

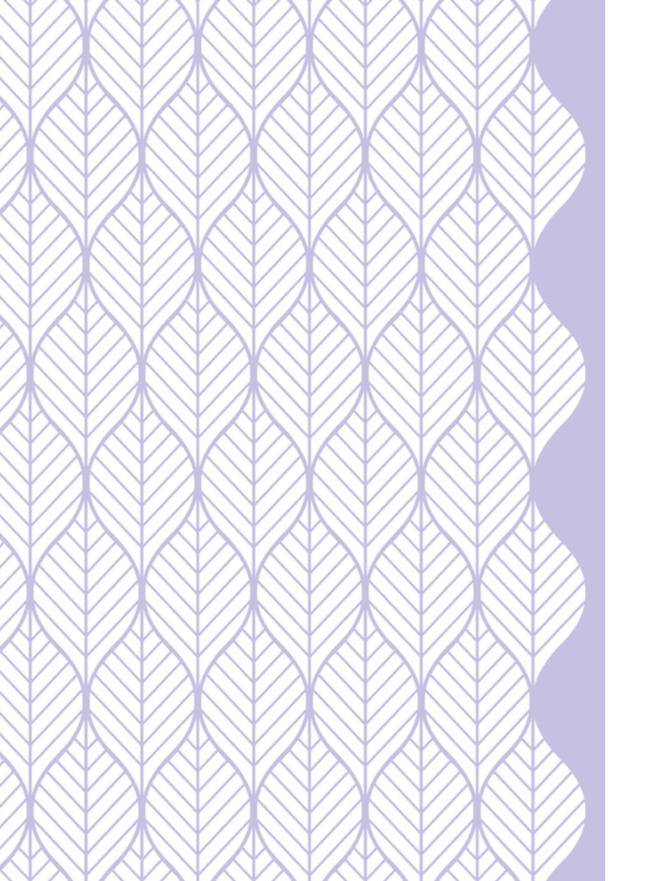


#### Krystyna Kołakowska

Rights Manager Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal sp. z o.o. krystyna.kolakowska@gwfoksal.pl phone: +48 792 053 550

Follow us on Facebook and our webpage www.gwfoksal.pl

Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal sp. z o.o. ul. Domaniewska 48, 02-672 Warszawa, Poland



### CONTENT

fiction 7 crime and horror 23 nonfiction 45



FICTION 8 9 FICTION



# A SHORT TRIP TO THE OTHER WORLD

You know, you've heard this story about Grandpa Janek? He's had more children.' No point in breaking the news gently. 'Apart from your dad? Good Lord, Julek! Our Janek?' 'Well, yes.'

He shakes his head. No.

'He had another wife in Myadelka. And three children,' I say. 'And another wife here, with some more kids, I think.' 'Irena?'

'No, Nan was his third wife.'

'No way. Who told you that?'

'I've seen photographs.'

'What photographs?'

'Of Dad's brothers and sisters.'

'When?'

'After Grandpa died.'

'What are you on about? Dad told you that?'

'No, seriously,' I insist, smiling on the inside. I would have never guessed that so many years after the senders' death, I would be the one to bring such news home.

'When?'

'After Grandpa died.'

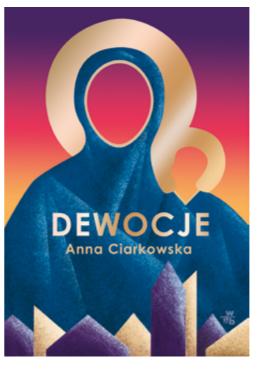
'What are you on about? Dad told you that?'

Julek decides to find the descendants of his grandfather who led three parallel lives. And so he embarks on a fascinating journey across the former republics of the Soviet Union: Julek searches for his roots in Belarus, North Ossetia, and Kazakhstan. But it's not only about travelling in a geographical sense: it is also a journey to healing his family and understanding himself.

When in 1999 Julek's grandfather Jan dies, it turns out he was also grandfather Ivan and had not one, but three lives. Grandmother Irenka was his third wife, and Jan was a bigamist, who married his first and second wife at the same time. He left his three children back in the Soviet Union. Later, he had children from his second marriage in Warsaw, and one son – Julek's father – from the third. Jurek, the story's narrator, decided to find his grandfather's descendants. His search will take him to the former republics of the Soviet Union: Julek Belarus, North Ossetia, and Kazakhstan.

A Short Trip To the Other World is not only about the search for identity, but also about the attempt to heal a family, haunted by absent men.

Juliusz Strachota (born in 1979 in Warsaw) is a writer and photographer. He is an author of the novels Relaks amerykański [American Relax], and Turysta polski w ZSSR [A Polish Tourist in the USSR]. For the latter, he was shortlisted for the Gdynia Literary Award.



#### **SANCTIMONIES**

I confess, my brothers and sisters, I confess for you, brothers and sisters, I confess your neglects and your jealousy, I confess your anger, your roughness, and your fear...

*Sanctimonies* is a confession of one life that, miraculously, begins to encapsulate other lives and the unconscionable sins that linger at the very bottom of one's conscience. It's a story of guilt, regret, and fear. This confession doesn't come with a relief brought by the full forgiveness; instead, this story shows it's not about the one who makes the miracle happens, but for whom it happens.

Welcome to the Provincial Catholic Poland: where there is a cross hanging above the door, bedsheets are starched and tablecloths white, where there is chicken soup on Sundays and confession on Fridays. And there is a Holy Mary figurine behind the glass cupboard panes.

This could have happened everywhere for there are mothers and fathers everywhere, just as there are shopkeepers, mailwoman, aunt Jadwigas, religious instruction teachers, and balding parsons. And miracles can also happen everywhere. This could have happened to anyone, but it happened to her, even though she didn't do anything special to deserve such a miracle. She just kept on living like everyone else in her village, her fate allocated to her fairly by the Providence, observing Sundays and holidays, with the body of Christ and regret her sins, with the soul-refining suffering, and with her God, who punishes all evil. Perhaps all she did was to pray in a more genuine way, perhaps she begged for God's grace more than others did. Maybe she wasn't as frightened of eternity and she believed more than anyone else that every human can become a saint.

