

MUSWELL
PRESS



2024

With new crime fiction from star thriller writers, a stunning second novel from Polari shortlisted author Jon Ransom and fascinating memoirs; one of coming out, *Lifting Off*, the other of a life lived centre-stage, *From Mohair Suits to Kinky Boots*, the 2024 Spring list encapsulates the very best of Muswell's publishing, and we are delighted to share it with you.

Proof copies are available of all our titles, so if you are a reviewer, bookseller or blogger and would like an early copy please let us know.

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FICTION | JANUARY '24



THE GALLOPERS

Jon Ransom

ISBN: 9781739193027 | B format HB
£14.99 | 224pp | 25th January 2024 | UK/BC

Shortlisted for the 2023 Polari First Book Prize for *The Whale Tattoo*

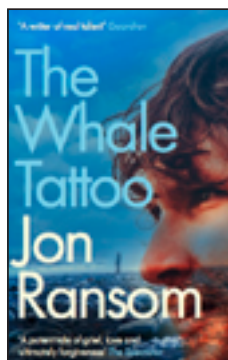
'A powerful new voice of gay working-class life'
– *Guardian*

Spanning 30 years, from the green fields of Norfolk in 1953 to London during the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s, this blistering tale follows the lives of Eli, Shane and Jimmy. Three men, united by a devastating secret.

Visceral and mesmerising, *The Gallopers* is a novel of deceit, desire and loss, and a book that confirms Jon Ransom's status as a writer of great talent.

His debut, *The Whale Tattoo*, shortlisted for the '23 Polari Prize, was hailed by *The Guardian* as one of the Debuts of the Year and described Jon as 'a writer of real talent... a powerful new voice of gay working-class life' Uli Lenart in *Attitude* said 'a book of visceral, magnetic, raw pulsating beauty. We haven't read a novel this brilliant since *Swimming in the Dark* by Tomasz Jedrowski.' Jon has since appeared at Edinburgh Book Festival 2022 and Hay Festival 2023. He lives near Cambridge.

www.jonransom.com



CRIME | FEBRUARY '24



EVERY TRICK IN THE BOOK

Bernard O'Keeffe

ISBN: 9781739471606 | B format PB
£9.99 | 368pp | 15th February 2024 | UK/BC

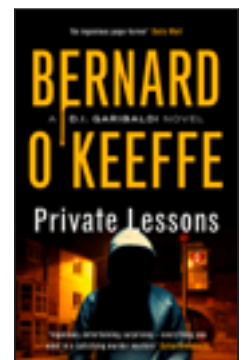
DI Garibaldi series optioned by Warner Sisters

'Absolutely gripping... a truly adhesive piece of writing' – John Carey

DI Garibaldi and his team are shocked when they discover that local writer, Ben Joseph, has been killed in the same manner, and at the same location, as the victim in his crime novel 'Schooled in Murder', the night after appearing at the Barnes Literary Festival.

Reading on, they uncover further connections with real life. Ben Joseph, the pseudonym of Liam Allerton is, like the victim in his novel, a retired teacher who taught at St Mark's, a school similar to St Jude's, in his novel.

O'Keeffe was a teacher and his books often take a pop at privilege. *The Final Round* (2021), focussed on a group of entitled ex-Oxbridge students one of whom gets murdered, his second *Private Lessons* (2023) featured infighting and murder amongst a group of private tutors in Barnes working for nauseatingly competitive parents *The Daily Mail* Golden Age reviewer adores Bernard and has given both books glowing reviews. He lives in Barnes, SW London.





CLASSIC ESPIONAGE | MARCH '24



THE LIFELINE
Phyllis Bottome

ISBN: 9781739879402 | B format PB
£10.99 | 234pp | 14th March 2024 | UK/BC

By the woman who taught Ian Fleming to write

'I read Phyllis Bottome's *The Lifeline* and saw that Mark Chalmers was Fleming, and that he had turned Chalmers into Bond' – Nigel West

First published in 1946, seven years before Bond's debut in *Casino Royale*, Bottome's hero is Mark Chalmers. He is a master at Eton, dark haired, athletic, keen on winter sports, fluent in French and German and with a taste for wine, food and women.

