Books, *A Thousand Beginnings and Endings* (2018) is a collection of short stories which features the work of sixteen bestselling authors. This series delights us with its [stories of star-crossed lovers and deities](#), reimagining South and East Asian mythology through a variety of genres.

Land of Sand and Song by Joyce Chua

Set in a harsh desert, this book sprouts with life and adventure. Seventeen-year-old Desert Rose is fleeing after her chieftain father is overthrown and captured. She journeys alone to the Oasis Capital to assassinate the person starting the rebellion, Emperor Zhao. Caught up in court politics with no real true allies, Desert Rose endures a series of trials – each more dangerous than the last. The book is inspired by Asian fantasy genres Wuxia and Xianxia, as well as the Chinese mythical obsession with the elixir of immortality. Part of a series, the second book to *Land of Sand and Song* is in the making.

Raybearer by Jordan Ifueko

Inspired by West African folklore and legends, Ifueko constructs a brand-new world in *Raybearer*. Trapped and trained from a young age to kill, Tarisai was born for one purpose, to kill the Crown Prince of Aritsar. The moment she turns sixteen, Tarisai enters a competition to become one of the eleven council members of the Crown Prince, so that she can get closer to her target. *Raybearer* is filled with rich world building, strong relationships and solid character development. The second exciting installation to the series, *Redemptor*, is also on the shelves.

Women Writing the World

BY OISIN HARRIS, TOBY SMOLLETT,
AND KATE WILLIAMS
.....

In celebration of August being Women in Translation Month, here are some of our favourite women writers from around the world.

Esther Kinsky — Germany

Author, literary translator and poet, Esther Kinsky hails from Germany. She has lived in Berlin and London and two of her novels, *River* and *Grove* have been translated into English (published by *Fitzcarraldo Editions* with *Rombo* on 5th October 2022). In *River*, she beautifully narrates one unnamed woman’s meandering walks along the Thames’ easternmost tributary, the river Lea. Kinsky uses these seemingly discombobulated walks around industrial zones, derelict wastelands and quaint canal paths almost like a sound mirror to bounce off reflections on decay, memory, migration and people’s relationship with places and non-places. Having drawn comparisons to WG Sebald, Iain Sinclair and Rebecca Solnit, her writing

is psycho-geographical, yet imbued heavily with people and their movements through discarded and liminal landscapes rarely explored in novels.

Olga Tokarczuk — Poland

Nobel prize winner and International Booker Prize winner, Olga Tokarczuk (published by *Fitzcarraldo Editions*) is a Polish author and trained psychiatrist who writes in what she’s termed a constellation-style that space-hops genres and topics. One of the key themes of her 2018 Booker International winning novel *Flights*, was humans’ relationship to themselves across space and time, whereas *Drive your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* remains staged in one place. Janina, the protagonist, feels a deep sense of injustice committed against animals. A reclusive former bridge engineer, ex-athlete now turned teacher, Janina is the trusted caretaker of various holiday residences in a remote Polish village. Her tale recounts the mysterious disappearance of her dogs, an event which sets in motion a spate of murders all involving the members of the local hunting club. A

whodunit of cosmological proportion ensues as Janina and her acolytes become engaged in the quest to unmask the killer or killers.

Balaraba Ramat Yakubu — Nigeria

Writing in Hausa, an Afroasiatic language spoken by the Hausa people in Nigeria, Balaraba Ramat Yakubu is one of the few Hausa writers to have had her work translated to English. She is a writer of *littattafan soyayya*, which roughly translates as “love literature,” a genre of writing mostly dominated by female writers and readers and which is often centred around the lives of women. Having been removed from education aged twelve for marriage, Balaraba Ramat Yakubu now fiercely defends her right to express her opinion and share it with others, and she often challenges women’s submissive role in her community through her novels. She is also a successful screenwriter and director in Kannywood, the Nigerian Hausa-language film industry.

Available in English
Translation — *Sin is a Puppy That Follows you Home*,

translated from the Hausa by Aliyu Kamal and published by *Blaft Publications* in 2012.

Camila Sosa Villada — Argentina

Camila Sosa Villada is best known for *Bad Girls*, which is based on her own experiences as a transgender woman working as a prostitute. The book won the *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* prize, an award for women writing in the Spanish language, in 2020. In addition to her writing career, she started out as a successful actress when she starred in an autobiographical play, *Carnes tolendas, retrato escénico de un travesti*, inspired by her own anonymous blog. She is a multi-hyphenated talent, and beautifully captures both the joys and the difficulties of her life as a transgender woman in Argentina in her work.

Available in English
Translation — *Bad Girls*, translated from the Spanish by Kit Mauda and published by *Other Press* in 2022.

Mieko Kawakami — Japan

Winner of the Akutagawa Prize in 2008 and the Tanizaki prize in 2013, Mieko Kawakami first became famous in the literary world for her novella *Chichi to ran*, which explored the

intolerable situation of working-class women in contemporary Japan, and specifically the agency of these women regarding their own bodies. *Chichi to ran* is an unapologetically anti-patriarchal work, and Mieko Kawakami’s other novels rotate around the question of power: those who have it, and especially those who don’t. The bullied children in *Hevun* struggle against the power of their bullies; the lost souls in *Subete mayonaka no koibito tachi* struggle against something less immediate, but are downtrodden nonetheless.

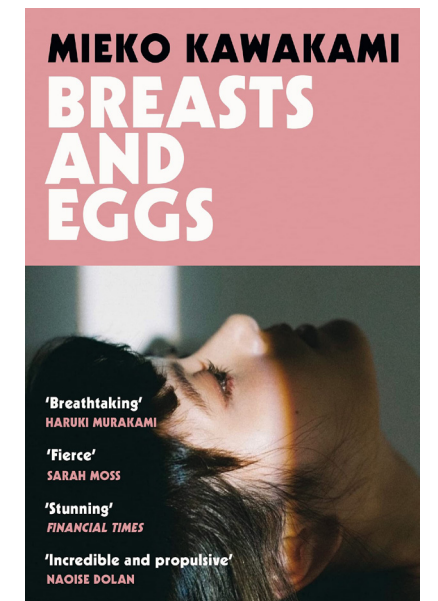
Available in English
translation — *Breasts and Eggs*, translated from the Japanese by Sam Bett and David Boyd and published by *Europa Editions* in 2020; *Heaven*, translated from the Japanese by Sam Bett and David Boyd and published by *Europa Editions* in 2021; *All the Lovers in the Night*, translated from the Japanese by Sam Bett and David Boyd and published by *Europa Editions* in 2022.

Nana Ekvimishvili — Georgia

Nana Ekvimishvili is an outlier in this list, for the fact that she may perhaps be more famous for her work outside of literature. A prolific film director, her most famous film may be

Grzeli nateli dgeebi, which won the C.I.C.A.E. Award at the 2013 Berlin International Film Festival. *Grzeli nateli dgeebi* follows two Georgian teenagers looking for their own freedom following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Nana Ekvimishvili’s only novel, *mskhlebis mindori*, has a similar premise — an eighteen-year-old Lela, abandoned by her parents and inadequately supported by those entrusted with caring for her, as the fall of the USSR provides the backdrop.

Available in English
translation — *The Pear Field*, translated by Elizabeth Heighway and published by *Peirene Press* in 2021.



Independent Bookshops

BY TEHZIB JANJUA AND SHUANGYUE ZHAO

In a time when books can be bought with a click of a mouse, how are independent bookshops still relevant?

Starting out as a writer, it may be difficult to convince large book chains to invest in displaying your work. Independent bookshops come in handy here. Many famous authors, such as Jessie Burton, built their brands through events and showcases in independent bookshops. For Burton, it was Bookseller Crow on the Hill, London, but for you, it might be that hidden gem of a bookshop in your own hometown.

Below we have curated our personal favourites in Manchester and London, but there are independent bookshops to be found across the country. We hope the following will help you to recognise the appeal of using and supporting independent bookshops when looking for locations to highlight new publications.

Tehzib’s Pick:
Manchester Book Buyers (1 Church St, Manchester, M4 1PN)

Located just outside the bustling Manchester Arndale, you can find a hidden market stall full of bookish treasures.

Photo Credit: Nicelocal.co.uk



With prices starting as low as 50p, this independent bookshop is perfect for anyone looking to adventure into a new genre, shopping on a budget, trying to read sustainably or wanting to add to their ever-growing home libraries.

At Manchester Book Buyers, you can find an extensive array of books covering most imaginable genres. From classics like Harper Lee to modern bestsellers such as James Patterson, you are sure to find something to read that suits your bookish tastes.

Manchester Book Buyers will have you visiting with its promises of not just second-hand but also rare books that you might struggle to find elsewhere. Stocking hard-to-find books such as antique editions of classics and vast numbers of maps, Manchester Book Buyers is a hidden gem waiting to be discovered.

Open 12:00–4:00 p.m. from Thursdays to Saturdays, this independent bookshop feels straight out of a bygone era. Sitting next to a fruit and vegetable stall, Manchester Book Buyers is sure to make you feel as though you have left the hustle and bustle of Manchester Arndale behind and entered a close-knit community full of culture and diversity.

Unlike other independent bookshops, Manchester Book Buyers exceeds its titular location, Church Street Market, consisting of a small walk-in stall that winds in a low to high price order. Barely fitting more than five customers at a time, book buyers are given time and solitude, much like what we might expect from perusing a library. This allows the buyers to fully experience the intimacy and joy of book buying whilst letting them make the most conscious book purchases.

Shuangyue’s Pick:
BookBar (166 Blackstock Rd, London, N5 1HA)

While exploring the streets of North London, you won’t want to miss this lovely bookstore – tables and chairs of turquoise colour sit at the door, warm light shines through bright floor-to-ceiling windows and music and cheerful voices of conversation and laughter always come from inside.

When I first walked into BookBar, I was excited by the unique idea of combining a bookshop and a bar which lets people enjoy a cup of coffee or a glass of wine while browsing beautiful books. Later, I found that there are more surprises about BookBar.

Unlike the more obvious buyer-seller relationship in large chain bookshops, people can enter this shop at any time to have a cordial and relaxed conversation with the owner. The staff is always welcoming and willing to provide information about recent books and advice on the publishing industry.

BookBar also conducts various events including interviews, discussions and book signings with authors, BookClub series activities and bookshop parties with bangers and cocktails supplied. Meanwhile, you may find an ideal place for

studying or working quietly in BookBar’s small but cosy cellar. BookBar thus has been offering support for new writers and their potential works and enriching people’s cultural as well as social life in the city.

The publicity work of BookBar is also impressive. There are not only new book recommendations and shop activity displays but also interactions with the customers. On its Instagram account, many customers have taken the initiative to share their photos of reading books in the shop or travelling around with its originally designed canvas bags. Just over a year after its opening, BookBar has attracted a large number of residents to become its fans, which shows the originality and vitality of contemporary independent bookshops.

BookBar is open from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. from Wednesdays to Saturdays and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Sundays.

Don’t forget to post your independent bookshop findings online and to at (@) or hashtag (#) the author. This is a great way to celebrate a less mainstream book buying experience and enjoy reduced book prices whilst still supporting the author. You can also consider doing the same for the shop itself as it is through recommendations and awareness that we can continue to maintain and support these much-loved independent businesses.

Photo Credit: [@bookbaruk](#) on Instagram



Back to School: Titles for the School Curriculum

BY LAUREN GANTT, ROSIE PINDER AND EMMA ROGERS

Great Expectations, Romeo and Juliet, An Inspector Calls – the chances are at least one of these texts was part of your English Literature curriculum at school. The 2015 Government guidelines for GCSE state that students must study one Shakespearean text, a selection of poetry since 1789, a 19th century novel and a British play or novel written after 1914. It is then up to the exam boards to choose texts based on these guidelines.

This results in a very narrow pool of texts making it to the classrooms, especially because the new guidelines place greater emphasis on British texts, reducing the possibility of students learning about world literature. Schools themselves are also often reluctant to change their set texts due to issues with funding and the fact that there are a lot more resources available for the common canonical titles. As a result, there is a distinct lack of both diversity and variety within the curriculum.

