

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter



August 2018

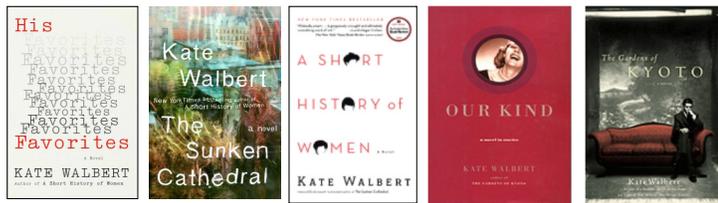
AUTHORS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Kate Walbert

The melancholy, poignant, and emotionally wrenching psychological fiction of Kate Walbert focuses on women struggling with loss, haunting memories, and social repression. Her character-driven, intricately plotted, and frequently interlinked or broken narratives offer rich, introspective

portraits of well-developed and emotionally complex female characters who are dissatisfied with their lives and are experiencing personal, romantic, and professional doubts.



Partial List:

His Favorites (Aug. 2018)

A searing and timely novel about a teenaged girl, a charismatic teacher, and a dark, open secret.

The Sunken Cathedral (2005)

A pair of widows, an art historian, their painting class instructor and an increasingly insecure neighbor navigate rapid changes and extreme weather in their Manhattan community.

A Short History of Women (2009)

Inspired by a suffragist ancestor who starved herself to promote the integration of Cambridge University, Evie refuses to marry and Dorothy defies a ban on photographing the bodies of her dead Iraq War soldier sons, a choice that embarrasses Dorothy's daughters.

Our Kind (2004)

Eight former housewives from the 1950s, having divorced and seen their children grow up, band together for support in a shared search for purpose, love, and identity in a modern world in which their roles are no longer clear.

The Gardens of Kyoto (2001)

Randall was Ellen's favorite cousin. When he dies on Iwo Jima, she turns to the legacy he left her: his diary and a book called "The Gardens of Kyoto." Unfolding in lyrical, seductive prose, her story becomes a mesmerizing exploration of the interplay of love and loss.

(Annotations from NoveList)



Olen Steinhauer

Olen Steinhauer pens both historical crime fiction and contemporary spy thrillers. His compelling work is marked by a fast pace and intricate plotting. Steinhauer sets his novels anywhere from Eastern Europe to China to Washington, D. C., providing a wide playing field for his deadly covert agents and his tenacious criminal investigators.



Partial List:

The Middleman (Aug. 2018)

The rise and fall of a domestic left-wing terrorist group is traced from the perspectives of an FBI agent, an undercover agent, a convert and a writer on the sidelines.

All the Old Knives (2015)

Six years ago in Vienna, terrorists took over a hundred hostages, and the rescue attempt went terribly wrong. The CIA's Vienna station was witness to this tragedy. So when it all went wrong, the question had to be asked: Had their agent been compromised, and how?

The Cairo Affair (2014)

The assassination of an American diplomat in Hungary places a Cairo-based CIA agent in love with the victim's wife, an Egyptian intelligence agent and an American analyst at the mercy of a dangerous political game of shifting allegiances.

An American Spy (2012)

When the CIA's Department of Tourism is dismantled by an elaborate Chinese intelligence scheme that has caused numerous agent deaths, survivor Milo Weaver is placed at risk by his former boss.

36 Yalta Boulevard (2005)

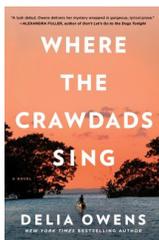
A member of the homicide department of the people's militia, State Security Officer Brano Sev is sent to the village of his birth to interrogate a potential defector, but his mission is complicated by a murder in which he becomes the prime suspect.

The Bridge of Sighs (2003)

Investigating murders for the post-World War II People's Militia, Emil Brod suspects political motives behind the killing of a state songwriter and finds himself accused of spying by his corrupt colleagues in the homicide department.

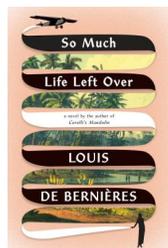
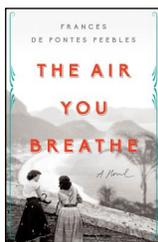
NEW FICTION

(Annotations from BookLetters and NovelList)



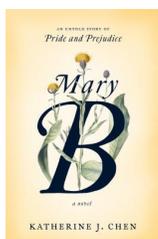
Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens. For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. Perfect for fans of Barbara Kingsolver and Karen Russell, *Where the Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder.

