

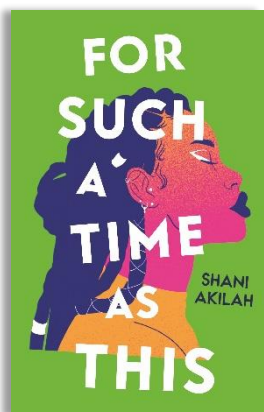
Hotlist: Frankfurt Book Fair 2023

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS by Shani Akilah

Sian Ellis-Martin

MS available, 45,000 words

UKexCan: Oneworld, Jun 2024 (pre-empt)



A powerful debut short story collection for fans of *IN EVERY MIRROR SHE'S BLACK*, *OPEN WATER* and *SUCH A FUN AGE*. In *FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS*, Shani Akilah deftly explores the connections that bind us; how we make them, maintain them, or even break them when they no longer serve us. Set against the backdrop of the global crises of 2020 and 2021, we meet a group of Black-British millennials as they explore their platonic and romantic relationships, from a fleeting meeting between past lovers and the first bloom of a new love, to the grief of losing a sibling and the difficulty of navigating racial inequalities in the workplace. Bringing to life themes of community, faith and belonging, Akilah's beautifully crafted stories give an insight into the joys — and struggles — of the many variations of love and friendship. **Shani Akilah is a British writer from South London.**

TV: Under offer

COSTANZA by Rachel Blackmore

Juliet Pickering

MS available, 94,000 words

UKexCan: Dialogue Books, Aug 2024



Rome 1636. History calls her a Muse. Temptress. Fallen woman. This is her story. In the scorched city of Rome, the cobbled streets hum with gossip and sin. Costanza Piccolomini is a respectable young wife — until she meets Gianlorenzo Bernini, the famed sculptor and star of Roman society, whose jet-black gaze matches his dark temper. From the second they set eyes upon each other, a fatal attraction is born. Their secret love burns with a passion that consumes them. But with every stolen kiss and illicit tryst, Costanza's reputation is at stake. Meanwhile, Bernini has a dangerous desire: he wants to make Costanza immortal. He vows to possess her not just in body and soul, but also in marble. When Bernini unveils his sculpture of Costanza she is exposed as his lover, marking the undoing of their affair — and the beginning of a scandal which will rock Roman society. For Bernini would rather destroy Costanza than let her go. Betrayed. Abandoned. Banished. This was meant to be the end of Costanza's story. But Costanza is no ordinary woman: from the ashes, she will rise... **COSTANZA is a dizzying and sensual historical novel that brings to life a feminist icon who has been written out of history. This addictive tale of desire and betrayal is perfect for fans of THE MARRIAGE PORTRAIT and THE MINIATURIST.**

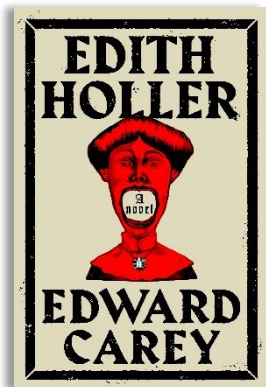
Key Rights sold: Brazil (Tordesilhas), Italy (Newton Compton), Spain (Maeva)

EDITH HOLLER by Edward Carey

400 pages

Isobel Dixon

UK: Gallic Books, Oct 2024 / US+Can: Riverhead, Oct 2023



The witty and entrancing story of a young woman trapped in a ramshackle English playhouse – and the mysterious figure who threatens its very survival. The year is 1901. In the eastern city of Norwich, bright and inquisitive young Edith Holler spends her days among the boisterous denizens of the Holler Theatre, warned by her domineering father that the playhouse will literally tumble down if she should ever leave its confines. Fascinated by tales of the city she knows only from afar, she decides to write a play of her own: a stage adaptation of the legend of Mawther Meg, a monstrous figure said to have used the blood of countless children to make the local delicacy known as Beetle Spread. But when her father suddenly announces his engagement to a peculiar, imposing woman named Margaret Unthank, heir to the actual Beetle Spread fortune, Edith scrambles to protect her father, the theatre, and her play—the one thing that's truly hers – from the newcomer's sinister designs. Illuminated by the author's trademark fantastical illustrations, **EDITH HOLLER** is a surprisingly modern fable of one young woman's struggle to escape her family's control. **'EDITH HOLLER is that rarest thing, a newly written tale that feels as though it's been discovered behind the stacked stone walls of an abandoned estate. It's eldritch, raucous, blistering, beautiful, and totally indelible.'** – Maria Dahvana Headley, *New York Times* bestselling author of *THE MERE WIFE*