In fact, last year, Penguin Random House reported that while 34.4% of students in the UK are people of colour, only 0.7% of students study a book by an author of colour at GCSE. Research from the “End Sexism in Schools” campaign team also found that 77% of schools teach only one or no texts by female authors and 99% of the plays taught are by male writers. These statistics clearly illustrate that something needs to change.

There is some progress being made with projects like Penguin’s Lit in Colour Scheme which partners with charities to help provide schools with the funding and resources to diversify their curricula. However, much more needs to be done to ensure that the curriculum is both decolonised and modernised so that the texts studied are not only more representative of all students but also more interesting to read and learn about.

Along those lines, here are some of our top picks for the titles we would love to see taught in schools this academic year:

I Am Malala by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb

The remarkable true story of the life of Malala Yousafzai. Raised in Pakistan, Malala was a fierce advocate for girls’ right to education which placed her as an enemy of the terrorists. In 2012, she was shot on her way home from school and miraculously survived. Now a graduate of the University of Oxford and the youngest person to win a Nobel Peace Prize, Malala is an inspiration to all and an international symbol of peaceful activism.

The Handmaid’s Tale by Margaret Atwood

A chilling dystopian in an alternate United States under religious totalitarian rule. *The Handmaid’s Tale* follows Offred, a woman who has only one function – to breed. If she refuses to submit, she will be executed. A valuable read and a critique on society, power and all that civilisation could be.

Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi

Persepolis is a graphic novel following the young Marjane Satrapi, a girl growing up in Tehran, Iraq, during an unstable time in history. The overthrow of the Shah regime, the Islamic Revolution and the war with Iraq are shown through the lens of childhood, adding a new perspective of the time.

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

First published in 1952, *Invisible Man* is widely regarded as one of the greatest works of African-American Literature. Ellison’s protagonist lives in a surreal America where he is literally invisible but this invisibility speaks directly to the real experiences of the Black Americans who were shunned and ignored by a racist society. It is a text that explores racism and identity through a brilliantly defiant and thought-provoking lens.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

Set in Afghanistan and spanning from the early 1960s to the early 2000s, this is a moving book which follows two women of separate generations – Mariam and, later, Laila. They fight to find love and

safety against all odds, including in the midst of a war.

Girl, Woman, Other by Bernardine Evaristo

A multiple award-winning book putting Britain in a new light. Following twelve characters, each on a personal journey, *Girl, Woman, Other* is about race, identity, womanhood and humanity in stories not yet explored. Each chapter follows the life and struggles of a different character before all their stories intersect in the final pages.

Emilia by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm

Having premiered in 2018, *Emilia* is a play inspired by the life and works of Emilia Bassano, a 17th century feminist poet who many speculate was the “Dark Lady” in William Shakespeare’s sonnets. This is a witty, passionate play about history and female erasure that also has its roots firmly in the present.

These are just some of our picks we would love to see incorporated into the curriculum. But the most important thing is that it keeps evolving so that all students feel connected to the books, plays and poetry that they are taught at school.

Classic Summer Titles

BY MEGAN POWELL, HANNAH SPRUCE AND MICHAEL CALDER

In an effort to continue the summer theme and make this glorious weather last even longer, the classics team have decided to highlight some classic summer titles. These could be summer themed, set in the season, or a relevant title. Here are our top three that fit the mould and which we hope will continue to inspire the sun. A common theme that the team encountered when analysing which summer text to use was that of setting. It appears that a lot of British summer classics are typically set in the countryside, most notably Yorkshire. This county consistently proves to be of great importance and inspiration amongst many English classic writers and it is easy to understand why with the idyllic descriptions of landscape. Another common depiction in classic literature is often the beautiful landscapes of Italy. Again, it is understandable where the writers gain such apt inspiration. These novels are perfect escapism and will have you enjoying the summer for longer.

The Beautiful Summer by Cesare Pavese

Originally written and published by Cesare Pavese during 1949, and then translated into English during 1955, *The Beautiful Summer* (1949) was amongst an array of literary works created by the renowned Italian author. Comprising three novellas when first written, titled *La tenda*, written in 1940, *Il diavolo sulle colline* (1948) and *Tra donne sole* (1949), the collection earned the author his first and only award, the Strega Prize, shortly before his death.

Born in the City of Santo Stefano Belbo, within the Province of Cuneo, Cesare Pavese often returned to his roots within artistic endeavours, incorporating the areas that communicated the greatest beauty during his childhood. This outing does not digress from that notion, as *The Beautiful Summer* depicts the corruptive nature and influence of selecting the wrong peerage.

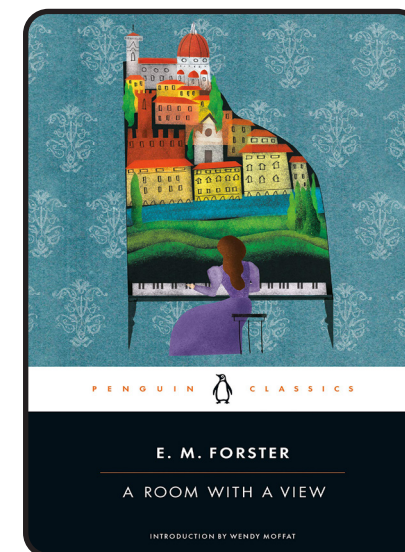
The young protagonist, Ginia, seeks excitement, diversity and change, as her existence within rural Italy becomes mundane; however, she questions the alignment of her character with another lifestyle. Yet, when she comes across artistic model Amelia and discovers the great promiscuity that can accompany a chosen lifestyle, Ginia finds herself rapidly descending into turmoil, moral uncertainty, and, in some essence, freedom.

Pavese poses an excellent, realistic balancing act which mirrors the hitches associated with personal development and great change – layered anxiety, excitement, innocence and doubt.

A Month in the Country by J.L. Carr

First published in 1980, J.L. Carr's *A Month in the Country* is a poetical novel set during the beautiful Yorkshire summertime. This novel is perfectly set

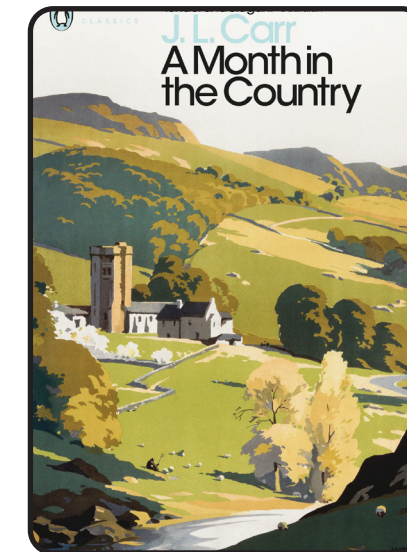
in an idyllic countryside that follows two First World War veterans. Tom Birkin is hired to restore a mural over the summertime in a rural church, where he is able to reflect on the emotional turmoil of the war. Escaping to Yorkshire for solace, Birkin uses his therapeutic work and discovers there is more meaning to the mural than what the church first conceived. He uncovers an amazing history and also meets Charles Moon, who was employed by the church to find a grave. He too is a war veteran and allows for some of Carr's own experiences to be depicted in this deeply moving novel. The novel beautifully depicts the Yorkshire landscape, while following the emotional journey of the veterans. Through their summer jobs, Carr is able to present the post war challenges and healing summer. *A Month in the Country* was nominated



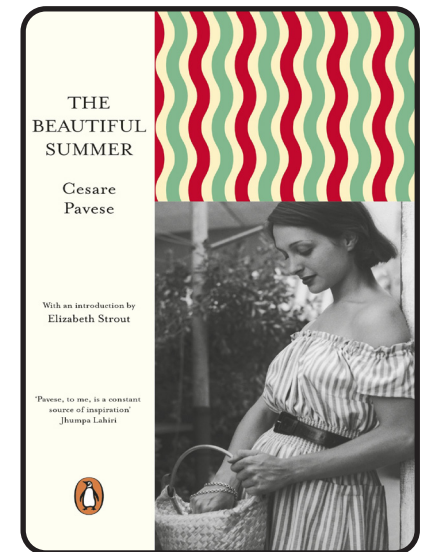
for the Booker Prize and was successfully adapted for the screen in 1987, starring Colin Firth and Kenneth Branagh.

A Room with a View by E.M. Forster

E.M. Forster's *A Room with a View* is the perfect classic as we approach the end of summer as it is a transitory novel which explores the changing society of the early 1900s. The protagonist Lucy Honeychurch emerges as a young upper-class woman who we first meet in Italy, where she is touring with her chaperone in pursuit of a form of independence and expanded education. It is a novel of halves in terms of the locations of Italy and England but also of new and old expectations. For Lucy, the summer in Italy offers unfamiliar experiences and feelings whereas England promises a respectable engagement to the pompous



Cecil Vyse. However, a connection with the unassuming George Emerson whilst in Italy threatens the stability of the life expected for her in England. Written in 1908, Forster critiques and mocks the rigidity of English society and its ingrained class systems which continued to be challenged and dismantled through the first half of the 20th century. This novel is a quick and accessible classic which explores romance, class and murder in under 300 pages. The 1985 film adaptation with Helena Bonham Carter in the lead role is a faithful accompaniment to your reading as it also expands on and utilises features from Forster's drafting of the novel.



Back to School: Our Top Throwback Picks

BY JULIETTE TULLOCH, BECCY FISH AND LUCY ROBERTS

As the back to school season begins once more, the cover evaluation team couldn't help but look back at some of the iconic books that influenced us the most when we were in school. We've chosen our top picks that are based in school settings with memorable cover designs.

Emily Windsnap, 8–12 years

Liz Kessler's fantasy series follows thirteen-year-old Emily Windsnap as she navigates life after finding out she is a half-mermaid. Emily's trouble begins with her swimming lessons, school bullies and then spans her adventures discovering monsters and the King of the Sea. Sarah Gibb designed the original 2001 cover with its detailed watercolour style and gold embossing. Gibb has gone on to illustrate many well-known children's books, including *The Tiara Club* series and several fairy-tale adaptations. This year a fully illustrated version of the series was released, illustrated by Joanie Stone, and it's clear that the more

recent cover designs seek to employ a younger age group than before.

Percy Jackson & The Olympians, 9+ years

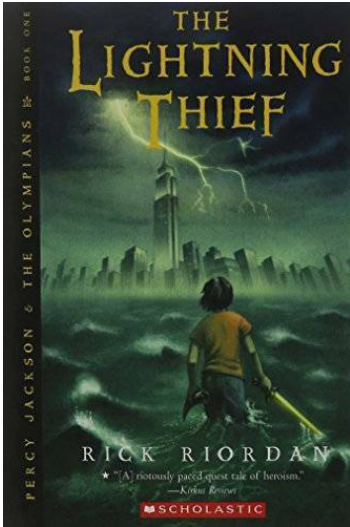
What child didn't grow up without an obsession for all things Greek mythology and found Rick Riordan's stories? Originally published in 2005 with *The Lightning Thief*, it went on to win numerous awards and expanded into a pentalogy. It also went on to produce two sequels, film adaptations and a highly anticipated tv series set for a 2024 release. The series follows demi-god Percy as he navigates life from American high school to Camp Half-Blood, fighting against the Titans who seek to rise once more. The original cover design was courtesy of [John Rocco](#) and features Percy's heroic battles across the world that becomes darker in tone as the series matures.

Wonder, 8–12 years

R.J. Palacio's debut novel *Wonder* highlights Auggie Pullman's exploration of

school after being sheltered by his mother as she previously home-schooled him. However, because Auggie has Treacher Collins syndrome and has endured many facial surgeries, his face is disfigured and he encounters the challenges of his classmate's opinions. But this does not stop him from being intelligent and funny whilst navigating the journey of making friends with Jack.

The minimalist cover design illustrates our protagonist Auggie, with the only facial feature present being his eye, highlighted with the title above. This style suggests that the plot revolves around the character's appearance and younger age with the hand-drawn design. The typography chosen is



whimsical and decorative to match the connotations of the title.

Diary of a Wimpy Kid, 8–12 years

No schoolbook throwback article would be complete without the mention of the iconic *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series. With the first instalment in 2007, the series has continued to book seventeen, *Diper Överlöde*, set to release in October 2022. The first volume depicts Greg Heffley's first year at middle school where his ambition is to climb up the social food chain and drag his bumbling friend Rowley along with him, which will become their ultimate friendship test. Each issue of the *Wimpy Kid* series has a bold statement colour as the diary background but is completed with Heffley's illustrative style in both typography and cartoon image depicting himself. These covers have become such a statement in children's books with their instantly recognisable style.