It is 1938, Chalmers, is recruited by an old friend at the Foreign Office and introduced to his boss 'B'. Reluctantly he agrees to take on a hazardous mission for British Intelligence – to parachute into Nazi-occupied Austria and pass on information to a British agent. Chalmers has no intention of committing himself beyond this one job but finds himself sucked into fighting fascism with the Underground.

It was at the school she ran in Austria with her ex-spy husband, Ernán Forbes Dennis, that Phyllis Bottome taught Ian Flemming, after he was thrown out of Eton. It seems that Bond may not have existed without Bottome. Amongst her many bestsellers was *The Mortal Storm* made into a prescient anti-fascist film starring James Stewart. She died in London in 1963.

THRILLER | APRIL '24



THE LION CONSPIRACY
Peter Hain

ISBN: 9781739471668 | Royal PB
£14.99 | 316pp | 4th April 2024 | UK/BC

Film Rights under negotiation

'Brilliant, part crime thriller and part political manifesto' – Book of the Week *The Sun*

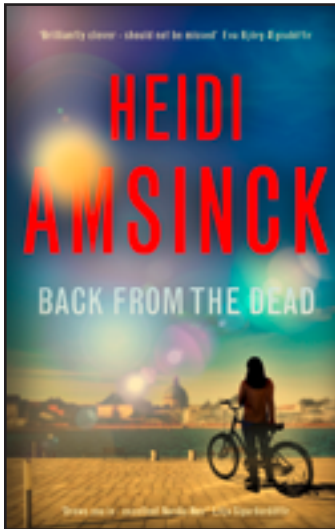
The Lion Conspiracy is the final book in by Peter Hain's acclaimed trilogy of environmental thrillers, following *The Elephant Conspiracy* and *The Rhino Conspiracy*.

From South Africa to Zanzibar, from Kenya to Britain, activists are battling to save lion prides, a species more threatened today than rhinos and elephants, because of illegal wildlife trading. Having thwarted murderous poachers in *The Elephant Conspiracy*, the Veteran, Thandi and Mkhize are back battling to save lion prides from being killed for their claws, teeth and bones.

Peter Hain was born in South Africa. He was one of the leaders of the UK Anti-Apartheid Movement the 1970s and '80s. Hain was MP for Neath, and a senior minister in the Tony Blair and Gordon Brown governments for 12 years. He is a lifelong Human Rights campaigner, and a Labour Peer in the House of Lords. Hain has written and edited twenty-one books including *Mandela*, *Outside In* and *Pretoria Boy*. He lives in London and S Wales.



CRIME | APRIL '24



BACK FROM THE DEAD
Heidi Amsinck

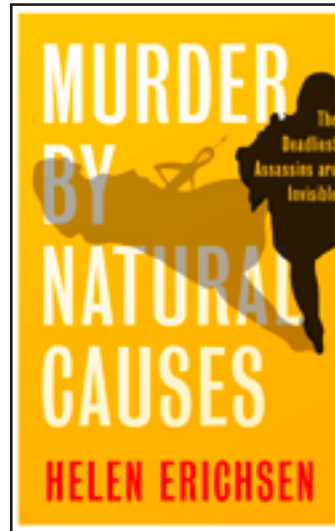
ISBN: 9781739123857 | B format PB
£9.99 | 362pp | 18th April 2024 | UK/BC

'A wonderfully atmospheric noir which felt like the literary equivalent of curling up with a box set of *The Bridge* or *The Killing*' – *The Times*

June, and as Copenhagen swelters under record temperatures, a headless corpse surfaces in the murky harbour, landing a new case on DI Henrik Jungersen's desk just as his holiday is about to start. Elsewhere in the city, crime reporter Jensen is covertly investigating the disappearance of a local MP's chauffeur. As their two worlds elide, Jensen and Henrik are thrown together once more in desperate search for the truth.

