

2022
Fiction/Non-fiction

Fiona Sze-Lorrain
Dear Chrysanthemums

1946: Two cooks work for Madam Chiang Kai-shek and prepare a foreign dish craved by their mistress, which becomes a political weapon and their tragic end. **1966:** Punished for her extramarital affair, a dancer is transferred to Shanghai, assigned to a jinxed apartment in a historic mansion during the Cultural Revolution. **1996:** A budding pianist from Morningside Heights settles down in Paris, and is almost raped when a mysterious piano arrives from Singapore. **2016:** Three old friends gather to renew comradery in a cathedral since their exile after the Tian'anmen Massacre, even though they struggle to reunite in their grief and faith.

Written with supreme elegance and precision, DEAR CHRYSANTHEMUMS is a vividly disturbing and beautiful novel-in-stories about displaced women of Asian heritage navigating their survival and reckoning with past trauma. Spanning from the wartime forties to the present, the stories are set in Shanghai, Beijing, Paris, and New York. With her devastating understanding of inhumanity among humans, Fiona Sze-Lorrain captures both the unique melancholy of exile and the remarkable tenderness of strength that emerges from these diasporic women.

- English World Rights to Scribner
- Approx. 210 pages
- complete Ms



Fiona Sze-Lorrain (born 1980) is a French musician, poet, literary translator, and editor. Born in Singapore, Fiona Sze-Lorrain grew up trilingual and has lived mostly in Paris and New York City. She spent her childhood in a hybrid of cultures, and her formative years in the United States and France. She began studying classical piano and guzheng at a young age. A graduate of Columbia University, she obtained her master's degree from New York University and attended École Normale de Musique de Paris before earning a PhD in French from Paris-Sorbonne University. She writes and translates in English, Chinese, and French. Her work includes four poetry collections, recently *Rain in Plural* (Princeton, 2020) and *The Ruined Elegance* (Princeton, 2016), and fifteen

books of translation. A finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, she was a 2019-20 Fellow at Columbia Institute for Ideas and Imagination.

Sze-Lorrain is one of the recognized translators of contemporary Chinese poetry. Her work was shortlisted for the 2020 Derek Walcott Prize for Poetry and the 2016 Best Translated Book Award, and longlisted for the 2014 PEN Award for Poetry in Translation. She is a co-founder of Cerise Press (2009–13) and a corresponding editor of *Mānoa* (2012–14).

Żanna Słoniowska
The House with the Stained Glass Window

„Żanna Słoniowska writes beautifully; with empathy, sensitivity and with real political impact. As a Ukrainian from the multicultural city of Lviv, she provides an important new voice in Polish literature!”

Olga Tokarczuk

In 1989, Marianna, the beautiful star soprano at the Lviv opera, is shot dead in the street as she leads the Ukrainian citizens in their protest against Soviet power. Only eleven years old at the time, her daughter tells the story of their family before and after that critical moment - including, ten years later, her own passionate affair with an older, married man. Just like their home city of Lviv, which stands at the crossroads of nations and cultures, the women in this family have had turbulent lives, scarred by war and political turmoil, but also by their own inability to show each other their feelings. Lyrically told, this is the story of a young girl's emotional, sexual, artistic and political awakening as she matures under the influence of her relatives, her mother's former lover, her city and its fortunes.



Żanna Słoniowska was born in 1978 in Lviv and is a journalist and translator. She now lives in Kraków. She is the first winner of the Znak Publishers' Literary Prize, for which her novel was chosen from among over a thousand entries. In 2016, Żanna Słoniowska won the Conrad Award, the Polish award for first novels.

- Znak, Poland, The Old Lion Publishing House, Ukraine, McLehose, UK, Kampa Zürich, Delcourt, France, Alianza Editorial, Spain

Press:

The House with the Stained-Glass Window is remarkable, a gripping, Lvivian evocation of a city and a family across a long and painful century, at once personal and political, a novel of life and survival across the ages (*Philippe Sands*)

Few novels will engage the heart and mind as cohesively as this emphatic performance that triumphs through its depiction of the human stories overshadowed by history. (Eileen Battersby *Financial Times*.)