Little Women, 10+ years

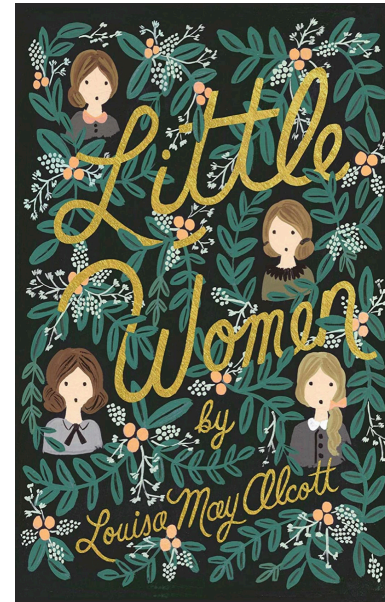
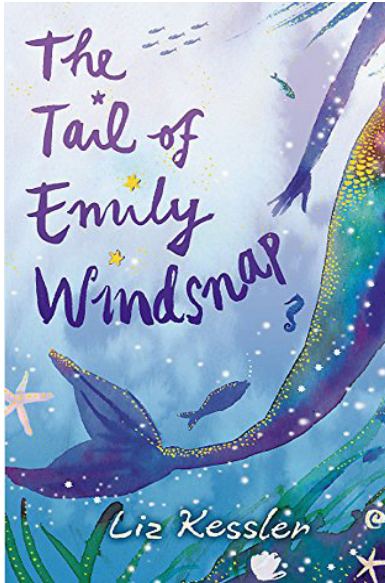
Little Women, written by Louisa May Alcott, occupies a special place on many young readers' bookshelves. The book works perfectly as an early introduction to classic novels for young readers, and a nostalgic re-read for everyone else. Following the lives of four

devoted sisters, this coming-of-age story lives through the Civil War, family struggles, and romantic tension. Each sister is unique, yet they hold the strongest bonds with one another. This beautiful cover depicts the four sisters, Jo, Beth, Meg, and Amy, surrounded by flowers and foliage. While the cover holds the sisters separate, the leaves and stems intertwine them together, supporting the family tie. The simple illustration of the girls still defines each of their styles and personalities, allowing readers to see the girls come to life throughout the book.

The Daring Escape of Beatrice and Peabody, 11–15 years

Kimberly Newton Fusco's *The Daring Escape of Beatrice and Peabody* depicts the epic journey of Beatrice, an orphaned circus member, as she navigates the difficulties of looking different in comparison to her peers, and being left behind by a loved one. Finding companionship in scruffy pup Peabody, the pair make their daring escape from the travelling carnival to find a life of their own. The cover design contains a detailed illustration of Beatrice and Peabody sitting on a pastel loveseat surrounded by beautiful pink flowers and sage leaves. The cover denotes the beauty of the lives held within, while the deep red colour of the title forebodes that the

characters featured inside may not have an easy escape ahead of them. As Beatrice and Peabody look at one another on the cover, it depicts the comfort they find in each other as they make their way into the world.



Job Opportunities

BY SHERIDAN PENA, LEAH BIRD AND TASNEEM HAFIZ

Editorial Intern at Trotman Indigo Publishing Ltd.

Closing Date: 2 September 2022

Salary: £19,760

Location: Bath

An internship opportunity has arisen at Trotman Publishing. The occupation term spans from October 2022 until the end of January 2023.

The main responsibility of the Editorial Intern will be to update one of Trotman's annual education titles, HEAP 2024: University Degree Course Offers. As HEAP 2024 is one of the bestselling guides to entrance requirements for UK degree courses, the ideal candidate will showcase an incredible eye for detail and accuracy. The Editorial Intern will work closely with the HEAP 2024 author and others on the editorial department.

Trotman Publishing is looking for a recent graduate with experience in text editing and rewriting. You will need to showcase good organisational skills,

effective time management, an excellent comprehension of written English and an interest in educational publishing. The ability to be proactive in terms of research and communicating efficiently is also desired.

For more information and to apply, click [here](#).



Audio Publishing Assistant at Pan Macmillan

Closing Date: 4 September 2022

Salary: £24,000

Location: Farringdon, London

If you are interested in audiobooks, check out this Audio Publishing Assistant position at Pan Macmillan.

Enthusiasm for the audio side of publishing is greatly appreciated in this role along with experience in an office environment. You will need

to demonstrate a willingness to learn the in-house database systems, a familiarity with Microsoft Office systems and a keenness to build relationships with the wider teams.

A typical day as the Audio Publishing Assistant will involve creating audio assets for marketing, creating and checking metadata on in-house systems, managing the team's schedules, organising recording documents, sending scripts off to outside associates and supporting the Publishing Director with casting audiobooks.

For more information and to apply, click [here](#).



Rights Assistant at Nosy Crow

Closing Date: 4 September 2022

Salary: £20,000 - £25,000

Location: London

A vacancy has recently opened up in the rights department at Nosy Crow. This independent children's

publishing company is looking to add an individual with strong communication skills to their dynamic team.

Responsibilities of the role include but are not limited to: gathering feedback from the international publishers on a daily basis, researching new markets and publishers, organising trip arrangements, managing database systems using Biblio and Microsoft Excel and supporting the rights team with administrative tasks.

The ideal candidate will showcase the following characteristics – excellent written and spoken English comprehension, competency in a language other than English (preference towards Korean, Japanese and Portuguese), the ability to multitask, self-motivated, great communication skills and strong relationship-building abilities. For more information and to apply, click [here](#).



Part-Time Audio Assistant at Nosy Crow

Closing Date: 4 September 2022

Salary: £9,880

Location: London

Nosy Crow is looking to expand their Audio team and has recently created this part-time Audio Assistant role. Working 3 days a week, this position is perfect for someone looking to take their first steps into the publishing world.

The Audio Assistant will work with the Contracts and Audio Manager and liaise with other internal teams. The key duties within this job involve scheduling audiobook recordings, sending scripts off to studios and actors, developing relationships with stakeholders, acquiring recording information and material and providing administrative support.

The successful applicant will need to be proficient in Microsoft Office, have prior office experience, possess an eye for detail, be able to work with confidential information, show excellent organisation skills and be a team player. Familiarity with editing software and an understanding of royalty-free music is desired but not essential. For more information and to apply, click [here](#).

Rights Assistant,

Adult Trade at Bonnier Books UK

Closing Date: 7 September 2022

Salary: £23,000 - £25,000

Location: Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square, London (Flexible remote working up to 3 days per week)

Bonnier Books UK is recruiting a Rights Assistant to join their team. This position reports to the Senior Rights Manager of the Adult Trade division and will work across all Adult Trade imprints.

The ideal candidate will need to be highly organised and display a proactive nature suitable for selling rights to existing and potential partners. Bonnier Books UK is looking for an individual with administrative experience, strong communication skills and an eye for detail. Language skills and familiarity with Biblio and Adobe InDesign are preferred but not essential.

For this role, you will be asked to prepare and update rights guides for book fairs and foreign visits, draw up sub-license contracts, help with the selling of subsidiary rights, coordinate book fair schedules, manage permissions requests and domestic rights and oversee the monthly invoicing and royalty payments. For more information and to apply, click [here](#).



Spotlight: 3Times Rebel Press

BY LILY WEBBER, CHARLOTTE BONNER AND ELLA DAVIES

We spoke to Bibiana Mas, the founder of [3 Times Rebel Press](#), a publishing house dedicated to publishing titles written by female authors who speak minority languages.

For people who've never heard of 3 Times Rebel Press, how would you describe yourself, and how your name and mission statement came to be?

I am Bibiana, Catalan by birth and Scottish by adoption. I'm a very stubborn woman who has decided to put all the anger and frustration (and skills!) into a project where I can give a voice to other women, a voice in the midst of a world which often makes us invisible because we cannot be mothers, daughters, carers, lovers, workers, entrepreneurs, creators, artists —a long etcetera— without being penalised or judged for our choices.

3TR has three pillars. One is that I'm only going to publish women; I'm only going to publish books in minority languages; the third is about giving back to the community. At the end of the year when we do the balance sheets, I want to give part

of our benefits to a charity that supports women. We are also fair traders — and pay everyone involved fairly."

3 Times Rebel has a very strong mission statement — publishing only women writers and only those who speak minority languages, "spreading voices and topics silenced by what is dominant." Do you think fiction has the power to change the world?

Through fiction it is easier to connect with difficult emotions, with situations that one would never think to encounter or in which one would easily judge oneself. Fictional stories give us this safe space to feel the full whirlwind of emotions without feeling judged and without judging another

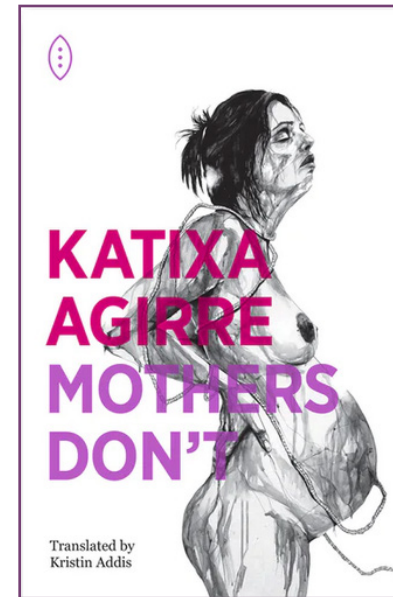
person. This exercise of empathy allows us to reflect in a freer way, without pressure of what the other might think. And for me, this is the first step to create a safe space for dialogue.

How do you balance commissioning titles which help change the canon, with keeping a business afloat and appealing to a commercial-enough audience?

That's a very difficult question to answer. In general it's not easy to keep a publishing house afloat. Even more so when it comes to translated fiction. My strategy is trying to maintain a balance between publishing voices that need to be heard, and having the assurance that these voices are already recognised in their places of origin. This



3TimesRebel
Women writers only.
Minority languages.
Fair trade.



gives me a very high level of peace of mind because I already know that the books are a very good product. It's the only way I have right now to minimise the risk a little bit.

In the globalised context where English is so often a default language, why is it important to keep publishing translations of minority languages?

It cannot be an option that the Anglo-Saxon world is missing out on so much good literature, so many writers who deserve to be read. The fact that only 3–5% of books are ever translated into other languages makes it even more imperative: we must insist and help the reader to see that beyond English writers there is a whole universe to discover. If someone like me that comes from a minority language

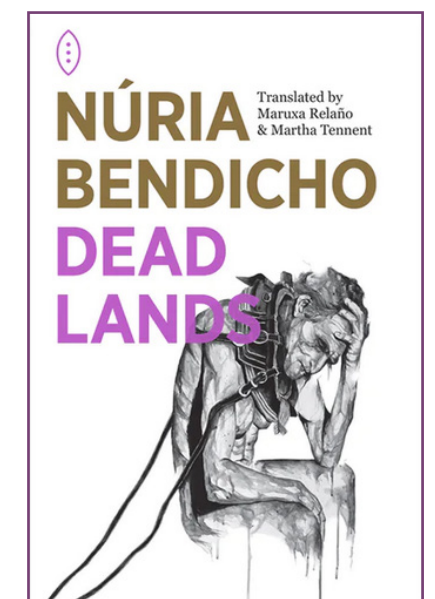
doesn't prioritise this, who will do it? Who will give them the opportunity to be read?

What are some of the biggest challenges in translating from a minority language into English?

As publishers of fiction in translation, one of the biggest fears we have is committing to a book when we don't really know if it is as we imagined it to be. Or even, if it will fit into our own publishing imprint. Unfortunately, we don't have the ability to read all the languages of this world (by the way, this is the superpower I would most like to have!). So we must place our trust and some of our judgement in the hands of readers who can read all these languages. We jump into the deep end by reading only part of the book, because translating it all in full costs a lot of money: the truth is that most of the independent publishers can only afford to translate certain chapters before paying for the whole of it. Unfortunately, after deciding to translate and publish the book, long sleepless nights begin. Endless sleepless nights packed with nightmares haunt us until the day we have the complete translated manuscript in our hands and, finally! We can see for ourselves that indeed, our instinct has not betrayed us.