Anna Ciarkowska Polish Language and Literature graduate, she found her true calling in poetry. She is an avid reader and draughtswoman, a collector of memories and experiences, a hypersensitive and tender gatherer of micro-stories. She loves long walks, sharks, and sickly-sweet white coffee. Ciarkowska is also an author of bestselling books *Pestki* and *Chłopcy, których kocham.* 

FICTION 10 11 FICTION



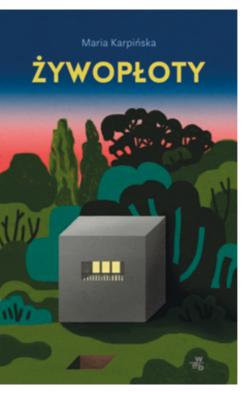
# HEART FULL OF SCORPIONS

It's a novel about the Polish People's Republic, about love and politics — a classic, solid, engaging novel. Engelking tells the story of 'rotten intelligentsia' from a prestigious Warsaw high school in early 1960, and he does it with zest, charm, and great care for every detail. A brilliant read.

Jakub Żulczyk

Warsaw, 1960. A dark city is rising from ruins. Jacek is 16 years old and has a head full of stories. He wears Lee jeans, a white undershirt, and, always, wistful gazes of many girls. He looks almost like James Dean, he can talk like James Dean and... he feels a bit like him, too, surrounded by a pack of boys from his district – on the streets, at school and football field. Until one night, Nina walks into a room crowded with sweaty bodies, filled with cigarette smoke, rock'n'roll music echoing with the sound of clinking bottles. The girl, who came to Warsaw from the USSR, doesn't look like a schoolgirl and doesn't act like one, either. There's probably an older boyfriend waiting for her back home, a jazzman or an actor. At the same time, in the four walls of a certain bachelor apartment just as thick with cigarette smoke, some people are playing a game the partying teenager do not and cannot know about. They have no idea that its outcome will decide not only their fates, but also the future of the Polish People's Republic.

Wojciech Engelking (born in 1992) – novelist and journalist. He wrote several novels, including Człowiek znikąd [A Man From Nowhere]. He writes for Newsweek; his essays were also published in Tygodnik Powszechny, Kultura Liberalna, and Pismo magazines. He is also an author of several academic papers on law and politics. He lives in Warsaw.



#### **HEDGEROWS**

Hedgerows is a story of a man whose identity is built solely on the narrative process – he exists only when he tells stories, and so his own story is spun like the history of the world, filled entirely by him. 'You are the story you tell' is the book's motto, and the main character takes it very literally, becoming a man-book, man-history, man-time, whose passing is measure as the history of the world: from the beginning of a century to the 1970s.

In her decades-spanning, polyphonic debut, Maria Karpińska presents us with the lives of so-called ordinary people, those everyday characters that seem to have nothing unusual about them – and that's exactly what makes them fascinating. Seemingly uninteresting, unexciting topics – such as a memory of teenage holidays with an accidentally-made friend, decorating one's first apartment or digging a grave for a dog – become an excuse for communicating the truth about the human condition, fate, fleetingness, memory, and above all: love and death. Those intimate, tender stories are permeated with a gentle air of peaceful, intelligent reflection on how we change and grow emotionally with age.

Maria Karpińska was born in 1988. She is an author of numerous articles, short stories, literary and opera reviews. Her texts, signed also under a surname Karpińska, were published in a number of magazines, including Res Publica Nowa, Czas Kultury, Teatr, Mała Kultura Współczesna, Znak, Nowe Książki, Twórczość, and Przekrój. Hedgerows is her first book.

FICTION 12



# THE LITTLE PRINCESS

A poetic fairy tale for children and adults about what's most important in life.

It'll be an event to remember! October 13th sees the launch of a unique book which should find its way onto the bookshelves of every child and adult alike. *The Little Princess* by philosopher and journalist Karolina Lewestam is a story about discovering the most important values in life: friendship, happiness, sensitivity, understanding for others, and self-acceptance.

The title character meets Amelia Earhart, the legendary American pilot who disappeared in mysterious circumstances. But before they give each other a mutual lesson in sisterhood, the protagonist takes a trip through space in an attempt to better understand her beloved flower – and encounters many bizarre and beautiful characters along the way. Through the princess's journey, readers experience a wonderful adventure that will give them courage and inspire them to spread their wings. In addition, we finally find out what really happened to Amelia Earhart, who went missing during her pioneering flight over the Pacific...

The Little Princess is an inspiring and touching book that helps readers to recognise a whole range of emotions, make their own decisions, listen to their own voice, and choose relationships that are good for them. A book that not only teaches children how to grow up to be smart adults, but also teaches adults how to become smarter adults – for themselves and their children.

**Karolina Lewestam** is a Polish journalist, writer, and university lecturer. She has a PhD in philosophy from Boston University and has lectured at Northeastern University and the University of Warsaw, among others. She is a prolific opinion writer for the Polish press, including a long-running weekly op-ed column for a leading daily, and is an editor at *Pismo*, a monthly opinion magazine. She has received five nominations for Grand Press, the leading journalism award in Poland, for her opinion writing. Besides *The Little Princess*, she has a forthcoming book of quirky philosophical essays on parenting due for release in early 2022. She has previously published academically in English. The main character of *The Little Princess* bears an eerie resemblance to her middle child, Matylda.

### Maciej Marcisz

was born in 1988. He has been working in the publishing industry for almost a decade, and at W.A.B. publishing house for two years. Along with his friend, he runs a reading club in Warsaw's Ochota district. He's a member of the SEXEDPL foundation board. He didn't finish his master's at the University of Warsaw or the National Film School in Łódź. He comes from a small town and lives in Warsaw. Family Tapes is his first novel.