The Air You Breathe by Frances de Pontes Peebles. The story of an intense female friendship fueled by affection, envy and pride--and each woman's fear that she would be nothing without the other. Skinny, nine-year-old orphaned Does is working in the kitchen of a sugar plantation in 1930s Brazil when in walks a girl who changes everything. Graca, the spoiled daughter of a wealthy sugar baron, is clever, well fed, pretty, and thrillingly ill behaved. Born to wildly different worlds, Does and Gra a quickly bond over shared mischief, and then, on a deeper level, over music.



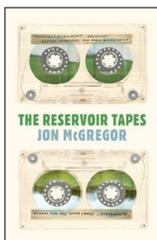
So Much Life Left Over by Louis De Bernieres. A closely knit group of British men and women struggle to cope with the world, and their own traumas, in the aftermath of World War I. A powerfully evocative and emotionally charged novel from the acclaimed author of *Corelli's Mandolin*.

If You Leave Me by Crystal Hana Kim. An emotionally riveting debut novel about war, family, and forbidden love--the unforgettable saga of two ill-fated lovers in Korea and the heartbreaking choices they're forced to make in the years surrounding the civil war that still haunts us today.



Mary B by Katherine J. Chen. The awkward middle child of five, Mary Bennet, who loses herself in the secret pleasures of reading and writing in 19th-century England, soon discovers that her fictional creations are no match for the very real scandal, tragedy and romance that come into her life.

The Reservoir Tapes by John McGregor. A teenage girl has gone missing. The whole community has been called upon to join the search. And now an interviewer arrives, intent on capturing the community's unstable stories about life in the weeks and months before Becky Shaw vanished. *The Reservoir Tapes* take us deep into the heart of an English village that is trying to come to terms with what has happened on its watch.



For a more extensive list of new fiction, mystery, and science fiction and fantasy titles, visit www.ridgefieldlibrary.org

STAFF PICKS

Fran's Picks

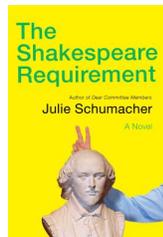
Convenience Store Woman by Sayaka Murata. Keiko Furukura is not the same as other Japanese girls, in fact her parents worry about how she will survive in the real world until she finds a job at a convenience store. There she slips into a role, following the manual for employees of the store and uses it as a guide for how to fit into her life. For eighteen years Keiko works at the store and little changes until another new employee, who also finds it difficult to conform to the norms of Japanese society, starts at the convenience store. Wrapped within the story are questions about marriage, how we choose to conform and our place in society.



Eagle and Crane by Suzanne Rindell. Louis Thorn and Haruto (Harry) Yamada, aka "Eagle & Crane" are two young friends who perform stunts on the wings of bi-planes. They have an uneasy alliance as there is bad blood between their two families and to further complicate their friendship, Harry's family is interned following the attack on Pearl Harbor. The novel begins with the arrival of an FBI agent to question Louis Thorn about his friend's escape from the camp, and as they talk a plane suddenly crashes onto the property. The timeline moves between the current investigation and the history of the two families detailing how half-truths and omission can distort history and stunt friendships. A combination of murder, mystery and a love triangle wrapped up in the history of depression era California.

Dorothy's Picks

Meet Me at the Museum by Anne Youngson. Tina Hapgood, a farmer's wife in England, and Professor Anders Larsen, a museum curator in Denmark, are brought together by their interest in the Tollund man, an almost intact archeological human specimen dating back to the 4th century B.C. This novel tracks their long-distance correspondence and the ever-deepening bond between the over-sixty Tina and Anders, as they reflect on their lives and the roads travelled and not travelled. Through their letters to each other, they find solace as they face decisions impacting the rest of their lives. This beautiful, reflective novel should have wide appeal and in tone harkens to the work of Marilynne Robinson.



The Shakespeare Requirement by Julie Schumacher. The author revisits the campus of Payne University that was the setting for her earlier novel *Dear Committee Members*. A rivalry between the well-funded Economics Department and the under-funded English Department is at the center of this satiric send-off of academia. Newly appointed English Department chair Jason Fitger is in over his head facing a range of personal and professional troubles. Then one of his faculty starts a rebellion on campus when he insists that the Department's Strategic Vision includes a Shakespeare requirement for English majors. Chaos for Fitger and great fun for readers ensues.