Are there any other exciting upcoming projects or titles that you can talk about with us?

In October, *The Carnivorous Plant* by Andrea Mayo: a story of abuse between two women, a very easy book to read, because it is written like a desperate diary, but very difficult to digest. Then we will have *I'll Do Anything You Want* by the Catalan Iolanda Batalle, which tells us a story of the vital and sexual liberation of a forty-year-old woman, a story of freedom through submission. An uncomfortable story about high-class prostitution. Then, I will publish one of the most beautiful voices of Galicia, Berta Davila, with the book *The Dear Ones*, a story that reflects on the bonds through a difficult decision such as choosing not to be a mother again.



Campaign Spotlight:

Honey & Spice

BY CAITLIN DAVIES, DANIELLE HERNANDEZ AND GEORGIA REES

Sunday Times bestselling author Bolu Babalola returns with her second novel *Honey & Spice*, which has been firmly established as a summer-must read. Her anthology *Love in Colour* (2020) featured on BBC2's *Between the Covers*, was a bestselling debut weaving folktales, romance and mythology, and was a roaring success. It's fair to say that *Honey & Spice* has captured our hearts again, featuring in bookshop windows across the UK and appearing on many recommendation lists.

Honey & Spice follows student radio show host Kiki Banjo, who is on a mission to offer solid relationship advice and guidance to the students at Whitewell University. However, meeting "The Wasteman of Whitewell," Malakai Korede, complicates Kiki's own feelings and personal principles, and risks going against the advice she ardently shares with the women at Whitewell. Will she give him a second chance?

Branded as the romance of the decade, the sizzling new summer release *Honey & Spice* has been adding some

joyful colour to our bookshop windows this month. Headline Publishing Group seem to have mirrored the modern love story contained within the pages in an equally fun and colourful launch campaign.

The marketing journey for *Honey & Spice* started back in February of this year, when the first wave of proof copies were sent out to a selected list of lucky readers. The coveted box was full of goodies alongside the book, including some sweet plantain chips to snack on while reading, a scrunchie by a small business on etsy and a playlist. As music is such a huge part of the story, the author curated a special playlist to complement the love story and provide a more interactive musical experience for readers to immerse themselves in as they read.

Following the distribution of the arc copies, the marketing team continued to stir buzz with an official cover reveal on Bolu's Instagram. Designed by illustrator [@Jovilee_Illustrate](#) the cover revolves around a spicy

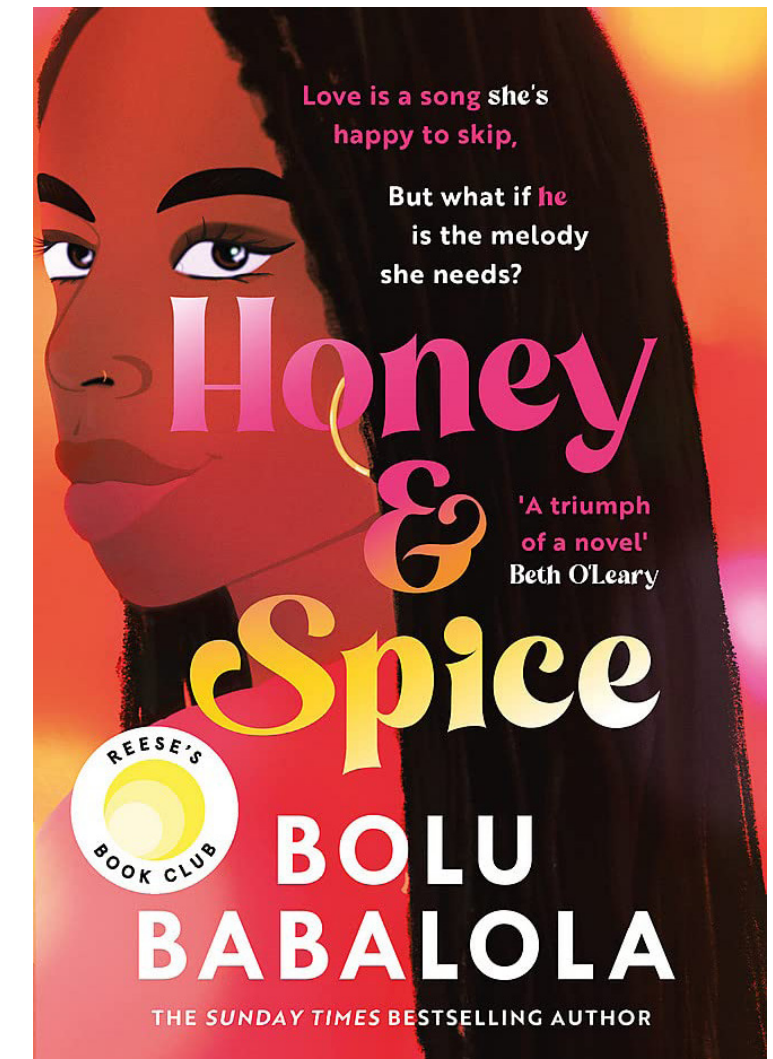
summer palette of bright pink and orange which illuminates the background and title in a gradient pattern. Like the narrative itself, the cover also features a woman of colour at the centre, with her love interest on the back – "having her back" as Bolu put it. And with a stunning jacket like that, why not show it off as much as you can! It wasn't long before the vibrant design was all over social media in community hashtags, graphics and teaser snippets. Continuing to utilise the bestselling authors personal account to launch the latest rom-com, Headline collaborated with Bolu to incorporate some pivotal quotes from the book in a series of instagraphics. Every day for a week in June, Bolu would share a special moment from her novel along with some song lyrics that encapsulate the feeling of that moment, creating even more anticipation for the upcoming publication day.

This vibrant whirlwind of social media marketing clearly sparked a lot of interest from readers and bookstagrammers, including Reese Witherspoon's

influential book club account where Bolu's latest novel has been celebrated as the July pick.

Being selected for Reese's Bookclub guarantees a multiplication in sales, and the team behind the bookclub really make the effort to heavily market their picks. Past picks include Delia Owens' *Where the Crawdads Sing*, Kiley Reid's *Such A Fun Age*, and Taylor Jenkins Reid's *Daisy Jones And The Six*, all of which have seen much success. The team first posted about *Honey & Spice* on their Instagram on the 5 July, coinciding with release day, and have since posted consistently throughout the month of July, inviting Bolu onto the channel to give small readings and take part in a virtual book club in conversation with Tia Williams, the author of *Seven Days In June*. Having such a prolific celebrity and book club getting behind and posting about the book, has really helped *Honey & Spice* to take up space in the oversaturated bookstagram market.

Back in the UK, pioneering literary social hub, BookBar, booked Bolu for a cocktail-fuelled live reading and author event. Bolu sat down with some friends to discuss romance, writing, and what they could look forward to in *Honey & Spice*. Clips of these mini sessions were then uploaded onto Bolu's Instagram page to extend the conversation



to her dedicated online fanbase. Bolu and Caleb Azumah Nelson, award-winning author of *Open Water*, sat down to discuss men, masculinity, and tenderness, while *Vogue* sex and dating columnist, Annie Lord, discussed healing, heartbreak, and finding your own identity in relationships. Bolu's Instagram account is a joy to scroll through and the marketing campaign behind *Honey & Spice* is a stellar example of the beauty of a curated marketing strategy.

Every choice made, from the colour palette to the character playlists, to the intimate events, have shown us a tantalising snapshot of what is in store.

It's aesthetically pleasing and engaging campaign has kept *Honey & Spice* on our radar for quite some time. Along with an exciting event schedule and cohesive social media campaign, this novel is certainly one to look out for this summer.

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Fantasy and Sci-Fi Literature

BY EMMA HOLBROOK, BECCA BINNIE AND EMILY MYHILL

Fantasy and science fiction genres of literature are hugely popular, both allow for limitless creativity and because these genres are in high demand, it is important for all communities, including the LGBTQ+, to be included and celebrated in the stories.

***The Mask of Mirrors* by M. A. Carrick**

Up first, we have the beautiful, engrossing and breath-taking first instalment in the *Rook & Rose* trilogy, *The Mask of Mirrors* by M. A. Carrick. For those of you unfamiliar with this amazing dark-fantasy novel, the novel follows the story of Ren, a skilled con-artist, who has come to the dazzling city of Nadežra with the goal of breaking into one of the novel houses to steal enough riches for her to secure her sister's future. But when it all goes horribly wrong and she finds herself trapped in the House Traementis, she realises she's entered into a darker, crueller world than she could have ever imagined, where the aristocrats are driven insane by their poisonous feuds. Oh! The drama is more than enough to satisfy those

looking for twists, turns and bumps throughout its 700 pages!

What I love so much about this novel is the inclusivity of LGBTQ+ characters but also the refusal to confine their characters to stereotypes. In the novel, there are four confirmed LGBTQ+; Vargo, one of the main protagonists, is bisexual aromantic, Giuna, a minor protagonist, is bisexual and finally, one lesbian and one transgender side character. There is also a mix of different LGBTQ+ relationships within the book, this includes Vargo's sexual but unromantic relationship, a romantic cis-female/trans-male relationship) and a romantic cis-female/cis-female relationship.

If you're looking for a new dark fantasy that hooks you from the first page, this is the book for you!

***The Priory of The Orange Tree* by Samantha Shannon**

Next up, we have *The Priory of The Orange Tree* by Samantha Shannon, a gorgeously intricate fantasy

novel published in 2019. It follows four narrators across 848 pages, within the beautifully complex and well-developed world of Inys; a world on the brink of war between the East, worshipers of dragons, and the West, where they are fervidly feared. Packed full of dragons, pirates, strong female protagonists, secret orders, and mysterious myths, this is an unmissable read for any high fantasy fans!

The Priory of The Orange Tree stands amongst the greatest fantasy books of all time with a set of very impressive comparisons; frequently quoted as a "feminist successor to *Lord of The Rings*," being likened to the second bestselling fantasy book series of all-time is incredibly high praise! Also commonly referred to as "*Game of Thrones* with lesbians," it has huge boots to fill and does so with ease.

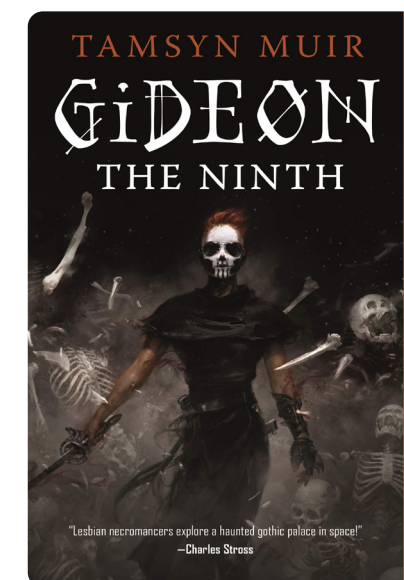
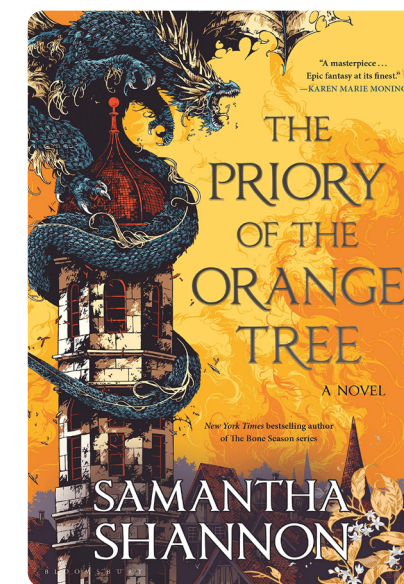
A sapphic romantic sub-plot is woven throughout the book, between two main characters, Ead and Sabran. An immensely slow build, it is simultaneously beautiful and heart-wrenching. Niclays is also queer, although no specific sexualities are

specified for any characters, same-sex attraction is a large part of their stories. Not only great queer representation, strong female friendships are also a pivotal part of the story and as something not often seen in high fantasy, it's very refreshing to read. Your next epic high fantasy novel awaits, and with a prequel in the works, there isn't a better time to pick it up!