#### A BOOK ABOUT FRIENDSHIP

Kasia, Michał and Dorota have known each other forever. Their friendship has stood the test of time, surviving relocations to distant cities and even increaingly divergent paths in life. But when a carefully hidden secret is leaked in the group chat, their future relationship hangs in the balance. Should you fight for a waning friendship for the sake of the good old days? Or should certain things be left to die? Were our parents right when they said that by a certain age, we'd be able to count our true friends on one hand?

A Book about Friendship is a novel about bonds stronger than love, vocation and the disappointments of adulthood. About who our nearest and dearest have made us want to be, and about the everyday compromises that distance us from how we think of ourselves, until we become completely unrecognisable. About the great unknown which is our life – until it ceases to be so.

It is a journey through the formative experiences of three friends – first loves, nights spent talking and reading, shame and acceptance, historical events and music festivals. It's a story about the voices of friends that stay in our heads even after they have long since disappeared from our lives.



#### **FAMILY TAPES**

Marcin Malys is 30 years old, with 63,000 zlotys of debt and a vague vision of his own future When his father decides to disinherit him and donate his fortune to charity, Marcin decides to get his inheritance back. To change his father's opinion, he has to win over his mother, sister and brother, who decided to forget about him forever.

From a hilarious story about attempts to deal with adulthood, *Family Tapes* turns into a moving family saga. It is a story of the magical and terrible power of money, the birth of the nouveau riche's fortunes, a toxic sense of uniqueness and the consequences of manipulating memories. It's about the things we'll never find out about someone else's family, and about a certain VHS tape

# BESSE

### Malcolm XD

is the most unknown man in Poland and a local internet legend. He wrote viral short stories, one of which, about an old fishing fanatic, was even made into a short film. His debut book, *Emigration*, became an instant bestseller and was met with critical acclaim. Soon after, to honour his most dedicated fans and the lovers of analogue literature, he published his best and most popular online stories in a collection titled *Pastrami*. In the first phase of lockdown, he embarked on a charity project where he brightened other peoples' isolation with his *Covid Chronicles*, but he underestimated the scope of the situation and came up with a story too short to last for the duration of the pandemic. During his author meetings, he prefers to remain anonymous, so he sits inside a vending machine. He does his interviews online. There are people who maliciously insist that Malcolm XD is a hive personality.



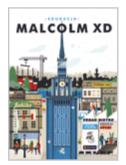
#### **EMIGRATION**

Movie rights sold

The debut novel of the most unknown author in Poland.

*Emigration* is a book about a young man who, after graduating from a provincial high school, decides to go to the UK to earn some money. In the manner characteristic of an 'online story', it talks about one of the most important Polish social phenomena of recent decades, which has not yet been presented in detail in Polish literature. This is a story about growing up in provincial Poland, an adventure-filled journey to London and the life of an emigrant. About truckers, Gypsy campervan dealers, anarchist squatters, recidivists hiding from the Polish justice system, Russian oligarchs, the impoverished English aristocracy, losers and go-go clubs.

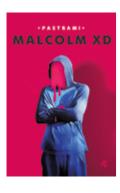
Get ready to see the legend of the Polish Internet in analogue version.



#### **EDUCATION**

#### Movie rights sold

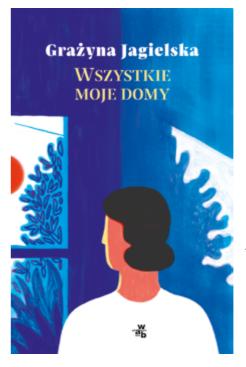
Education, the story of Malcolm and Stomil takes off where it ended in his debut book Emigration. The lads leave the UK without backpacks filled with £50 notes, but at least they make it. Upon their arrival in Warsaw, they are forced to fight an unfair battle with the Polish Education System and the so-called University of Adult Life. They struggle to find their footing and get jobs in the harsh job market reality. They tried all kinds of jobs, from delivering homoeopathic supplements to secluded – literally and metaphorically – middle-class estates, to selling EU-funded office equipment and accidental attempt to sell Poland by a group of dodgers from a reprivatisation mafia.



#### **PASTRAMI**

Malcolm XD is the most unknown man in Poland and his first novel is a great success on the Polish literary market. It has won the recognition of the readers and critics alike. For all the "paperback" readers, who haven't had a chance to read the texts that Malcolm XD has published online so far, we have prepared an anthology of his best pastas. The anthology includes the story of an old man – a passionate angler, Territorial Defense Forces, the Pathologist, Pauline and many others. The collection has the foreword by Sylwia Chutnik and an introductory pasta by Malcolm XD himself.





#### **ALL MY HOMES**

I reached for my phone and dialled a West Coast number. Steve picked up after the eighth ring. It was four a.m. over there; I said we messed up our quiet rural life, not without the help from the local, well-organised community. Balanced lifestyle went to hell; as for ecology and broadly defined spiritual growth – those were off the table as well. Perhaps there were some unconventional methods to try? I reminded him of what we're dealing with: midlife crisis, the void caused by loss of identity. What do you suggest? I'll take anything.

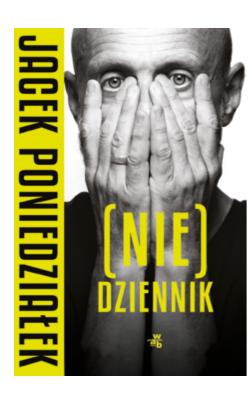
'Put your head underwater,' said Steve. 'At dawn, facing the current. Do you have a river nearby? Go in and wait for it to flow through you. A ritual healing. Spread your arms and legs. Call me later, tell me how it went.'

