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Celebrating Women Writers from Around the World

Belletrista

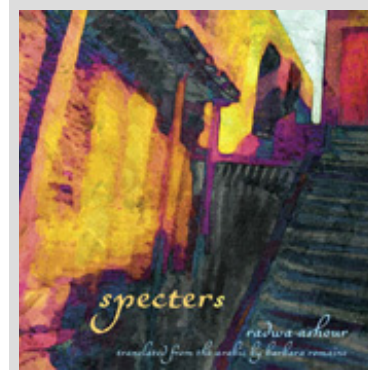
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Explore Africa! Click here to go to reviews of 20 great books written by African women.



We interview Najat El-Hachmi, author of *The Last Patriarch*.



Specters by Egyptian author Radwa Ashour, Chapter One

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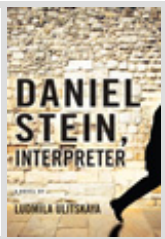
If you are enjoying what you see here in Belletrista, please

With this issue Belletrista is marking her second birthday! Over the past two years, all of us here at Belletrista have enjoyed bringing to you a diversity of women writers from around the world, so that we might celebrate together the richness and variety of their literature.

In this issue, we are featuring a special section of twenty reviews of books by women from Africa. While not an exhaustive selection, it's an excellent introduction to women's writing from a vast and varied continent. In keeping with our African theme, we have an exclusive interview with Moroccan/Catalan author Najat El-Hachmi, and an excerpt from Egyptian author Radwa Ashour's latest book to be translated into English. Of course, you'll also find our usual review section of interesting books from around the world, and our largest ever New & Notable section, packed with fine books for your reading pleasure. Whether you are a regular to these pages or a newcomer, thank you for being a Belletrista reader!

Reviews

Click on 'Reviews' to see the full list of this issue's reviews...



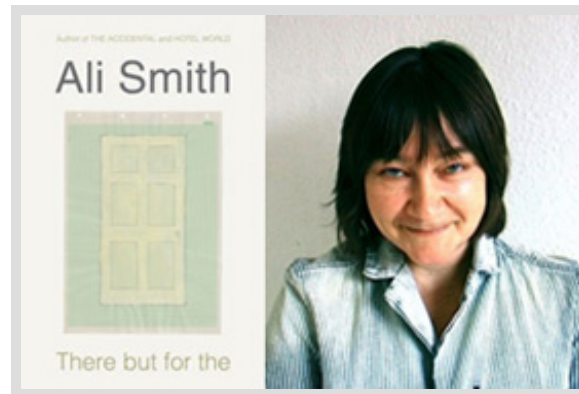
DANIEL STEIN, INTERPRETER
Ludmila Ulitskaya
Translated from the Russian by Arch Tait

Oswald Rufeisen might be called a saint; he lived a simple, selfless life, full of kindness and sacrifice. Truth is often greater than fiction, yet Ludmila Ulitskaya succeeds in fictionalising the life of Oswald Rufeisen as 'Daniel Stein' or Brother Daniel. She weaves a fascinating web of activity around Brother Daniel's life from his early life in Poland; through the years of the Second World War when he works for the Gestapo as an interpreter, yet saves many people from the Nazi death camps; to his years as a Jewish Catholic priest in Israel.

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Reviewed by Ceri Evans

Ali Smith's *There But For the*



An extended review by Rachael Beale



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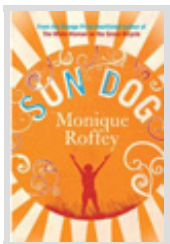
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SUN DOG
Monica Roffey

Glorious colours riotously abound in Monique Roffey's first novel: 'deep purples, maroons, reds and oranges'. It is set in a delicatessen cum cafe in Shepherd's Bush, London where large, ungainly August Chalmin presides over culinary riches.

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Reviewed by Chris Mills



THE COOKBOOK COLLECTOR
Allegra Goodman

The Cookbook Collector is one of those instantly engaging books that makes you want to tell all your friends that they must read it even when you are only half way through the novel yourself. Author Allegra Goodman did herself a disservice when she described her new novel as "Sense and Sensibility for the digital age", particularly given the number of outraged responses that subsequently appeared on Jane Austen fan pages. Goodman deals with much bigger issues than Jane Austen ever aspired to write about in her novels, however exquisite those classics might be.

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Reviewed by Dorothy Dudek Vinicombe

If Written By a Woman

Visit our new Belletrista blog!

The Caine Prize for African Writing 2011 – shortlist announced

The shortlist for this year's Caine Prize has just been announced and three women are in the running for the prestigious award. This is always an exciting time of year – the Prize is a great way to discover short stories by excellent writers. Lucky for us, the Prize's website links to a copy of ...

Read the Rest



THIS TOO SHALL PASS

S. J. Finn

I inhale. Realign my chair, which slides a little too easily under me. I do have one niggling concern (there are several but this is the one that comes to mind): while I will go on feeling as transparent as air, what I'm about to put in writing will show itself in a dense hue, one that might even shock me. —With these thoughts we are introduced to Jen, now known as Monty, who goes on to simply and honestly recount the changes that have occurred in her life.

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Reviewed by Judy Lim



THE HUT OF FALLEN PERSIMMONS

Adriana Lisboa


Translated from the Portuguese by Sarah Green

It is interesting to read a book that you are certain will be a love story—though you aren't sure whether happy or ill-fated, requited or unrequited—only to find yourself perpetually poised, waiting for that romance to start. Haruki, an illustrator of books, and Celina, an embroidery artist, meet by chance on a subway in Rio de Janeiro.

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Reviewed by Tad Deffler

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