***The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. Le Guin**

Published in 1969 the science fiction novel *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. Le Guin follows the character Genly Ai. Ai is from the planet Terra and he's been sent to Gethen to convince them to join a confederation of planets called Ekumen. It is clear when Genly gets to Gethen that there is much about this planet's culture he does not understand.

Le Guin utilises the creativity of the sci-fi genre to confront the constructed gender binary of the contemporary world. The inhabitants of Gethen can choose and change their gender, by creating a planet which separates gender and sexuality and embraces fluidity and free will, Le Guin rejects restrictive gender and sexuality norms.



This queer sci-fi novel highlights the importance of embracing difference and respecting others.

***Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir**

Next a thrilling sci-fi novel published in 2019, *Gideon the Ninth*. The first book in *The Locked Tomb* series by Tamsyn Muir. The story follows Gideon as she packs her sword, shoes and dirty magazines to escape a life of servitude. Chaos descends as the Emperor hosts a lethal trial of wits and skill and Harrowhark Nonagesimus is called into action. The book depicts a fiery relationship between dynamic characters Harrow and Gideon as this heart racing whirlwind unfolds.

Creating an epic solar system of sword play, necromancers and cut-throat politics Muir has given life to an LGBTQ+ inclusive and exhilarating world. Good news, the third instalment in the series is set to be released September this year!

Inclusive fantasy and sci-fi literature is important and these books are compelling and deserving of a place on every bookshelf!

The Theakston's Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year Award

By Paridhi Badgotri and Gabriella Sotiriou

The Theakston's Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year Award, which celebrates its eighteenth year in 2022, focuses on originality, excellence and the best crime fiction from British and Irish authors. This year's shortlist for the award, detailed below, included some of the best chilling crime fiction of the year.

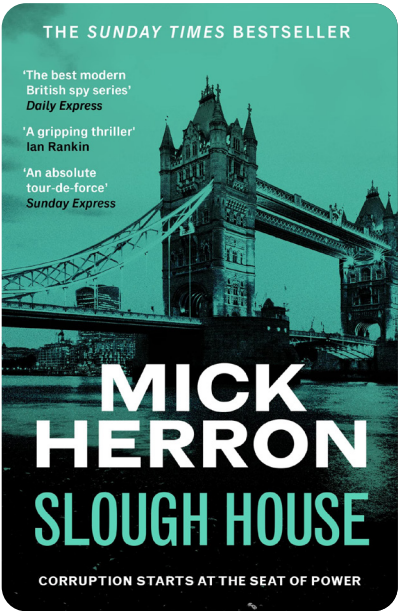
It included *The Night Hawks* by Elle Griffiths, which is the fourteenth installment of Griffiths' *Ruth Galloway* series. Galloway, a forensic archeologist from Norfolk, is called to action when a body is discovered buried in a beach by a group of metal detectorists. Alongside the body is a hoard of Bronze Age treasure. Though Ruth is more interested in the treasure than the body, she dives into the mystery and becomes determined to find answers. The discovery sparks a series of murders that are supposedly linked to sightings of the local legend of a ghostly dog whose appearance usually leads to death. This is Griffiths' fifth feature on the shortlist for the award.



Also just missing out on the winning spot was *Daughters of Night* by Laura Shepherd. Laura Shepherd is a historical crime writer and *Daughters of Night* is her second novel. Her debut novel *Blood and Sugar* was longlisted for same award just two years ago in 2020. *Daughters of Night* takes place in the London underworld, particularly the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens which form the setting of the murder of a prostitute. Caroline 'Caro' Corsham is taken into the darkest corners of Georgian high society when she begins to investigate the crime.

Vaseem Khan also made it to the shortlist this year with his novel *Midnight at Malabar House*, a murder mystery set in post-Partition Bombay and featuring India's first female detective Persis Wadia. Wadia suddenly finds herself in charge of the country's most scandalous case after the murder of English diplomat Sir James Herriot. *Midnight at Malabar house* brilliantly blends a cosy murder mystery with high-stakes politics. Excitingly, this is the first in a series.

The final book on the shortlist was *The Last Thing to Burn* by Will Dean. A thrilling tale of a woman trapped in a small cottage on a farm living under the control of the abusive man who claims to be her husband. But something happens that makes her want to escape his clutches. This is a suspenseful novel based on revenge and packed with tension that explores the horrors of abusive relationships. This is bestselling author Will Dean's first time featuring on the shortlist.

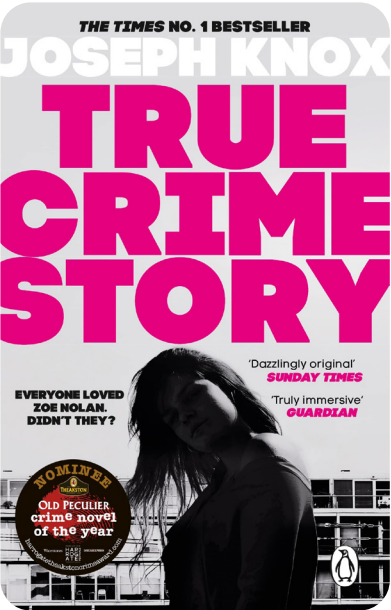


Winner: *Slough House* by Mick Herron

In the seventh book of his *Slough House* series, named after the series itself, Mick Herron offers a cut-throat view of the global finance, spy craft, politics and media that hold the power in our world, highlighting gasp-worthy corruption present in the UK. *Slough House* is a part of MI5 where all the washed-up demoted officers are dumped. Brexit has created a political upheaval and in addition, a new populist movement is taking considerable power on London's streets in the aftermath of a Russian conspiracy that left a British citizen dead. With the highest bidder holding the utmost power, danger is at the threshold. The members of *Slough House* are dying unusual deaths and they are being removed from the official records. Herron depicts the biting effects of privatization and the manipulation of truth via media conglomerates. Jackson Lamb, the protagonist, tries to navigate the levels of lies, power and death in Herron's novel.

Highly Commended: *True Crime Story* by Joseph Knox

Joseph Knox blurs the line between fact and fiction in *True Crime Story*. The book investigates the mystery of a university student's disappearance. The student, Zoe Nolan, walked out of a party taking place in an accommodation where she had been living for three months. Years later, a struggling writer, Evelyn Mitchell, becomes interested by the mystery and tries to piece together the story of Zoe's disappearance through an interview with her friends and family. Through the character of Evelyn, Knox describes his own anxieties related to criminal mysteries. He uses the meta device – writing a story about a writer trying to write the story of a crime. In this interesting format, Evelyn finds out that while some events turn out to be perfectly aligned with each other, some stand in stark contrast giving rise to confusing inconsistencies in the story. In a world where everybody is hiding something, Evelyn is shaken by the revelations of Zoe's truth.



Upcoming Publishing Events

BY SOPHIE DICKINSON AND ERIN EVETT

Book Launch: *Children of Gods and Fighting Men* with Shauna Lawless

1 September,
6:00–9:00 p.m.

Waterstones Belfast

If you love mythology, this event will definitely be for you! Join author Shauna Lawless in Belfast, as she launches her new novel *Children of Gods and Fighting Men*. She shines a fresh light on Irish mythology and the event will feature local music and rich Irish traditions. This first instalment of Lawless' trilogy promises to be a masterfully written blend of fantasy, history, and politics. For more information and ticket prices, click [here](#).

Still Born — An Evening with Guadalupe Nettel

1 September,
6:30–8:00 p.m.

Bristol Stanford

Acclaimed Mexican novelist Guadalupe Nettel joins Bristol Stanfords to discuss her fourth novel, *Still Born*. *Still Born* explores one of life's most consequential decisions - whether to have children or not - with Nettel's signature charm and intelligence. It covers the story of Alina and Laura, both career-driven women in their thirties, neither of whom have based their future around the prospect of a family. Laura has taken the drastic decision to be sterilised, but as time goes by, Alina becomes drawn toward motherhood. When complications arise in Alina's pregnancy, and Laura becomes attached to her neighbour's son, both women are forced to reckon with the complexity of their emotions. Nettel explores ambivalent motherhood with a delicate hand, carefully dissecting the contradictions that make up the life of women. She will be in conversation with writer and journalist Sian Norris. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).

Bridgerton Event

4 September,
11:30–5:00 p.m.

Waterstones Covent Garden

If you loved Juila Quinn's *Bridgerton* series, this immersive event held in Waterstones Covent Garden will be the perfect day out for you. They will be hosting a variety of activities, such as a costume competition, a truth confession jar, a treasure hunt and much more! If you want to immerse yourself in one of your favourite novels/Netflix series, then look no further. The winner of the costume competition will also be announced the Diamond of the Season on Waterstones' social media. For more information and ticket prices, click [here](#).

Book Launch: *Epic Annette* with Anne Weber & Tess Lewis

6 September,
7:00–8:30 p.m.

Goethe-Institut London

In coordination with Institut Francais, the new English translation of the prose poem *Epic Annette* by Anne Weber will be unveiled. It won the German Book Prize in 2020 and has been translated into multiple languages. Author Anne Weber, translator Tess Lewis and publisher Susie Nicklin will be discussing the title in front of a live audience.



It focuses on the true story of Annette Beaumanoir, a medical student who, at nineteen, joined the French Resistance and saved the lives of two Jewish children in Paris, hours before their planned departure to a concentration camp. Don't miss out on learning about this captivating tale of a courageous heroine in an epic poem comparable to Homer. For more information and ticket prices, click [here](#).

The Manningtree Witches — An Evening with Sherborne Literary Society

14 September,
7:00–8:30 p.m.

Sherborne School

Join A.K. Blakemore for a discussion about her award-winning debut novel *The Manningtree Witches* at Sherborne School. If you are interested in the history of witchcraft and the infamous English witch trials, this event will definitely be for you. It focuses on the patriarchal society and how the fear and mistrust of men led to the condemnation and slaughtering of many women whose innocent voices were silenced. For more information and ticket prices, click [here](#).

Lessons — Ian McEwan: In Conversation

14 September,
7:30 p.m.

Royal Festival Hall,
Southbank Centre

Join Ian McEwan for his special event at the Southbank Centre as he discusses his new novel *Lessons*. This epic story is a powerful meditation on history and humanity, told through the prism of one man's lifetime. *Lessons* spans the past seventy years, from the end of the Second World War through to the crises of the Cold War, finishing up in the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Roland, McEwan's protagonist, is often found fighting against history and seeking solace for lost opportunities through varying means — music, literature, politics, family, friends, sex and love. McEwan will be in conversation with Alex Clark as he celebrates the publication of *Lessons* and reflects on his critically

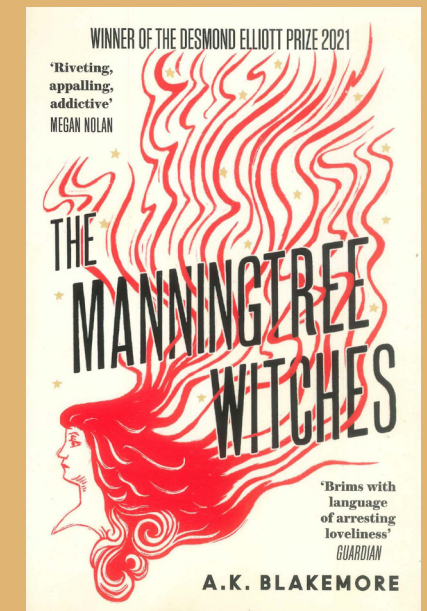
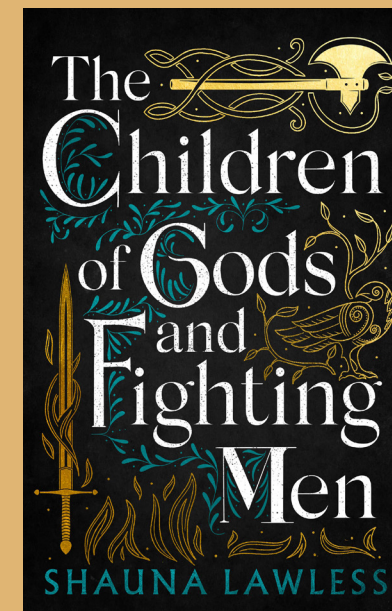
acclaimed career. This event is in partnership with Penguin Live and Southbank Centre. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).