When her husband retires from his job as a test pilot – meaning that he is no longer a threat – and her second (and last) child leaves the family nest, her world as she knew it, precarious as it was, falls apart. She has learned to live in a constant state of fear and anxiety, and so now, she has to establish a new order. She decides to begin with finding a new home that could become a safe haven to help her and her husband learn to adapt to a changed reality. However, their efforts to grow accustomed to new places always end with failure. They keep deconstructing one home after another, slowly realising that they must find the order they seek within themselves.

Grażyna Jagielska wrote a novel that is deep, wise and, at times, surrealistic – about the challenges of having to constantly learn how to live together while dealing with almost-obsessive efforts to find oneself and one's inner peace. 'Nothing scares me as much,' says the narrator, 'as the things that are limitless and inexplorable, but I never stop looking.' It is also a story of the causative power of women and the change of the gender order.

Grażyna Jagielska (born in 1962) holds a degree in Journalism, is a passionate traveller, and makes a living as a writer and translator. She wrote several novels (incl. Korespondent [The Correspondent], Fastryga [Stitch], Płaskuda [Nasty]), a number of translations (J.G. Ballard, Fay Weldon, Joanna Trollope), and a famous memoir Miłość z kamienia [Love Made of Stone].

FICTION 16



### (NON)JOURNAL

Jacek Poniedziałek, one of the most recognised Polish film and theatre actors, wrote a moving testimony of recovery from addiction. (non)Journal is more than a story about his life in the artistic world, full of drugs, alcohol and one-night-stands, interlaced with the memories from the rehab centre. In his tender and piercing story, Poniedziałek tries to face his past – turbulent childhood, climbing the class ladder, paying the price for being a public figure – and finally, he tells a story of forgiveness.

A year has passed since Jacek Poniedziałek decided to live in sobriety and went to rehab that became as a closing chapter of the journal he was writing over the months prior. The story of his work as an actor, spanning New York, Mexico, Warsaw and Cracow, is interrupted by the descriptions of his visits in a rehab centre. The journey to sobriety gave the actor a chance to face his difficult past – in his book, Poniedziałek recounts his painful childhood, acknowledges the hurt and shame he felt due to his social class and poverty. This is a story of a small-town boy who climbed unbelievably far up on the social ladder. However, every success comes with a pressure that only keeps increasing as there is more and more to lose. It is also a story of a man looking for love and accepting the finality of human life – to his own surprise, the actor realises that ageing does, in fact, give us freedom.

Jacek Poniedziałek – theatre and film actor, working in the New Theatre in Warsaw. He studied acting at the National Academy of Theatre Arts in Cracow under Jan Peszek, Krystian Lupa, and Jerzy Stuhr. For five years, he worked at the Stary Teatr in Cracow. Since 1990, he appeared in most theatre plays directed by Krzysztof Warlikowski; he also works with Michał Borczuch, Krzysztof Garbaczewski, and Jan Klata. Poniedziałek also directed and translated several theatre plays.

### Agnieszka Szpila

copywriter, blogger and writer. W.A.B. published her debut book *Pinheads* in 2015, in which she described her struggle with the condition her daughters, Milenka and Helenka, were born with. Three years later, she published her first novel, *Bardo*, also with W.A.B.



#### **BARDO**

Representatives of all groups of the Polish society meet on the coach: patriots, nationalists, martyrs, religious pensioners, engaged couples and those trying to have a baby... The excursion is led by a guide – the charismatic prioress, mother Małgorzata. Each of the main characters – Lena, Ewa and Hanka – has experienced emotional loss. Overwhelmed by the everyday, they make a pilgrimage to the sanctuary hoping for a miracle. But what will happen during the journey will, at times, resemble scenes from the absurdly funny films of Quentin Tarantino.



#### HEXES

Anna Szajbel, the president of a Polish oil company who thumbs her nose at ecologists and their endeavours to protect the environment, is caught in a passionate act of lovemaking with a tree. This career-ending event leads her to a very important discovery – a lie told by her husband that ruined her life. Discovering the truth drives her to a fit of madness, and ultimately a personality disorder, as a result of which she ceases to be merely Anna Szajbel, former oil company president. Whether due to delusions or possession, she is suddenly transformed into Mathilde Spalt – a hag living in the 17th century, in the episcopal principality of Nysa, worshipping not God the Father, but Mother Earth and the daughter She bore. Mathilde lives in the forest with other women who have renounced all bourgeois comforts and values.

When the Church decides to chop down the forest and chase them away for good, the women declare war. The flame of madness that connects Anna Szajbel with Mathilde Spalt and the other women is the flame of the stakes at which women who thought and felt differently were burned. HEXES is a story about a new, feminine, intimate, non-institutionalised religion that calls for love for all things earthly, and about the GYNOCIDE committed by the Church, which punished women for rejecting the patriarchal-religious order and bourgeois values.

### Maciej Płaza

Maciej Płaza (born in 1976) – is a writer and translator; he holds a PhD in humanities. He wrote a book on Stanisław Lem, and in 2012, he received the Literatura na Świecie award for his translations of H.P. Lovecraft's short stories. His debut short story collection *Skoruń* (W.A.B. 2015) earned him the Gdynia Literary Award 2016 and the Kościelski Award 2016. The book was also shortlisted for Nike 2016 award and longlisted for the Gombrowicz Award. His novel *Robinson w Bolechowie [Robinson in Bolechów*, W.A.B. 2017] received the ANGELUS Central European Literature Award 2018.



#### **GOLEM**

#### A colourful and imaginative portrait of a Galician shtetl from the early 20th century

The year is 1910. On one crisp morning, a vagabond comes to a small, poor shtetl. Although not old yet, he seems weathered with life and hard work, maimed and deaf. He finds shelter at the home of the local tzaddik, who sees in him something others do not: a 'spark of the ancient light'. The mysterious man's arrival coincides with the events that, once again, will disturb the brittle ethnic balance of the town – the events that accompanied the lives of European Jews for generations, culminating in the 20th century. This time, however, they will end very unexpectedly.