Dans Une ville à cœur ouvert, Żanna Słoniowska raconte le combat de femmes à Lviv, en Ukraine, cité symbole des changements politiques de l'Europe. Visite guidée avec la romancière. (...) Il serait dommage de ne pas profiter de l'exceptionnelle porte d'entrée qu'est ce roman aux accents boulgakoviens proposé par Żanna Słoniowska. (Marianne Payot *L'Express*)

À elles quatre, ces femmes symbolisent leur ville bringuebalée par l'Histoire, malmenée par les occupations successives. Dans ces pages envoûtantes, Żanna Słoniowska éblouit par sa faculté à mêler les époques, mais aussi l'art et l'amour, l'intime et la politique. (Laurence Caracalla *Le Figaro Magazine*)

Słoniowska writes subtly and beautifully - every phrase conjures up images, casting colourful lights just like the stained-glass window of the title. (Sylwia Chutnik)

This story could only have happened in Ukraine. And then again it could have happened anywhere, because the blood on the blue-and-yellow flag is just the beginning of an intimate tale about four generations of women. (Zofia Fabjanowska-Micyk *Zwierciadło*.)

Słoniowska is a fascinating story-teller who also gives insight into the reality of life in Ukraine. This is an astonishing literary discovery. (Justyna Sobolewska *Polityka*.)

Żanna Słoniowska surprises and seduces. (Jarosław Czechowicz *Krytycznym Okiem*.)

This novel was written as a challenge to crushing, cruel history; it arose from a desire to give a voice to the individual experiences of women. But at a certain point it turns in a direction contrary to its original ambitions, and the counter-history disappears in the fog of exploding smoke grenades. (Dariusz Nowacki *Gazeta Wyborcza*.)



Kirsty Bell The Undercurrents

The Undercurrents: A Story of Berlin is a dazzling work of biography, memoir and cultural criticism told from a precise vantage point: a stately nineteenth-century house on Berlin's Landwehr Canal, a site at the centre of great historical changes, but also smaller domestic ones.

When her marriage breaks down, Kirsty Bell - a British-American writer, in her mid-forties, adrift - becomes fixated on the history of her building and of her adoptive city. Taking the view from her apartment window as her starting point, she turns to the lives of the house's various inhabitants, to accounts penned by Walter Benjamin, Rosa Luxemburg and Gabriele Tergit, and to the female protagonists in the works of Theodor Fontane, Irmgard Keun and Rainer Werner Fassbinder. A new cultural topography of Berlin emerges, one which taps into energetic undercurrents to recover untold or forgotten stories beneath the city's familiar narratives. Humane, thought-provoking and moving, *The Undercurrents* is a hybrid literary portrait of a place that makes the case for radical close readings: of ourselves, our cities and our histories.

'From the first moment I heard Kirsty Bell read from her writing, I have yearned for the book she was then working on. And now here it is, perfect and perfectly balanced, a clear-eyed and beautifully written account about place, about consciousness. I treasure *The Undercurrents*, and so will you.'
-- Hilton Als, author of *White Girls*

'Kirsty Bell has achieved a real work of art: She tells of Berlin's sunken past as a freshly emerged present - and she explains the energy of this city from the history of the people, the streets, and the hopes that have shaped it.'
-- Florian Illies, author of *1913: The Year before the Storm*

- UK: Fitzcarraldo Edition, US: Other Press, Germany: Kanon Verlag, Spain: Errata Naturae, Italy: EDT
- Approx. 280 pages



Kirsty Bell is a British-American writer and art critic living in Berlin. She has published widely in magazines and journals including *Tate Etc.* and *Art in America*, and was contributing editor of *frieze* from 2011-2021. She was awarded a Warhol Foundation Grant for her book *The Artist's House*, and her essays have appeared in over seventy exhibition catalogues for major international museums and institutions such as the Whitney Museum for American Art, The Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, and Tate, UK. Her approach to writing is rooted less in her degree in Art History and English Literature from Cambridge University (1990-93) than in her hands-on experience with

contemporary art production, while working in galleries and curating exhibitions.