The SWWJ Writers' Conference 2022

16 September,
9:30–7:30 p.m.

The Antonin Artaud Building,
Brunel University London

The Society of Women Writers and Journalists, in partnership with Brunel University London, are offering a conference packed with helpful advice and thought provoking sessions. Their impressive line-up includes poet Benjamin Zephaniah and sessions on how to promote your writing for publishing. Tickets include lunch and refreshments. For more information and tickets, click [here](#).



Shuffling of the Shelves: August Part 2

BY HANNAH MOORE, LUCY SHARDLOW, MELISSA TRAN AND HOLLY WATSON

From spell-binding stories to nail-biting thrillers and even some well-known names in literature surging back to the top with a little help from the film industry – we round up what has been heating up the charts as we approach the end of summer!

At number six in the Waterstones charts, we have Victor Jestin's recent release, *Heatwave*, winner of multiple prizes and a dark psychological thriller with a unique premise. On holiday, a socially awkward teen witnesses a man die while failing to help him, and then buries the body. Falling into a spiral of guilt and fear, we watch as Leonard comes to terms with his mistakes. Taking the number seven spot is children's novel *Alex Neptune, Dragon Thief* by David Owen, which follows Alex and his friends' exciting quest to rescue a water dragon from an aquarium prison. For any fans of Percy Jackson, this is a must-read. Adam Nicolson's *Life Between the Tides* is at number ten; a non-fiction

book about sea life that looks at the human relationship with the sea and linking science with philosophy. This text is perfect for anyone looking to learn more about the world.

The WHSmith chart is full of summer thrillers this August. At number eight is *The Faithless* by Martina Cole, a story about family ties and betrayal that will have you dying to turn the page. Following Cynthia Tailor and her failing marriage and less than perfect children, *The Faithless* shows what happens when you pick yourself over those that you love. Ranking at number ten is *Autopsy* by Patricia Cornwell. Cornwell is well loved for her crime fiction so it is no surprise that her novel is in the charts. *Autopsy* is book twenty-five in the Scarpetta Series and follows the dystopian world that exists post-pandemic. When a woman's body is found violently mangled in a public place, Scarpetta must utilise her US Secret Service connections to solve the investigation, before the serial killer strikes again. *Autopsy* is a nail-biting summer crime novel you do not want to miss.

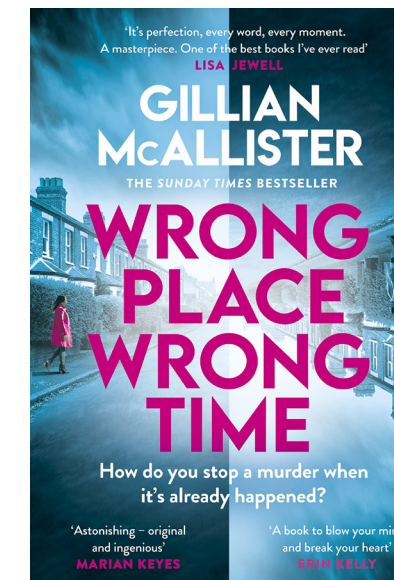
Beth O'Leary has re-entered the Amazon charts this year, this time with her novel *The No-Show* which sits at number three this month in the most sold chart. O'Leary's novel became an "instant *Sunday Times* bestseller" on release with her previous novels making her a bestselling author that many rom-com lovers can't get enough of. At number five we have *The Island of Missing Trees* by Elif Shafak. The novel follows two teenagers, with very different religious and cultural backgrounds, as they seek refuge in a tavern that becomes a secret meeting place away from the outside world. Shafak is a British-Turkish author and takes a lot of inspiration from her Turkish roots in her writing, with this being no exception. Many readers have become spell-bound by Shafak's storytelling, with fellow author David Mitchell describing the novel as "Balm for our bruised times" (Amazon).

The Bookstagram community is raving about Gillian McAllister's thriller *Wrong Place, Wrong Time*, which has recently risen to the charts after being made August's Pick of the Month in Reese

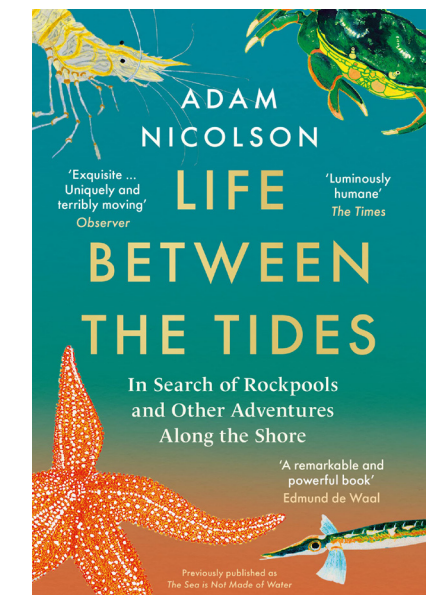
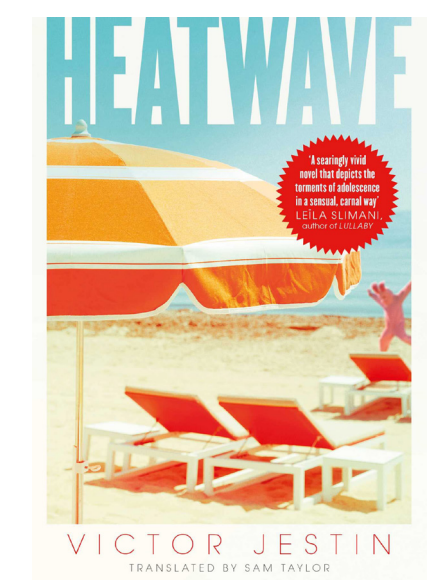
Witherspoon's book club. McAllister's novel follows the story of a mother, Jen, who tries to prevent a murder that her son has committed, waking up each morning to find herself further in the past. Described as riveting and mind-bending, there is no wonder that this is the "perfect book to round out the summer" (@reesewitherspoon on Instagram). *Red, White and Royal Blue* has been making an impact on BookTok after the announcement of the film adaptation directed by Matthew López. This LGBTQ+ romance novel centres around Alex Claremont-Diaz (the son of America's first female president) and his relationship with British Prince Henry. What begins as a fake instagrammable friendship soon shifts into something deeper and more dangerous, potentially jeopardising the relationship between the two nations.

Our noteworthy book this month is *Blonde* by Joyce Carol Oates. Released in 2000, Oates' novel has recently seen a resurgence in popularity due to the announcement of a Netflix adaptation being created. *Blonde* is primarily fictional yet focuses on the woman behind the cultural icon Marilyn Monroe. Separated into five sections from childhood all the way to afterlife, *Blonde* retells a "fragmentary and exhaustive, fictional and historical" recollection of Monroe's life

(Amazon). Some readers have complained that the lines between fiction and fact are too blurry. One reader comments that they were left "unsatisfied" by characters being addressed by initials instead of full names, yet others have noted how this perfectly encapsulates the life of a woman whose life

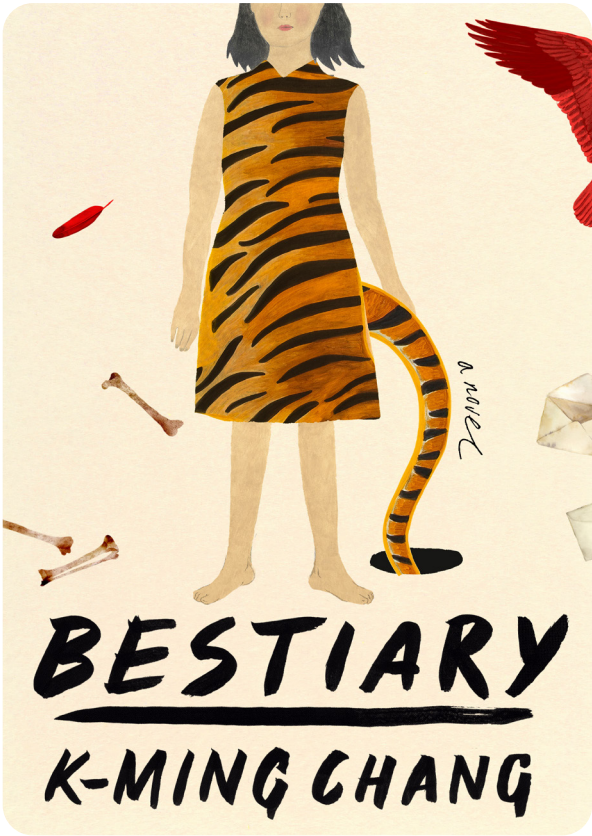


was ultimately a facade (Waterstones). *Blonde* is due to be released on Netflix late September and will star Ana de Armas as Monroe. With biopics of icons such as Elton John and Elvis becoming popular in recent times, it is not surprising that there is so much hype surrounding this upcoming one on Monroe.



Not to be Overlooked

BY GURNISH KAUR BIRDI AND SANDHYA CHRISTINE THEODORE



Not to be Overlooked introduces a variety of wonderful but lesser-known books to assist readers in finding their next great reads. This week's column covers a review of *Bestiary* by K-Ming Chang and *The Memory Police* by Yōko Ogawa.

Bestiary by K-Ming Chang

This novel is an anecdotal treatise on various beasts, real and mythical. These

animals are interlaced with three generations of a family, as an unnamed Grandmother, Mother and Daughter narrate a story that drifts between realism and fantasy.

Bestiary begins with Mother talking about her family's move from Taiwan to Arkansas, and the struggle of losing all their wealth because her father forgot where he buried their gold. What follows is a non-linear narrative that, when pieced

together, becomes a lurid history of a fantastical family. The majority of the story is told by Daughter, who wakes up with a tiger's tail after hearing about Hu Gu Po, a tiger spirit in a woman's body. Meanwhile, she also falls for a girl with her own strange history. As Daughter and her lover translate letters from Grandmother spit out by mouths in the backyard, Daughter begins



to understand the legacy left behind by the women in her family.

There is no sentimentality in this book. It is difficult and unforgiving. The language is often stomach-churning and descriptions of violence are brutally honest. The relationships are never perfect, from the complicated dynamics of parents and children to brothers and sisters and lovers and spouses. Despite *Bestiary* featuring an aunt who turns everything she touches red, a daughter conceived with a river and a giant crab becoming a child when eaten, there remains an undercurrent of harsh reality. The story emphasises the difficulty of motherhood and daughterhood, as it explores the traumas, strengths and violence inherited and passed down.

K-Ming Chang's debut novel reflects her poetic prowess with its lyricism. She has skilfully used both language and storytelling to transport the reader deep into a world where legends and reality coexist and interact. Both her raw descriptions and seemingly simple reflections craft a dynamic and nuanced story. *Bestiary* is a great book for lovers of poetry and anyone looking for an engaging plot and reflections on history, family and love.

The Memory Police by Yōko Ogawa

First published in 1994 in its original Japanese, *The Memory Police* encapsulates the uncertain feelings of loss and control, and our relationships with memories. Yōko Ogawa's Japanese dystopian story is centred around an island controlled by the Memory Police, the inhabitants of which are all ordinary until things start to disappear. Their memories – of birds, hats, flowers and other objects – begin to fade quickly, and soon after the people continue their lives without them.

Ogawa's characters are nameless. As readers, we follow the journey of a protagonist whose routine we learn and feelings we understand, but whose name we never know. The same goes for her companion, known as the 'old man'. It only occurred to me after finishing *The Memory Police* that perhaps they made names disappear, too.

While the island is full of people whose memories disappear, there are many who do not forget. As nice as it may sound to remember things no one else does, these are the people who are targeted, abducted and killed by the Memory Police. Our protagonist soon realises that someone really close to her cannot forget memories,

just like her mother. She has lost many people in her life and in fear of losing anyone else, she hides him from the Memory Police.

This novel is an eye-opening dystopia that keeps you on the edge of your seat, as our protagonist hides the Police's target and faces obstacles to keep him safe. And one day, she battles the loss of something that ends her career and her passion, but her friend encourages her to remember and preserve the memory of the disappearances, just like her mother did.