The third in the series featuring Copenhagen investigative reporter, Jensen. All three are characterised by a powerful sense of place (*My Name is Jensen* 2020, *The Girl in the Photo* 2022). Brought up in Denmark, Heidi lives in London and writes in English. Her first book won the Danish Crime Academy debut award and was ahead of Stephen King in the bestseller list. She is part of the Scandi crime set and a frequent visitor to festivals all over the world.

CRIME | MAY '24



MURDER BY NATURAL CAUSES
Helen Erichsen

ISBN: 9781739471620 | B format PB
£9.99 | 278pp | 26th April 2024 (HB May '23)

'Villanelle meets Orphan X in this incredibly well researched and written debut...Simply brilliant' – Graham Bartlett

Cilla is a 22-year-old contract killer, specialising in the dry job: a murder interpreted as death by natural causes. Plucked from her family home in Russia and trained as an elite assassin, she does five jobs a year and occasionally works freelance. She also happens to be a talented bridge player.

Neither strong, nor beautiful, Cilla isn't your typical female protagonist. In fact, she is so unremarkable as to render her almost invisible, an advantage in her line of work. She has survived because she is clever, stubborn and lucky. But Cilla knows that, statistically, her luck is about to run out.

Helen Erichsen has a background in sociology, psychology and criminology. A talented bridge player, she has represented England several times. She lives in Kent.



CRIME | MAY '24



SECOND SKIN
Dugald Bruce Lockhart

ISBN: 9781739123871 | Demy HB
£16.99 | 320pp | 30th May 2024 | World

The Lizard, now a Prodigy Films International and Studio Pictures co-production

'Taut, compelling, masterfully constructed. Outstanding' – William Boyd

Five years after witnessing murder on the Aegean Island of Paros, Alistair Haston receives a call from a man claiming to be his son's grandfather, but Alistair has no knowledge of a son...until now.

Confused, and desperate to find out more, Alistair heads to Athens to track down his ex-girlfriend but on arrival he is ambushed by MI6, who enlist him to spy on a suspected Mafia kidnap gang, intent on abducting his son. As the chase moves from Athens to Zakynthos, and on to Cyprus, it slowly dawns on Alistair, that this abduction could well be related to that deadly summer on Paros five years ago.

Dugald's debut, *The Lizard*, was described by the Daily Mail as 'hugely impressive', one of the 'best crime thrillers' of the year said the Guardian. As a professional actor Dugald has great charisma and would enhance any festival panel. He played the Swedish dad in the West End version of *Mamma Mia*, appeared in *The Crown* and is currently in *Private Lives* with Patricia Hodge and Nigel Havers. He lives in SE London.

MEMOIR | JUNE '24



LIFTING OFF:
A LIFE IN FREEFALL
Karen MacLeod

ISBN: 9781739193072 | B format PB
£10.99 | 224pp | 6th June 2024 | World

Betty Trask Award winning author of *In Search of the Missing Eyelash*

Identity, sexuality and family laid bare

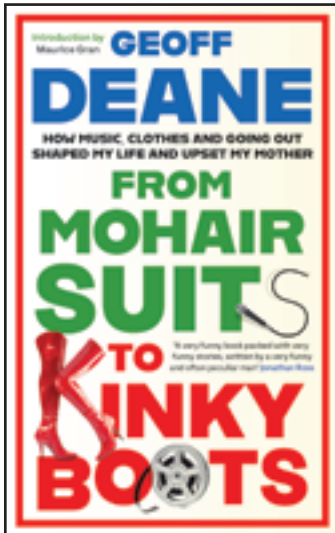
Told with the wit and verve that characterised her debut, Karen's memoir of flying as BA cabin crew offers a fascinating insight into the profound impact of long haul life. Having come out as a lesbian she is forced to go back in as colleagues advise her that it is not ok to be gay, unlike male cabin crew.

Against a backdrop of exotic locations, Karen slowly unravels as the inability to truly be herself reverberates. This is the story of how Karen came into land. How she learned to look after herself and discovered her true strength.