Key Rights sold: Italy (La Nave di Teseo)

Options: Brazil (Darkside Books), Bulgaria (Lettera), Czech Republic (Argo), France (Cherche-Midi), Germany (Beck), Holland (Ambo Anthos), Hungary (Europa), Iraq (AlMada), Japan (Sogensha), Korea (Arcade Publishing), Lithuania (Alma Littera), Poland (Prószyński), Russia (Eksmo), Spain (Blackie Books), Sweden (Sekwa), Taiwan (Delight Press), Turkey (Ithaki)

THE CHAMBER by Will Dean

TBC

Kate Burke

UKexCan: Hodder & Stoughton, Jun 2024



AND THEN THERE WERE NONE meets **THE LAST BREATH**. A tense locked-room thriller set against a ticking clock. The beauty of an undersea world juxtaposed against bare steel, intrusive thoughts, and the constant struggle not to give way to panic. Six experienced saturation divers locked inside a hyperbaric chamber. In an emergency the door cannot be opened for nine days. Rapid decompression would be fatal for all occupants. All six are calm, trusted and highly-trained. They live in incredibly hot, close quarters. And then one is found dead in his bunk... And if someone unlocks the door, everyone dies... **Will Dean is the author of the sensational standalone thrillers THE LAST THING TO BURN and FIRST BORN, and the Tuva Moodyson crime series. His previous standalone novel THE LAST PASSENGER was a Top 20 Sunday Times bestseller.**

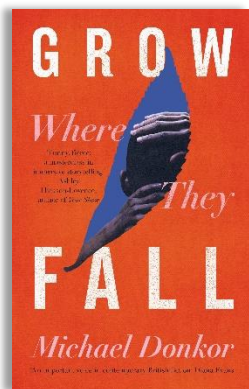
Options: China (Translations Magazine, Yilin), Croatia (Znanje), France (Belfond), Holland (AW Bruna), Hungary (Lettero), Italy (Marsilio), Russia (Eksmo)

GROW WHERE THEY FALL by Michael Donkor

MS available, 100,000 words

Juliet Pickering

UKexCan: Fig Tree, Mar 2024 (at auction)



A richly layered and insightful exploration of black masculinity, from a warm, lively voice in fiction. Bright and precocious ten-year-old Kwame Akromah knows how to behave. He knows the importance of good manners, how to stay at the top of the class and out of the way when his mother and father are angry with each other. But when his charismatic cousin Yaw arrives from Ghana to live with the family while he looks for work, the rules Kwame has learned about the world can no longer guide him. Twenty years later, Kwame is a secondary-school teacher, popular with his students and depended on by his friends. His is a life spent elegantly weaving between the classroom, the labyrinth of Grindr politics and increasingly intermittent visits to his parents' home. Behind the confident façade, however, he is as driven by caution as he was as a boy. But when electrifying changemaker Marcus Felix is appointed as headteacher, Kwame must reckon with himself as he never has before. Can he face the ghosts of his childhood? How will he learn to move through the world without losing who he is? And where does existing stop and living begin? **Beautifully written, spirited and deeply moving novel about a young man finding the courage to expand the limits of who he might become, from the acclaimed author of HOLD.**