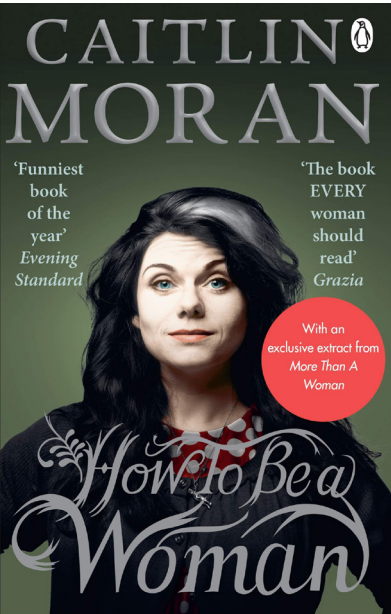
Shortlisted for the International Booker Prize, Ogawa's *The Memory Police* is a beautifully written, haunting dystopia, perfect for anyone who enjoys themes similar to George Orwell's 1984. Celebrating translated literature should be important to anyone who appreciates the art of words, as opening this door will expose you to abstract ways of writing and idea building. This is the first translated piece of literature I have read, and I am excited to read more.

The Memory Police will definitely leave you wondering. My thoughts while reading this novel were: What if books started disappearing from our world? How would we educate? How would we empower? How would we escape reality?

Funny Books to Celebrate the End of Edinburgh Fringe Festival

BY AMY WRIGHT, ROWAN JACKSON, ANA MATUTE, ZOE DOYLE AND LAUREN JONES

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival has been in full swing this August. Celebrating the arts and culture, the Edinburgh Fringe began in 1947 and has since become one of the largest arts festivals in the world. Although there are a wide variety of acts, a significant proportion of them are classified as comedic, ranging from amateur acts to sets by well-known comedians. To celebrate the end of this year's festival, which marks the festival's seventy-fifth anniversary, we've decided to highlight some books that really made us laugh. Read on to discover our favourite comedic picks.



How to be a Woman by Caitlin Moran

How to be a Woman by Caitlin Moran is a laugh out loud memoir that is both honest and intellectual. The book contains Moran's own fresh ideas on feminism and includes descriptions and stories of the sexism she has noticed and experienced throughout her life and in the present day. Moran explores what it means to be a feminist today in an accessible form that is also witty and amusing. A book that makes you think, *How to be a Woman* should certainly be essential reading for all adults, and it successfully portrays real and relatable experiences in a funny and refreshing way. Alongside the important subject matter, it is Moran's humour that makes this an addictive, unputdownable read that you'll still be talking about long after finishing it.

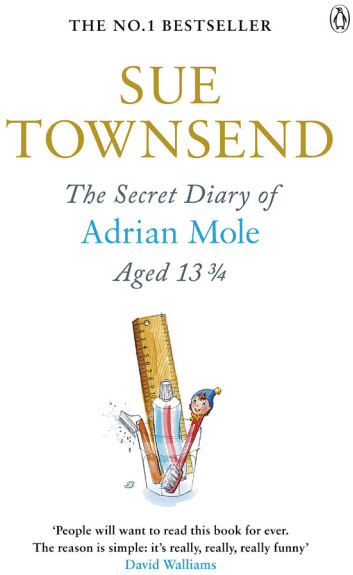
My Family and Other Animals by Gerald Durrell

The first in his Corfu trilogy, Durrell's memoir is a vibrant account of his wild boyhood exploring the natural world around him in 1930s Greece. Trading the grey,

rainy climate of England for the sundrenched Greek Island of Corfu, the Durrells, composed of his mother and elder siblings Lawrence, Leslie and Margaret, attempt to adapt to their new home and neighbours. Filled with personal anecdotes and a host of animal personalities, the book is charming and filled with humour – Gerald's antics and menagerie of animals often get him into amusing situations, particularly when his eccentric family are involved. Durrell's book celebrates the wonder and beauty of the natural world, the bonds of family and the fragile and precious moments of childhood with his characteristic wit and charm.

The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 ¾ by Sue Townsend

The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 ¾ follows the life of Adrian Mole, a worrier and self-proclaimed intellectual. The book is set during the years of 1981 and 1982, in England's Thatcher years. It opens with Adrian's list of New Year's resolutions and goes on to feature naïve, pessimistic, amusing and self-indulgent observations. Written in the form of a diary, this book draws on



cultural and political events from the time through the eyes of a teenage boy who is more focused on his first love, family drama and the fact he has developed acne. *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 ¾* is a quintessentially British book filled with the hilariously melodramatic musings of a teenager. Despite being originally published in 1982, this book is still relatable and enjoyable to teenagers, or anyone that has been a teenager, making it a timeless comedic classic.

I'm More Dateable Than a Plate of Refried Beans by Ginny Hogan

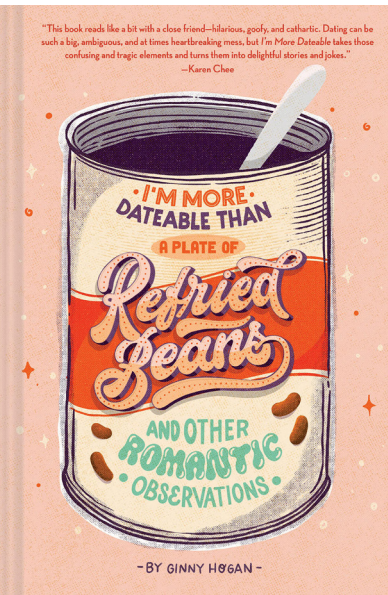
A hilarious novel about relationships and dating in which Ginny Hogan, writer and standup comedian, approaches social expectations in a very particular and funny way. Sometimes we wonder

a lot about "The One" or settling with someone, and during that process, we find ridiculous social conventions that we are just trying to follow without really going beyond them.

The stories of Ginny are very special because she lets us see that even if sometimes we feel sad or on cloud nine while we are dating and growing, it's a funny part of our lives. With stories and quizzes, it's a fun book to laugh about our lives and modern romance where sometimes we are swiping and others singing songs about how this isn't just summer love, but a winter love.

A Class Act by Rob Beckett

In his first book, *A Class Act*, comedian Rob Beckett compares his experiences of growing up working class in South-East London with his decidedly more middle



class life as a successful comedian, podcaster and presenter. Beckett candidly explores the class divide and the concept of belonging through a series of personal anecdotes, which are a mixture of heart-wrenching, embarrassing, and crazy – but are hilarious without exception. Beckett's experience as a comedian shines throughout *A Class Act*, with witty, well-timed jokes and tongue-in-cheek descriptions. From tales of all you can eat buffets to anecdotes of Alicante Airport, Beckett's account will have you in stitches the whole way through. If you're up for a hilarious and engaging take on some big questions, then we can't recommend this book enough.

Upskilling Tips for Further Education

BY MEGHAN CAPPER, TANVI JAISWAL, MISHA MANANI AND GEORGIA STACK

In this issue, the Upskilling Team delves into the publishing world of further education. We'll be discussing our individual experiences, including how postgraduate education might be the right path for some people, but not others. We cover how our postgraduate experiences have benefitted us as individuals, but stress that it is not an essential requirement to have a degree at all to thrive in the industry.

Meghan — MA in English Literature at Newcastle University (expected 2022)

Hi, I'm Meghan and I'm currently finishing my master's degree in English Literature.

Why did I choose to do this course?

- I loved studying Literature in Newcastle and I wasn't ready to give it up yet! Even

if you didn't do an undergrad in English, a master's can demonstrate you're a book lover!

- Some people think that master's degrees are only beneficial if you need them for your career, but having an extra year of studying is a valuable way to acquire skills and develop further on a personal and academic level.
- It's how you use your time as an MA student that might give you an extra leg up in future job applications!

What are the connections between the course and publishing?

- **Manuscript, Print and Digital module:** we transcribed and devised notes for a 17th century recipe book and coded them using a software called XML Editor. My experience in this module demonstrates that I have proficient IT skills and can pay close attention to detail whilst working with manuscripts.

- **Developed a specialised literary knowledge:** having specific genres, writing styles and authors that you love could be transferable to a role in a literary agency where agents acquire clients based on their personal specialities.

- Newcastle University also has a children's literature MA pathway which would be great for someone with a tailored interest in children's and young adult publishing.

Tips for a publishing-related MA degree

- **Apply for funding:** don't be shy to apply for scholarships and bursaries because any extra help is handy to have.
- **Study in a city:** I've found it beneficial to stay in a city where I can network and have access to opportunities and resources.
- **Join student groups and activities:** I was able to be a part of the student committee for our

Postgraduate Conference where I developed key events management, administrative and teamwork skills crucial to any publishing role.

- **Use University Careers Services:** take advantage of this opportunity, because it has been a huge support when writing CVs and cover letters for publishing.

Tanvi — Publishing MA at the University of Derby as an international student (expected 2022)

Hi, I'm Tanvi and I'm currently completing my MA in Publishing. During the year-long course, you learn about the different aspects of the industry which enhances your understanding of how everything works e.g. publishing laws and print publishing. This course is useful for anyone looking to change careers or learn more about a book's journey and the industry.

Why did I choose to do this course?

- **Change in interests:** by the final year of my BA English Hons in India. I knew that I didn't want to pursue a master's in the same discipline. At first, I looked at creative writing courses since they aligned with my passion for writing. That is when I came across publishing courses and after looking

through the course modules, I found it to be the perfect next step in my career.

- **To understand the UK publishing industry:** unfortunately, there isn't a single university in India which offers an MA Publishing course so I decided to move to the UK. As an international student, I think this course, which is offered at a number of universities across the UK, is a brilliant way to know more about the publishing industry.

What are the connections between the course and publishing?

- **Modules:** the course spreads itself out across several modules – digital and print designing, marketing and sales, publishing law and editorial which are directly linked to the publishing industry, and is advantageous for people who do not have previous professional experience.

- **Professional teachers:** most of these courses are taught by industry professionals which is an advantage as you will be taught by people who have real-life experience within the industry.

- **Placement year:** a number of universities offering this course also offer a placement year,

which is a huge upper hand considering how competitive the publishing industry is. These placement years are usually added as a second year where you get to work within the industry through the help of your university – this can go a long way to help your publishing career.

Application tips for a Publishing MA

- Focus on your personal statement and show a genuine interest in publishing, as it is your first impression on the academics deciding on your application.





Why did I choose to do this course?

- **The USA and UK publishing worlds are very interconnected:** speakers would frequently refer to their relationship with the UK which highlights how closely we work with each other. It's useful to understand both sides!
- **Create connections:** you always get a chance to talk to speakers and ask questions. Your peers are also on a similar journey and are the future of publishing!
- **Temporal aspect:** I knew I didn't want to spend a year pursuing a master's. This six-week intensive course explored publishing in great detail with tangible results and assignments.
- **Understand all aspects of publishing:** there is a CPC in Oxford for four weeks on book publishing. However, I was interested in learning about how magazine and digital publishing worked, so I applied to New York.
- Talk about how your undergraduate degree underlines some transferable skills to publishing.
- Lastly, make sure to include relevant experience (if any) in your application.

Misha – Columbia Publishing Course at Columbia University (graduated 2022)

Hi everyone! I'm Misha and I recently graduated from King's College London and the Columbia Publishing Course (CPC). During CPC you spend three weeks learning about book publishing and three weeks focused on digital and magazine publishing. This is a certification course mainly for recent graduates.

What are the connections between the course and publishing?

- **Key skills:** time management, communication, creativity, commercial awareness,

working independently and collaboratively and being proactive.

- A week-long book workshop where you work in groups to create an imprint of a larger publishing company. We each came up with a book idea and worked on the editorial, marketing, publicity, design and rights plan. Professionals in the industry then evaluated our submissions and provided feedback.

- A week-long media brand workshop where you create your own digital media company in a group. Everyone has a dedicated role e.g. Editor, Business Manager, Social Media Editor etc. You then receive feedback from those in the industry.

- We had many different lectures. For instance, children's publishing, creating marketing and publicity plans, what to look for when reading book submissions, how books get adapted into films and profit and loss (P&L).

- You have career sessions for writing a CV, cover letter and thank you notes.

Application tips:

- Show a demonstrated interest in publishing e.g. editor for a newspaper, book blogger etc.
- Mention books you have read by American authors.

- Don't just talk about what you have done, discuss why you did it.

- Express a genuine interest in a publishing career e.g. where did it begin?

