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*Celebrating Women Writers from Around the World*

# Belletrista

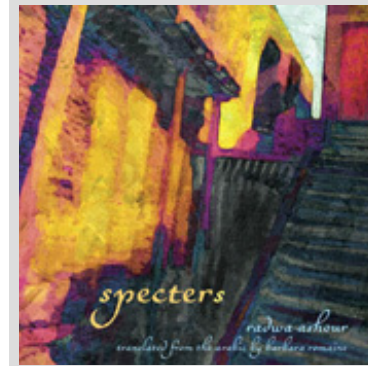
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Explore Africa! Click here to go to reviews of 20 great books written by African women.



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



*Specters* by Egyptian author Radwa Ashour, Chapter One

## **Belletrista - Issue 12**

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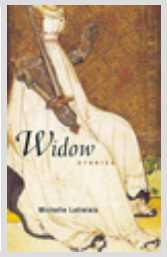
If you are enjoying what you see here in Belletrista, please

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...



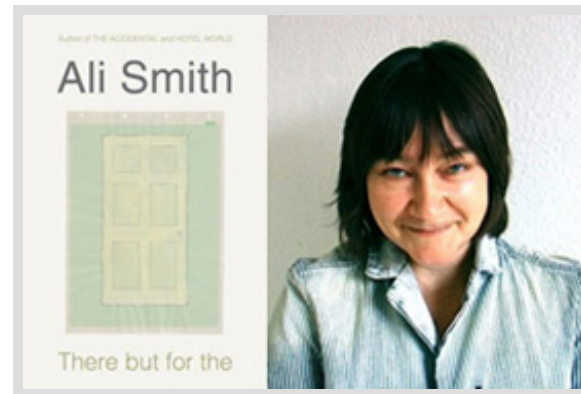
### WIDOW: STORIES Michelle Latiolais

Michelle Latiolais has a rapacious love of words. She plays with them, rolls them around in her mouth, ruminates on their meanings and their origins, reads them backwards even, and links them to other words, constantly coming to different insights and enjoyment of the language.

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Reviewed by Akeela Gaibie Dawood

## Ali Smith's *There But For the*



An extended review by Rachael Beale



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## **PENWOMAN**

*Elin Wagner*

*Translated from the Swedish by Sarah Death*

A runaway bestseller when it was published in Sweden in 1910, and now a classic, Elin Wagner's *Penwoman* was "the book of the Swedish women's suffrage movement" according to translator Sarah Death. Now 100 years old, *Penwoman* remains a captivating story that convincingly transports the reader back to the beginning of the twentieth century, but also reaches ahead to the twenty-first and speaks to the gender inequality that still exists.

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**Reviewed by Jana Herlander**



## **THE SKIN OF THE SKY**

*Elena Poniatowska*

*Translated from the Spanish by Deanna Heikennen*

*The Skin of the Sky* follows the life of Lorenzo de Tena, one of Mexico's most celebrated astronomers. His childhood bond with his dotting mother is shattered by her early death, leaving him to be raised by an apathetic father. His mother's ...

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**Reviewed by Andy Barnes**



## **HOTEL BOSPHORUS**

*Esmahan Aykol*

*Translated from the Turkish by Ruth Whitehouse*

Kati Hirschel is a young German bookseller who loves living in Istanbul and running a shop that specializes in mysteries and crime novels. She enjoys spending time with her Turkish friends, and her life ...

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**Reviewed by Maggie Oldendorf**

## **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**



## HEATWAVE AND CRAZY BIRDS

**Gavriela Avigur-Rolem**

*Translated from the Hebrew by Dalya Bilu*

*Heatwave and Crazy Birds* is a dense and complex, but ultimately rewarding book about one woman's search for 'her' Israel. Rich with historical references but rooted firmly in the present, it is a bittersweet examination of the Israeli people's relationship with the land they live on and the problems it faces.

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**Reviewed by Andy Barnes**

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