QUEEN OF A DISTANT LAND by Barbara Erskine

MS available, 162,000 words

Isobel Dixon

WEL: HarperCollins, Aug 2024



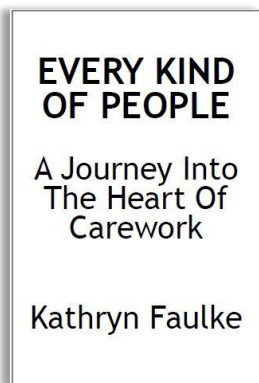
Another captivating time-slip novel from the million copy bestselling author of **LADY OF HAY**. Why can Cadi hear the sound of Roman centurions despite the centuries that separate her from the Roman occupation? Is it connected to the mysterious meadow that borders her garden? When the meadow is earmarked for a brash new housing development, Cadi along with the other inhabitants of her Welsh village, are determined to fight it. They soon discover that the meadow was the site of a Roman villa — could this explain the otherworldly sounds and visions Cadi's been experiencing? Cadi's search for answers will reveal a connection between her and one of the villa's previous inhabitants, Elen — a Welsh princess who is married off to an austere Roman general when she is only a girl. **Barbara Erskine is the acclaimed author of many internationally best-selling novels beginning with the much-loved classic, LADY OF HAY, which has been continuously in print for 35 years.**

Option: Germany (Weltbild), Czech (Euromedia), Hungary (Alexandra)

EVERY KIND OF PEOPLE: A Journey into the Heart of Carework by Kathryn Faulke Isobel Dixon

MS available, 81,000 words

UKexCan: Fig Tree, Jul 2024



A vivid, moving memoir about working as a carer and the life-changing power of an often-invisible job. Anxious and burnt out, Kate has left a senior role in the National Health Service and looks for a new, less stressful job. Believing she's found this in carework, she signs with an agency and is soon plunged into a challenging and eye-opening new world. Facing low pay, long journeys between homes and pressurised thirty-minute visits, all combined with the shocking onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, Kate soon realises that the people she cares for have much to teach her too. Sometimes stretched to the limit, she comes to realise that in the midst of it all, she has found her vocation, that care work can be joyful too, and that to care is the most important thing of all. **EVERY KIND OF PEOPLE** is Kathryn Faulke's first book and has already struck chords with many readers in the publishing community – and promises to be a striking lead title for 2024. **EVERY KIND OF PEOPLE** stands alongside books like Christie Watson's **THE LANGUAGE OF KINDNESS**, but with its beautiful writing it will also appeal to fans of memoirs like **THE OUTFRAN** and **THE SALT PATH**.

THE LAST MAN IN PARIS by Benjamin Johncock

Juliet Pickering

MS available, 58,000 words

UK: on submission



A beautiful novel in the vein of **SMALL THINGS LIKE THESE** and **ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE**, exploring themes of migration, belonging and fatherhood. Frank Hawks is running a ramshackle bar in Puerto Rico when his mother-in-law, Marion, shows up out of the blue, demanding he comes back to New York – the city Frank fled to from Germany after his wife, Rachel, was shot by Nazis as the three of them attempted to escape persecution. He reluctantly returns with Marion, where they meet an old friend, Willard, who's beleaguered by his own loss: his 10-year-old nephew has disappeared in Paris, a city increasingly in danger of being invaded by the approaching German army. Recognising something of his own plight as a young orphan – and desperate to escape New York once more – Frank takes it upon himself to go to Paris in search of the boy. But what he finds in France will be very different: a new chance at love, and a death-defying rescue he has not anticipated. **Benjamin's debut novel, THE LAST PILOT, was published in the US by Picador and the UK by Myriad, in July 2015. It won the Authors' Club Best First Novel Award in 2016.**

PASSIONTIDE by Monique Roffey

Isobel Dixon

MS available, 90,000 words

UKexCan: Vintage, May 2024 / US+Can: Knopf, Aug 2024



Timely and fiercely alive, the electrifying new novel by the author of **THE MERMAID OF BLACK CONCH**. Monique Roffey is back with a striking new work. When a young steel pan musician – female and foreign – is found dead the morning after Carnival, the victim-shaming response of the city’s mayor causes an outcry. An outcry that leads four very different women on the Caribbean island to spark an uprising, an unexpected revolution. Wrenching, fierce, tender, with another unforgettable cast of characters in a novel to linger over and remember. **‘Monique Roffey is a unique talent’** – Bernardine Evaristo