Georgia – History Graduate from Bristol University (not pursuing postgraduate education)

Hi everyone! I'm Georgia and I recently graduated from Bristol University. I decided not to continue in further education because, to be honest, I was exhausted. Luckily in my ideal career (publishing), postgraduate education is not required for entry-level jobs! I'm also interested in a public sector career.

How did I make this decision?

- **Do what feels right for you:** I knew I didn't want to continue in education for another year and that it wasn't the end of the world if I didn't! If you do feel up for the challenge of a publishing MA or related postgraduate course, then definitely look into it, as it will be a great foundation to prepare you for a publishing career.

- **Research the requirements for your career pathway:** many publishers have mentioned that they don't require an MA in publishing, nor does

it put you at an advantage in the application process. Experience is the priority!

- **Considering other options:** since I'm open to careers outside of publishing, I knew that it wouldn't be the best use of my time or money. Instead, I took to gaining as much experience as I could!

How to stand out without an MA?

- **Experience:** however big or small, it is key to making sure that you have something to confidently speak about in applications and interviews. Joining *The Publishing Post* or becoming a bookseller is a great start.

- **Start a side hustle:** create a Bookstagram, BookTok or a book blog to highlight your enthusiasm for the publishing industry.

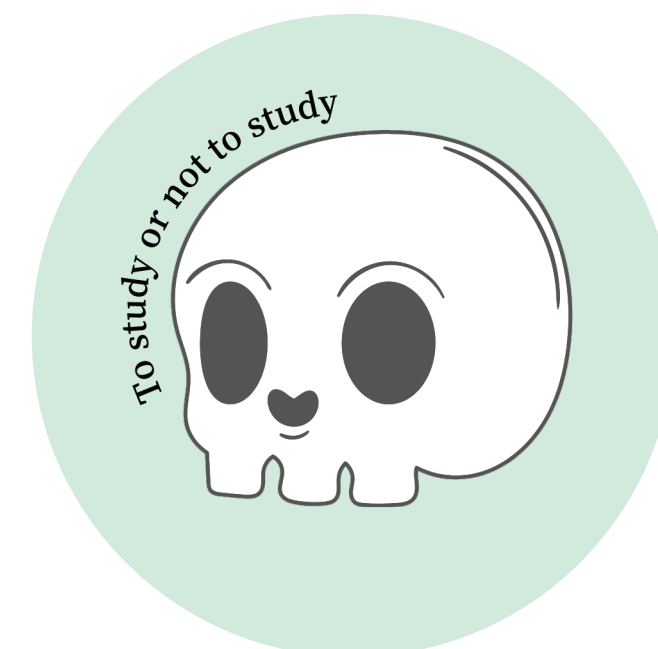
- **Tailor your CV or application:** it really shows when you've done your research on the publishing company you're applying to. An applicant who has clearly done their research on the company, its products and its news will be sure to stand out.

What you are currently doing now/future plans?

- I'm working full-time as an administrative assistant at my local council to earn some money. However, I recently completed an internship with an independent publisher whilst working full-time and contributing to *The Publishing Post* each fortnight.

- My future plans are... see where life takes me!

Thanks for reading Issue Fifty-Four! Join us again for Issue Fifty-Five, where we will cover Upskilling Tips for Publishing Newbies.

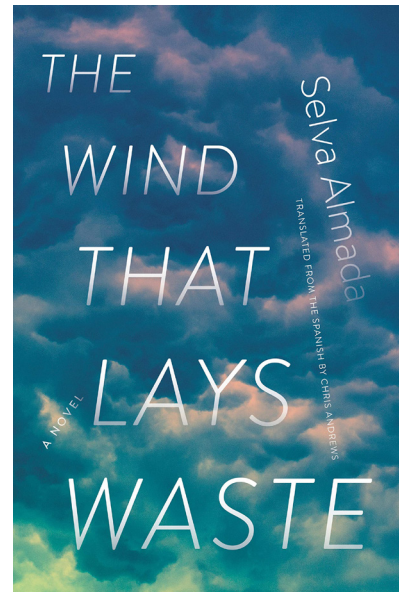


Women in Translation Month

BY HAYLEY CADEL, MARY KARAYEL AND YASHIKA M.

This month is Women in Translation Month, which is celebrated globally. It's an occasion to acknowledge translators, women authors and their literature. The commemoration is born out of the lack of awareness of women in translation, with less than 31% of translations into English being written by women. With literature discussing themes like the history of literature, femininity and its association with historic and modern art, family values, and representation of the marginalised and unrecognised communities in the society have been outstanding steps towards creating a change in how widely this literature is now read. Latest releases such as Selva Almada's *The Wind That Lays Waste* (translated by Chris Andrews) and Ibtisam Azem's *The Book of Disappearance* (translated by Sinan Antoon) have garnered tremendous response with readers of today who resonate with the feminine nature and themes of the books.

The Women in Translation project was set up due to the gender disparity in non-English literature, with the focus of the project on literature written by women in any language other than



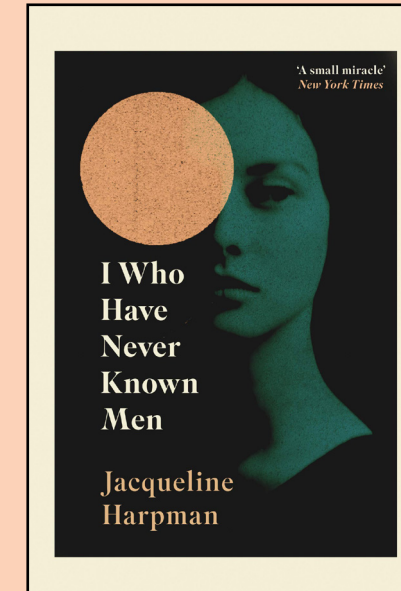
English. It chose not to focus on specific genres, allowing the project to be a gateway for all readers to access translated women's work. It not only highlighted the lack of women translated into English, but recognised that only 36% of books translated into English were from non-European countries. In 2014, the Women in Translation Month was created by Meytal Radzinski and has since become a staple in the literary calendar. Every year, readers across the world read and review women in translation, not only helping to promote these books but the project and translated authors more widely.

As outlined, this month has the ability to create a spike in interest in translation literature but this can also generate interest in backlist titles through the desire to find more and more titles – this is often encouraged by platforms such as BookTok and Bookstagram. Recently, there has been renewed interest in *Breast and Eggs* by Mieko Kawakami (translated by Sam Bett and David Boyd). Published in 2008, *Breast and Eggs* portrays working-class womanhood in Japan through the stories of three women. Another popular translated work is *I Who Have Never Known Men* by Jacqueline Harpman (translated by Ros Schwartz) which is reminiscent of *The Handmaid's Tale*. In this novel, thirty-nine women are kept underground, in isolation, with no memory of how they got there when a prisoner emerges and offers escape and survival to the women. And finally, *The Vegetarian* by Han Kang (translated by Deborah Smith), originally published in 2015, the novel tells of a woman who gradually, but mysteriously stops eating, and the trauma which accompanies this unravels.

However, it is not just individual books which are bringing



women in translation to the market, it is also independent publishing houses who have been set up with this sole aim. One publisher, Tilted Axis Press, was set up in 2015 in response to the lack of translated Asian authors on UK bookshelves and set about redressing the balance. With their book covers, each book fits into the brand with a tilted axis on the cover, making these books instantly recognisable and serving as a clear signpost to the reader. Aside from this, they are also dedicated to improving access into the industry. Additionally, Charco Press was set up with the intention of bringing the best of Latin American fiction to the UK. As well as translations, they sell copies of books in their original languages. Again



pairing this with distinctive branding which sets them apart on the shelf.

Women in Translation Month is all about appreciating the great women writers who do get translated – and of course, the people who make these stories accessible: the translators. Here are a few more recommendations to get you through the rest of the year so that we don't just consume this literature once a year, but enjoy it all year round.

Last week, Mauritian writer Ananda Devi's autobiographical poetry collection was released, exploring universal themes of loneliness, desire and memory. The collection, originally written in French, was translated by Kazim Ali, who is a translator,



author and poet. If you prefer fiction, why not try *Witches* by Brenda Lozano (and translated by Heather Cleary)? *Witches* tells the story of Feliciano, an indigenous curandera, or healer, and Zoe, a journalist. These two women meet through the murder of Feliciano's cousin Paloma and they uncover parallels between each other's lives despite being brought up so differently. Parallels is a really important word when thinking about translated fiction and how we can relate to it despite it being more difficult to access without translation. This shows the importance of having a month dedicated to women in translation and we hope we've inspired you to try some translated fiction this summer.

BookMachine CAMPUS

Review: Amazon Advertising Courses

By JOANNE BOUSTEAD

Making the most of your Amazon A+ page

This course is a step-by-step guide to creating a professional Amazon A+ page that will help you to maximise sales. The course is run by Claire Morrison, who has eighteen years of trade publishing experience (including Vintage and Headline). Before this course, it had never occurred to me just how important it was to correctly market titles on Amazon. I found this course to be incredibly helpful, and I'm sure it will be a brilliant tool for all marketers as well.

The first module provides an in-depth look into planning and preparing an Amazon A+ page – particularly useful for someone new to creating these pages! The accompanying downloadable materials are a brilliant tool to help with the planning and preparation, and I would definitely recommend using them and tailoring them to your specific needs. Make use of the checklist! Not only does it

cover each module, but it also serves as a handy reminder to keep you on track.

When I first learnt about metadata and the importance of keywords, I thought it was quite a daunting task to come up with so many keywords – especially ones that could make a real impact on sales! That's why the keywords module in this course is so useful: it gives you plenty of online tools to search for and create relevant keywords that might just turn your campaign around. Watching how to build an A+ page has



also been helpful, with Claire taking the process step-by-step. These Amazon-specific tools are ones I never knew existed, and now that I know they exist (and how to use them!), I feel that I would be more prepared to create an A+ page if I were to start a marketing role!

How to run Amazon advertising

The CAMPUS "How to run Amazon advertising" course gives a thorough look at how to run advertising on the Amazon platform. The course is run by Elke Desanghere, a digital marketing expert who has worked for Penguin Random House and Nosy Crow. Again, this detailed course is brilliant for those new to advertising on Amazon, and breaks down the individual campaign types that are available to use on the platform. Before taking this course, I would wholeheartedly recommend taking the "Making the most of your Amazon A+ page" course, which you can read about above!

Throughout the entire course, Elke encourages you to think like a consumer – not just a marketer. From this viewpoint, you are able to gain further insight into what the audience wants, and how best to market to them. The course also covers campaign run times, and the differences between automatic targeting and manual targeting. Similar to the "Making the most of your Amazon A+ page" course, "How to run Amazon advertising" also dives into keyword targeting, and provides a multitude of tools to help you determine the best keywords to use in your campaign. Unlike the previous course, this one also uses tools from outside of Amazon – including Google Keyword Planner and Google Trends.

Modules three and four provide a step-by-step guide to creating a sponsored product campaign, a sponsored brand campaign and a sponsored display campaign. Elke guides you through each process, and encourages you to complete your campaign alongside the course. Whilst this part of the course was not as helpful to me (unfortunately I'm not a marketer, nor am I designing an Amazon campaign!), I have no doubt that it would be incredibly helpful for first-time marketers, and

marketing departments looking to improve their campaign results.

The course finishes with advice on how to evaluate your campaign results, and also suggests metrics to keep an eye on whilst the campaign is running – all things I would never have known about if not for this course! It also suggests that adjusting your campaign is completely OK, as long as you've given it enough time to start collecting data.

Marketers will find that both "Making the most of your Amazon A+ page" and "How to run Amazon advertising" to be essential resources and they should be at the top of your list for BookMachine CAMPUS courses to complete. Brilliant for newcomers to marketing, these courses provide you with a wealth of knowledge on the Amazon platform, and

will help marketers to hone their campaigns and increase visibility and sales!

A note from BookMachine

"BookMachine CAMPUS is our suite of flexible, publishing-specific video courses designed to empower you in your career development. At BookMachine HQ, we're delighted to see the impact of the courses across the industry and how they are helping learners develop key skills! Our recent spring release saw the addition of six brand-new courses to the online library. Led by our knowledgeable tutors, specialists in publishing skills from TikTok to legal contracts, our catalogue is packed with expertise. Learn more about what you could achieve with CAMPUS [here](#)."



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