Annette Kehnel
We've Done It Before – A Concise History of Sustainability

“Recycling, sharing, co-operation – it was all happening before! Annette Kehnel, a medievalist, argues that our conception of economics is stuck in the nineteenth century. We have to go further back in history to think our future afresh, and save the planet. She offers surprisingly practical examples and introduces remarkable individuals from the last two thousand years. This is set to be a bold and exciting book – a must-read!”

Lyndal Roper, Regius Professor of History, Oriel College, Oxford

Sharing, swapping, giving and recycling – living as we used to!

Communities that functioned on the basis of sharing on the Monte Subiaco in Italy, sustainable fishing at Lake Constance, common lands in the UK, the economy of transient grazing among Alpine shepherds in the south of France, banks providing microcredit in Bologna and other Italian cities (Monti di Pietà) and crowdfunding to finance bridges in Avignon; progressive thinkers who analysed capital five hundred years before Marx; systems to provide collectively for those in need like the Fuggerei (social housing) in Augsburg; second-hand markets in Paris and the Beguines who lived in female communities based on the idea that less is more and who planted exquisite self-sufficient gardens in the middle of medieval cities like Antwerp and Bruges ...

Pre-modern history is full of inspiring and amazing examples and concepts that are ripe for rediscovery. And we urgently need them as today's challenges – finite resources, the twilight of consumerism, growing inequality – are pressing, but we are having difficulty finding new ways forward, because we still think and act according to nineteenth-century concepts that have become completely dysfunctional in the twenty-first century.

Historian Annette Kehnel shows us that we have to go further back in history to find inspiration for our future and provides surprising and vivid examples from medieval and early modern history. Her work is full of fundamental and inspiring alternatives to the status quo and its leading doctrine. Growth and returns were not always the measure of all things; we acted and lived differently and we could do so again. This amazing book takes a stimulating and revelatory look at a past that has the power to change our future.

Annette Kehnel

Wir konnten auch anders

Eine kurze Geschichte
der Nachhaltigkeit



Annette Kehnel has held a chair in Medieval History at the University of Mannheim. She has published numerous works on her main focus of research: cultural and economic history and historical anthropology. She received the prestigious NDR Non-Fiction Book Prize 2021 for her book "Wir konnten schon anders. Eine kurze Geschichte der Nachhaltigkeit"

- Germany: Blessing Verlag,
- Complete Ms, all rights available
- Approx. 340 pages

Bushra Al-Maktari
What have you left behind?
Voices from a forgotten war.

Unique testimonies from an isolated country and a war ignored by the world

In 2015 Bushra Al-Maqtari decided to document people's suffering in the war in Yemen. She traveled covertly through the country – inspired by the Russian Nobel Prize- winning author Svetlana Alexievich – and put her life at risk to speak with her compatriots. Often, she traveled incognito, veiled from head to toe, so she could pass through the checkpoints of the many warring parties undetected. She puts names, faces, and voices to the victims and the relatives of the victims of this forgotten war. Such details are rarely mentioned in media reports on the war in Yemen.

For foreign journalists, the country is difficult if not impossible to access, and the local media are factionalized. Bushra al-Maqtari has compiled forty individual fates in this book, a tiny fragment of the harrowing reality of the war in Yemen.

It is a quiet and, for that reason, all the more moving book, a unique testimony which makes us painfully conscious of the horrendous cost of war.

“The images that arise in the mind when reading this book leave deeper traces than news images. That makes this book so important.” ttt-magazine



Bushra al-Maktari (b. 1979) is a writer and journalist living in Sanaa, Yemen.

In 2015, she decided, like her role model Svetlana Alexievich, to document the suffering of people in the war in Yemen. Her writings are published in various Arabic and international newspapers. In 2013, she received the Françoise Giroud Award for Defense of Freedom and Liberties in Paris as well as the Leaders for Democracy Prize awarded by the Project on Middle East Democracy in Washington. For **What have you left behind? Voices from a forgotten war** Bushra al-Maktari won the Johann-Philipp-Palm-Award for Freedom of Speech together with the imprisoned Chinese publisher Gui Minhai.

- Germany: Ullstein Verlag; UK: Fitzcarraldo Editions, Sweden: Myteriforlag
- Approx. 270 pages, English proposal available, Arabic and German