In the Jewish tradition, Golem is a mythical creature bestowed a human shape but no soul – and it has been a fascinating trope for centuries. Maciej Płaza uses it to immerse his readers in the world of a Podolian shtetl of the early 20th century. Here, Kabbalah and messianic themes are counterbalanced with a realistic description of the Chassidic culture and customs. And Maciej Płaza, one od the greatest stylists of the Polish prose, shows that he is more than capable to breathe new life in the legendary Golem and all that surrounds it.

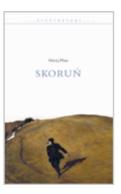
When he turned around the corner, he found himself in the town, his knock-kneed legs shuffling on the muddy paved street. The morning mist was slowly peeling off the whitewashed homes. In one corner, he noticed it fleetingly, a figure of the old water carrier bobbed from side to side, bent so low under his shoulder pole that instead of his face, all one could see was a cap on his head. A flock of sparrows took flight from a blackthorn bush by the fence, heavy with blueish berries, dewy drops raining down from the thorny branches. The first wisps of smoke were crawling up from the chimneys, still sleepy and cold. The air was laced with the steamy smell of reheated potatoes. In one of the yards, there was a brief commotion inside the freshly opened chicken coop. Something bolted across the empty market square, a cat, maybe, or a dog that strayed here from the gentile district. He saw it all and he felt it all, but he could not hear, for his ears were plastered with great deafness. Something to get used to, he thought...



#### **ROBINSON IN BOLECHÓW**

Robert comes back to Bolechów after a three-year absence and a failed marriage. His mother is dead. After his return, Robert renews his contact with Monika and Franciszek. Flashbacks present the relationship between the characters: Robert and Monika had known each other since childhood and are both scarred by provincial morality; Robert had not known his father, while Monika's family had broken up. Monika's father Franciszek, a man with a dark past (resettled to Bolechów from after the II World War), had fallen in love with Robert's mother Łucja.

That day, the hubbub in the town was louder than ever, though with a frosty undertone. Single shots were fired in the night, you could hear laughter and screaming, occasionally a woman's piercing cry. The tanks left the following morning. A couple of days later, father with a group of armed men got on a sleigh and went to the forest. They came back after dark, lighting the way with torches. Father talked quietly with mother until late at night. After that, armed carts left the town every couple of days.



#### SKORUŃ (NE'ER-DO-WELL)

A village on the Vistula in communist Poland. The protagonist and narrator of Maciej Płaza's collection of short stories is a young boy, a hoodlum – a ne'er-do-well. This insult, used by an eternally angry father and a blindly pious mother, has stuck to him better than his name, which is unknown. Life in the countryside is marked by the seasons and the related work on the farm, mainly in the orchard. The story of the boy growing up is intertwined with apple harvesting, family secrets and furious quarrels between his father and uncle. Someone disappears, someone else appears, and someone else dies. Somewhere in the background there's a struggle with the prevailing system, and the echoes of war can still be heard. Meanwhile, he – ne'er-do-well – and his initiations, reflections and discoveries are all expressed unhampered, crudely, between one box of apples and another.

#### Information on awards:

- 2018, Angelus Central European Literature Award for Robinson in Bolechów
- 2016, winner of the Gdynia Literary Award
- 2016, winner of Kościelski Award
- 2016, nominated to the Nike Literary Award for Skoruń
- 2016, nominated to Witold Gombrowicz Literary Prize for Skoruń
- · 2016, nominated to the Śląski Wawrzyn Literacki for Skoruń

### Zyta Rudzka

Zyta Rudzka is a novelist and playwright. She is an author of such novels as *Białe klisze* [White film], Mykwa [Mikveh], Ślicznotka doktora Josefa [Doctor Josef's Belle]. Rudzka wrote a number of theatre plays, including Cukier Stanik and Zimny Bufet, for which she was awarded the Gdynia Drama Award and the Gold Remi Award at the Worldfest – Houston Independent Film Festival. Her works were translated into several languages. Her previous novel, Krótka wymiana ognia (W.A.B. 2018) won the Gdynia Literary Award and was shortlisted for the Nike Award.



#### **SOFT TISSUES**

He is an ageing paediatrician, a decent diagnostician if he says so himself, but he no longer enjoys his work; he is tired and grumpy. His wife – an ophthalmologist, cheating on him for years. His father – a village doctor, suffering from Alzheimer's who in his old age decided to marry a Ukrainian woman fleeing the war. And there is the mysterious woman, to whom this novel is addressed.

Zyta Rudzka's latest novel is about dying, growing old, and about the false appearances that allow us to keep up our guard even as we're falling apart on the inside. Nicely clothed, our hair neatly pruned, we want to show that we've been around, determined not to let the world know how desperate we really are. *Soft Tissues* is a book about the repetitiveness of fate and about our inability to escape it. But it's also about love – the hard, rough love between a man and a woman and the son's love for his father; and about the fact that perhaps, in the end, love is the only thing that matters.

This short novel is deeply rooted in language – sparse, strange, distinct, sharply reflecting the internal entanglement of its characters. It's a linguistic masterclass, perfectly pinning down the emotional turmoil that cannot be precisely named and addressed.

Yes, I am a doctor. Didn't I tell you?

After all that, it's hard to believe. And yet. I make living out of other people's illness. I am a man called a 'doctor', although I wouldn't be too generous with the 'man' part. Getting old is a gradual process, and what I just did was a rather impressive leap. My father aged quickly, too. Not so quick at dying, though. He'll be eighty-seven next year. For the past six years, he didn't say a word, although he does like to stretch his lips, showing his faded gums and denticles, ground-down in a horselike way.

My father still has his own teeth. More teeth than sanity.