Karen performs comedy as Barbara Brownskirt, a Judi Dench mega-fan and poet-in-residence at the No 197 bus stop on the Croydon Road, in SE London. She works at Bookseller Crow on the Hill and is a visiting lecturer at UCAS. www.karenmacleod.co.uk



MEMOIR | JUNE '24



FROM MOHAIR BOOTS TO KINKY SUITS

Geoff Deane

ISBN: 9781739471637 | B format PB (HB Oct '23)
£10.99 | 252pp | 13th June 2024 | World

How Music, Clothes and Going Out Shaped My Life and Upset My Mother

'A very funny book with very funny stories, written by a very funny and often peculiar man' – Jonathan Ross

The rip-roaring memoir of a life lived large, from London's East End to Hollywood and back again with a cast ranging from local oddballs to international celebrities.

As the lead singer of *Modern Romance* (*Everybody Salsa!*, *Best Year's of Our Lives*) Geoff Deane toured the world, as the screenwriter of *Kinky Boots* he conquered Hollywood, now comes Geoff Deane's rip-roaring memoir of a life lived large, from London's East End to Hollywood and back again. With an extraordinary rich use of language, and a smattering of Cockney rhyming slang, Yiddish and Polari. Glossary included.

Geoff has been described by as Kimberley Chambers as 'the missing link between Micky Flanagan and David Sedaris'. A brilliant raconteur he will be touring bookshops and festivals.

FICTION | JULY '24



DARKNESS FALLS IN JAKARTA

Louise Soraya Black

ISBN: 9781739471644 | B format PB
£9.99 | 234pp | 4th July 2024 | UK/BC

Virginia Prize winning author of *Pomegranate Sky*

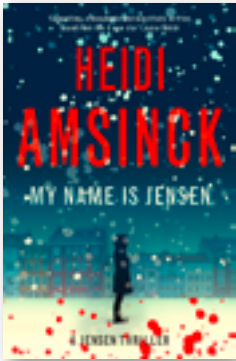
The death of Claire's parents triggers haunting memories of her past life in Jakarta, a time that Claire has been running away from her whole life. Forced to leave the city she loved, and packed off to school in the UK, by her disappointed parents, Claire is racked with guilt about the agonising event she'd become embroiled in.

Twenty years later, with husband and son in tow, she decides to travel back in the hope of finding answers and perhaps forgiveness. Is confronting her past the key to her deliverance?

Louise writes beautifully and her seductive descriptions of Jakarta are mesmerising. Her previous book, *The Water Garden* (2021) was described by Fay Weldon as 'very attractive, beautifully written' and by Ella Berthoud as 'a deeply seductive read'. She has a British mother and Iranian father and spent part of her childhood in Indonesia where her father worked for UNICEF. She currently lives in Ibiza.