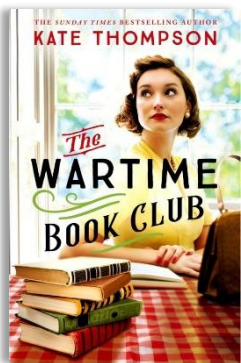
Options: Brazil (DarkSide Books), Croatia (Fraktura), Estonia (Rahva Raamat), France (Mémoire D’Encrier), Germany (Tropen), Holland (Orlando), Hungary (Könyvmolyképző), Italy (Marsilio), Japan (Sayusha), Poland (Swiat), Romania (Alice Books), Russia (Arkadia), Serbia (Laguna), Turkey (Can)

THE WARTIME BOOK CLUB by Kate Thompson

Kate Burke

MS available, 496 pages

WEL: Hodder, Feb 2024



The heart-warming and inspiring new novel of love, bravery and resistance. From enchanting cliff tops and white sandy bays to the pretty cobbled streets of St Helier, Jersey is known as the land of milk and honey. But for best friends Bea Rose (the local postwoman) and Grace Le Motte (who works in the island's only library) it becomes the frontline to everyday resistance when their beloved island is occupied by German forces in 1940. Inspired by astonishing true events, **THE WARTIME BOOK CLUB** is an unforgettable story of everyday bravery and resistance, full of romance, drama and camaraderie and a tribute to the joy of reading and the power of books in our darkest hour. **Kate is an award-winning journalist, ghost-writer and novelist.**

Options: Brazil (Record), Finland (Bazar), France (City Editions), Germany (Droemer), Hungary (Libri), Italy (Garzanti), Kuwait – Arabic (Jadal), Slovakia (Ikar), Spain (Maeva)

THE MEMORY HUNTER by Hannah Treave

TBC

Kate Burke

WEL: Canelo, Jan 2024



A stunning and heartwrenching story of friendship and family, the perfect read for fans of Dani Atkins, Jojo Moyes and Marian Keyes. Ava is a firefighter. She finds comfort in reuniting salvaged items with their rightful owners from the blazes she and her colleagues attend. Cassie's home has burned to the ground. She and her young daughter have no family to turn to, until Ava and her husband offer up their spare room. Thrown together but kindred souls, the two women learn they both have roots in Ireland – it's where Ava's unknown birth mother gave her up for adoption, and where Cassie's estranged family live. Embarking on a journey to Ireland, they will discover that sometimes the family that matters most is the one they've found. Through heartbreak, destruction, hope and love, Ava and Cassie's lives will be changed forever. **Hannah Treave is a freelance journalist with fifteen years' experience working with women's weekly and monthly magazines. Her previous novel, THE NOTEKEEPER, has sold in 6 languages.**

Options: China (Beijing Guangchen Culture Communication Co.), Germany (Piper), Italy (Newton Compton Editori), Russia (AST), Spain (Newton Compton Editores)

HAPPY ENDING by Anne-Marie Varga

92,000 words

Kate Burke

UK: On submission



BEACH READ meets EMILY IN PARIS in this fresh and poignant romantic comedy. Twenty-six-year-old one-hit wonder novelist Rosie Watkins wants to get one thing straight: she is not running away. Has she sub-let her apartment in New York City? Yes. Has she deleted her social media so that no one besides her family knows what she's doing? Yes. Has she booked a one-way ticket to London? Also, yes. But that does not mean she's running away. She just needs... something new. Hence, London. Maybe once she's there, she'll finally be able to get over everything the past year has thrown at her and move on with her life. Rosie quickly finds her footing with some new friends: magnetic Tara who might be secretly in love with her friend, Pat; Saoirse, a serial dater who doesn't believe in love and Deepti, who's navigating a career crisis that could change the course of her life. They all welcome Rosie with open arms – all except George: moody, arrogant, full-of-himself George, who just happens to think that Rosie is an "entitled, annoying, energetic American." He also just happens to be Tara's twin brother – tall, dark, tattooed, super hot and definitely off limits. But the more settled Rosie becomes in London, the more her past continues to haunt her. So, what exactly is Rosie hiding? And can don't-even-go-there George be that someone to help her move on? **Anne-Marie spent five years working in publishing at Penguin Random House USA and now spends her time writing romantic comedies.**