Healthy as a horse, too. He wants to kiss me all the time, salivating all over me. So, that's how I'm doing.

In case you'd like to ask.

21 FICTION



#### DOCTOR JOSEF'S BEAUTY

A new edition of an extraordinary novel by one of Poland's most interesting writer, winner of the Gdynia Literary Award, author of *A Brief Exchange of Fire* and *Soft Tissues*, which has captivated literary critics and readers alike.

Doctor Josef's Beauty is a bold, strong and uncompromising story about the old age of those who were children during the Holocaust, as well as a bold and unusual take on the essence of the body, which both redeems and betrays. Zyta Rudzka's novel touches on the most difficult topics – and it does so ruthlessly, but also with humour. It simultaneously outrages and seduces; above all, it leaves no one indifferent.



#### **BRIEF EXCHANGE OF FIRE**

Zyta Rudzka's new novel is a surprising melange of lustful sensuality and tragi-comical musing on creative work, gender, and the passage of time. Brief Exchange of Fire is a battleground for the eternal struggle of Eros and Thanatos, man and woman, poet and the world.

Roma Dąbrowska is a poet, daughter, wife, lover, mother — a woman. The roles she came to play in her life all come together in the face of approaching death. As she wanders, hauntingly, across the world of the living, the old poet's consciousness returns to the most important people and events in her life. It is something of a summary of her creative self. Who was she? A wild and passion—ate lover, a poet who loved words, an unfulfilled mother of a brilliant daughter who left the nest too early? Grotesque figures return in the protagonist's frenetic visions — former enthusiasts of her work, ex-husbands, her own mother. Roma reflects on her womanhood, her creative work, the passing of time, while at the same time missing the delights of the sensual world, which she all but deserted.

A man walked up to me one day, holding a cigarette: have you got a match? It took me a few years to answer, but the question was like a spark. My imagination caught fire and was set ablaze. Metaphors were set off – pyrotechnical, erotic, even of a fire-fighting variety. A tale was spewing wafts of smoke. Or maybe it was me who walked up, not wanting anything but a match. And this is what I'm sending my heroines out to get. Briefly speaking.

2019, winner of the Gdynia Literary Award 2019, nominated to the Nike Literary Award 2019, nominated to the Warsaw Literary Award 2021, winner of the Warsaw Literary Award



## CRIME AND HORROR

### Igor Brejdygant

born in 1971, he is a novelist, screenwriter, director, and photographer. He wrote screenplays for the Polish feature films Palimpsest (dir. Konrad Niewolski), Prosta historia o morderstwie (dir. Arkadiusz Jakubik), and to TV series Paradoks, Zbrodnia, Belle Epoque, Ultraviolet, Szadź, Erynie, Otwórz oczy, Rysa, and Układ. He studied Film Production at the na wydziale produkcji w łódzkiej National Film School in Łódź. Brejdygant also directs documentaries and TV series, including Szaleńcy Pana Boga series for Religia TV, Handlarze for TTV, and TVP2 series Paradoks. He wrote several crime novels that were warmly received by the readers and critics alike: Paradoks (2016), Szadź (2017), Rysa (2018), and Układ (2019).



#### THE WIND

Early spring in the Tatra Mountains. The speeding foehn wind takes the breath away, knocks people off their feet and blurs the mind. Agnieszka and Piotr Markowski, Zakopane's most famous couple, set off from a hostel at Morskie Oko lake towards the Szpiglasowa pass. An avalanche descending from the Miedzina ridge to the lake shore shrouds the metre-long layer of ice in thousands of tons of snow. Wawrzyniec is almost certain that seconds before the avalanche, he heard a strange, hollow rumble like the sound of an explosion... Meanwhile, the chance of finding the two hikers is decreasing by the minute. Was what happened merely an unfortunate twist of fate?

Igor Brejdygant's *The Wind* depicts a Zakopane far-removed from the tourist image: murky, on the border of winter and spring, life and death. The mystery of the Markowskis' accident forces Wawrzyniec to confront his own past. An amalgamation of unrest and passion constantly throws spanners in the works and lays false trails.

25 CRIME



#### THE SCRATCH

#### movie rights sold

Never before have the old sins cast shadows that long

In modern-day Warsaw, a homeless alcoholic dies. DCI Monika Brzozowska has a feeling there is more to this case than just hobo wars. Further murders with similar M.O. confirm her suspicions. As the investigation unfolds, it turns out the old sins of the victims are connected to the mistakes of youth Brzozowska is guilty herself. The DCI, who suffers from bouts of amnesia, becomes entangled in a dangerous game, forcing her to look back and face the demons of her own past once again. As it turns out, they have never really gone away.

The Scratch is an exciting combination of a crime novel and psychological thriller in which the suppressed painful memories turn out to be the hardest riddle waiting to be solved. And while told by a man, it is a convincingly-spun story of a woman trying her best to find her footing in a patriarchal world of the police world while fighting the fears that consume her to save herself. Will she be able to make it through, despite the long shadows of her past sins?

'What do you mean, I don't address them right?'

'I mean that, apart from other issues, you often use words that are considered offensive,' explained Inspector.

'Leon, come on. Words that are considered offensive? As if anyone in this building knew any other. You want me to point and mime?'

'You know what I mean.' Stasiak raised one hand, stopping her from trying to interrupt him again. 'They might speak like this because they're thugs, but such language isn't befitting of a lady.'

'And why is that, would that make the thugs feel uncomfortable?' Monika cut him off anyway, ignoring the hand. 'Thugs and loafers at that. The corpse looks like he swallowed a hand grenade, the traces are all stomped over because they had to go and stuff their fucking faces with kebabs. I ask them to check something for me, to collect some information, but what do they do instead? They explain it's wasting everyone's time because it was just a hobo fight. So what, since when are hobos above the law?