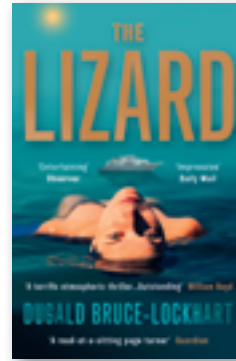
Crime Highlights



**MY NAME IS
JENSEN**
Heidi Amsinck



**THE GIRL IN
THE PHOTO**
Heidi Amsinck



THE LIZARD
Dugald Bruce
Lockhart



**THE RHINO
CONSPIRACY**
Peter Hain



**THE ELEPHANT
CONSPIRACY**
Peter Hain



**PRIVATE
LESSONS**
Bernard O'Keeffe



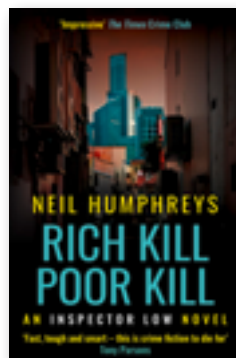
**THE FINAL
ROUND**
Bernard O'Keeffe



**REILLY ACE OF
SPIES**
Robin Bruce Lockhart



**MARINA BAY
SINS**
Neil Humphreys



**RICH KILL,
POOR KILL**
Neil Humphreys



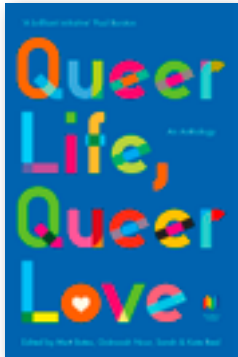
LOST WOMEN
Neil Humphreys



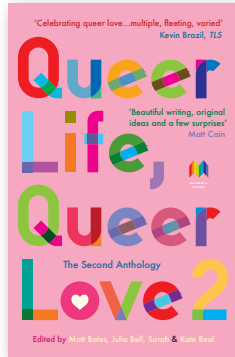
**BLOODY
FOREIGNERS**
Neil Humphreys



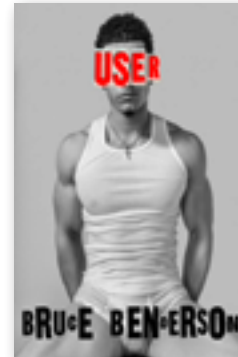
Queer List Highlights



QUEER LIFE, QUEER LOVE: THE FIRST ANTHOLOGY



QUEER LIFE, QUEER LOVE: THE SECOND ANTHOLOGY



USER
Bruce Benderson



THE LURE
Felice Picano

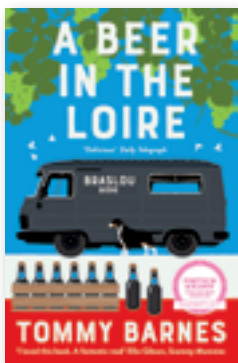


CHILDREN OF THE SUN
Max Schaefer



THE GAUDY IMAGE
William Talsman

Travel Highlights



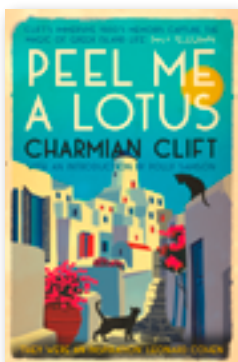
A BEER IN THE LOIRE
Tommy Barnes



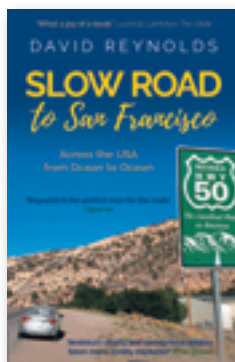
TROUBLE BREWING IN THE LOIRE
Tommy Barnes



MERMAID SINGING
Charmian Clift



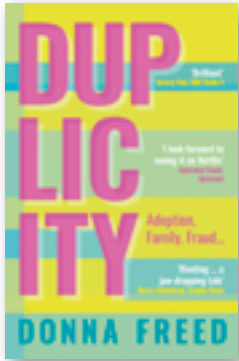
PEEL ME A LOTUS
Charmian Clift



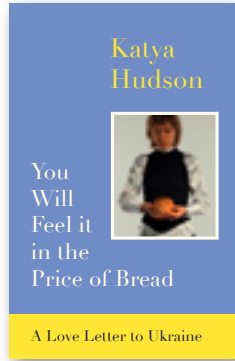
SLOW ROAD TO SAN FRANCISCO
David Reynolds



Memoir Highlights

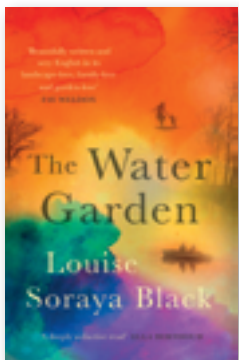


**DUPLICITY:
ADOPTION,
FAMILY,
FRAUD...**
Donna Freed



**YOU WILL
FEEL IT IN
THE PRICE
OF BREAD**
Katya Hudson

Fiction Highlights



**THE
WATER
GARDEN**
Louise
Soraya Black



SCENT
Isabel
Costello



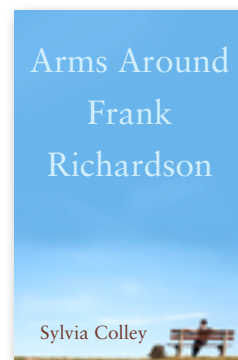
**A LITTLE
HOPE**
Ethan Joella



**A QUIET
LIFE**
Ethan Joella



**THE
WHALE
TATTOO**
Jon Ransom



**ARMS
AROUND
FRANK
RICHARD-
SON**
Sylvia Colley

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