#### THE SYSTEM

#### movie rights sold

Commissioner Monika Brzozowska is struggling to recover mentally after she killed her husband, a paid assassin, in self-defence. The situation is made all the more difficult by the fact that her superiors have made her take indefinite leave. Regrettably, Commissioner Brzozowska ends up returning to a pernicious habit that once nearly killed her. Meanwhile, witnesses who were meant to help the police bring a paedophile ring to justice are beginning to disappear. Everything points to the fact that it's the dangerous and influential men getting their kicks from playing with minors who are trying to hush up the case. Over time, it turns out that things are much more complicated, and being the executioner doesn't rule out being the victim.

### Wojtek Miłoszewski

(b. 1980) – is a Polish writer and screenwriter. He is the author of bestselling sensational novels with elements of political fiction – *Invasion* and its equally renowned continuation, – as well as the well-received retro Kraków-based crime novel *Kastor*. He co-wrote the series *The Border* (*Wataha*) for HBO Europe and *The Prosecutor* (*Prokurator*) for TVP2, which won the Polish Academy Award for best TV drama series in 2016.



#### INVASION

Eastern Europe, present times. Vladimir Putin annexed the entire territory of Ukraine, to which Western Europe reacted only... by expressing its anxiety and indignation. However, the Russian leader is not bothered by that and he soon makes the next move, and crosses the borders of Poland.

War erupts in Poland without any warning. Millions of people must abruptly adapt to a completely new reality. They include Roman Gurski, a former paratrooper, who returns to the country to enlist, Henryk Wojnarowicz, a rich gardener, who makes a fortune on food trade during the war, and Michał Barański, a former teacher from Katowice, whose principal goal is to ensure the security of his family.

The war, described from three points of view, is a crucible of contradictory emotions experienced by millions of inhabitants of the country torn apartby the fire of war. It is a tale of great villainy and unimaginable cruelty, but also of the great power of love and of the fight to retain the remnants of optimism and humanity.



#### PAINT

The continuation of Invasion (Inwazja)

Poland is losing the war against Russia. The occupiers are launching a Russification campaign and striving to control all areas of Poles' lives. Will Captain Roman Gurski be able to gain the advantage in the unequal battle between the poorly armed Polish underground and the well-equipped and trained Russians? Will Zenon Marczak find his stepsister, Danuta Wojnarowicz, who so mercilessly mutilated him during the war? Will Michal Baranski's family, separated by the ravages of war, ever reunite? Will the countries of the West, led by the US, decide to react and free Poland from the yoke of the newly created Russian Empire?



#### **OPPOSITION**

The continuation of the bestselling novels *Invasion* and *Paint*. Vladimir Putin, who has called himself a Tsar and decided to re-establish the Russian Empire, has gone too far. The new president of the United States, Mike Pence, doesn't intend to wait for the Russian ruler's totalitarian plans to devour the rest of Western Europe. US troops launch an attack, aiming to destroy the imperial army.

The heroes of the previous volumes, thrown into the whirlwind of ongoing events, must face new, blood-curdling dangers. As usual, the front sees brutal, heavy fighting. The whole world is counting on a swift US victory. However, Russia proves to be a difficult opponent, and victory for the West is not so certain.

Moscow, the capital of the Russian Empire, becomes an extremely dangerous place following the start of the American offensive. People from across the large agglomeration are fleeing from the ravages of war.

27 CRIME



#### **NO CHANGE**

#### A crime novel just like the bad old days!

Early 1990. The people of Cracow are divided. Some are losing money at a frightening pace while others become rich overnight. A new gang appears in town, elbowing its way to the top with monstrous brutality. Organised crime and amphetamine trade pose new challenges for the police, freshly emerging from the old militia structures. Chief of Police Kastor Grudziński is forced to handle the changes in the provincial headquarters and, above all else, he has to convince his superiors the police needs to introduce new operational methods. The system previously used by the militia is no longer sufficient for targeting and breaking down organised crime groups. His task becomes even more challenging when a new case emerges – there is a series of child murders happening in Cracow. Will Chief Grudziński manage to adapt to the new reality, and will it ever be possible for him to get his personal life back on track?

Once again, Wojtek Miłoszewski paints an engrossing and fascinating picture of the criminal underbelly of Cracow. Black humour, unexpected plot twists, and intriguing crime puzzle make his new novel impossible to put down!

He kneeled by the Chief Superintended and began resuscitation. He was never trained how to do so, but he saw the emergency services in action enough times to pick up the basics. He kept on pushing Tyszol's chest rhythmically, giving him rescue breaths every now and again. Seeing bloody froth come out of the wound in his colleague's chest, he groaned. Police sirens howled in the distance. Someone must have called the law enforcement, alarmed by the cannonade. Or maybe the Border Police guys climbed the heights of heroism and called the headquarters. Tyszol stared ahead with an empty stare, eyes bulging. A trickle of hot blood steamed when it touched the freezing cold ground.

'Don't you dare die on me here, can you hear me?!' roared Kastor, still desperately pushing his chest. 'Don't you fucking dare!'



## Zygmunt Miłoszewski

(b. 1976) is a top-selling Polish novelist and scriptwriter. He achieved international success with his crime trilogy starring Prosecutor Szacki, and his work has been adapted for cinema and television. His first novel, a horror story called *The Intercom*, was published in 2005 to high acclaim. In 2006, his novel for teenagers, *The Adder Mountains*, appeared. Major success came in 2007 with the publication of Entanglement, the first in the trilogy of crime novels that have gained him a popular following in Poland and abroad. In 2010 *Entanglement* was published in English by Bitter Lemon Press, and in 2011, a Polish movie based on the novel was released with the same title. In the same year, a sequel called *A Grain of Truth* was published, became an instant bestseller and earned Miłoszewski a place on the shortlist (of three) for the prestigious "Passport Polityka" award given annually to writers under the age of 40. In 2012 it too was published in English translation by Bitter Lemon Press, and in 2015 the Polish movie version was released, with a screenplay co-authored by Miłoszewski and director Borys Lankosz. Meanwhile, in 2014, *Rage*, the third and final part of the trilogy featuring Prosecutor Szacki as the main protagonist, had won him the "Passport Polityka". Rage was published in English by AmazonCrossing in 2016.

All three of these crime novels have appeared in more than 40 editions in 18 languages. In Poland alone they have jointly sold over a million copies. Outside Poland, Miłoszewski's greatest success has been in France, where the Szacki trilogy has sold altogether more than 100,000 copies, and the author has won or been shortlisted for numerous literary prizes including the "Prix du Polar Européen", awarded to the best European crime novel. All three novels have been adapted for radio dramatization and broadcast by BBC Radio 4 in the UK.

Between crime novels, in 2013 Miłoszewski wrote *Priceless*, a fast-paced art heist thriller that sold 200,000 copies in Poland, won several awards and has so far been published in six foreign languages. In 2017 it was published in French translation (winning the Transfuge prize), and in 2018 in English, by AmazonCrossing. It is now being adapted for the screen by Netflix. His next novel, a romantic "what if?" story, *Will You Still Love Me Yesterday?* (2018), sold over 150,000 copies within 12 months and won three "Book of the Year" awards. It was published in French translation in 2019 by Fleuve Éditions, an imprint of the Editis publishing group.

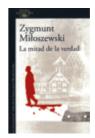
Miłoszewski is also a screen writer. As well as co-authoring the screenplay for A Grain of Truth, he co-authored a Polish television series called *The Prosecutor*.

He speaks excellent English and has often spoken at literary events in the UK and US.

29 CRIME





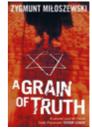
















Miloszewski takes an engaging look at modern Polish society in this stellar first in a new series starring Warsaw prosecutor Teodor Szacki. (...) Szacki, who's undergoing a midlife crisis and has ambivalent feelings about his wife, considers an affair with journalist hoping to get exclusive details on his inquiry. Readers will want to see more of the complex, sympathetic Szacki.

**Publishers Weekly** 



#### AS EVER

There are marriages built on friendship, intimacy, or understanding of souls. Grażyna and Ludwik's relationship was always driven by passion. That is why each year they celebrate the anniversary of an evening in 1963 when they first fell into each other's arms to have sex. On the day of her 50th anniversary he is over 80 years old, she is just reaching 80. Is there anything left in store for them? They fight the sadness with their passion, as ever, and in the morning – to their surprise – they wake up again in their youthful bodies, back in the year 1963. In Warsaw, where the tower of Polish-French friendship still stands, and Edward Gierek is a young, charismatic opposition politician. Will the protagonists relive their love?

Miłoszewski wrote a masterful exploration of a genre that's new to him, proving that he is able to tackle horror, crime, or romantic fiction, and skillfully intertwine his characters; stories with Polish history.

CRIME 30 31 CRIME



#### THE INTERCOM

The first day in the new home of the newlywed couple Agnieszka and Robert begins rather discouragingly: they stumble into a headless body lying on the blood-stained staircase in a block of flats. Strange voice speak on the intercom, the people living in the building are haunted by the oddest dreams and hallucinations. The horror mounts as the building literally locks up, trapping its powerless inhabitants inside.

Is all this but a case of collective hysterics, or is the place haunted? Three individuals attempt to solve the puzzle: Agnieszka, whose husband increasingly gives in to the dark forces lurking in the building; Wiktor, an alcoholic journalist struggling with his traumatic past; and Kamil, a high-school student estranged from his parents. What will they find out about the terrible building and about themselves?

Fast-paced, with its provocative, Bulgakovian dark humour and a carefully constructed atmosphere reminiscent of a Stephen King novel, The Intercom combines the best features of a gripping work of fiction, a horror story and a thriller.

The Intercom is a horror story set in contemporary Poland, with a reliably portrayed social background and accurate observations conveyed in simple language.

"Newsweek"



#### **ENTANGLEMENT**

#### 2008 HIGH CALIBER AWARD for the best crime novel in Poland!

Entanglement is an exceptionally fine combination of criminal tale and psychological thriller. One fresh Sunday, on 5 June 2005, Prosecutor Teodor Szacki begins an investigation into a strange case. In a central Warsaw monastery one of the participants of an unconventional group therapy session is murdered while they are playing the roles of members of their families. Was the murderer someone from the group? If so, should we look for a motive among them or among the people they played during the therapy? The prosecutor believes only a thorough knowledge of the life of the deceased, who was apparently boring and colourless, and his past, will let him discover the motive and thus the murderer. Meanwhile, there are family secrets which cannot be disclosed with impunity; they are protected by powers stronger than family. The novel's trump card is the main character: a man whose youthful face is in contrast to his completely grey hair. A good husband and father, dreaming of an adventure that would turn his ideal life upside down.

Entanglement is an exquisite contemporary crime story. polish literature boasts a real master. Zygmunt Miłoszewski is a full-bodied writer.

Jerzy Pilch



#### A GRAIN OF TRUTH

#### 2012 HIGH CALIBER AWARD for the best crime novel in Poland!

Sandomierz is a picturesque town full of churches and museums. Meanwhile, early one morning in spring, a woman's naked body is found outside a former synagogue. Someone has slashed her throat open – and it looks as if they did it with the enormous razor found lying nearby. Quite by chance, public prosecutor Teodor Szacki just happens to be on the scene. How come? Six months earlier he broke up a gang of sex traffickers who had a drop-off point in this town. On a wave of short-lived fame, Szacki decided to move there permanently from Warsaw. But a few months after separating from his wife and daughter, and leaving the big city behind, he knows he has made a mistake. So the cadaver outside the synagogue is a chance to put an end to his small-town ennui. Szacki conducts the investigation with the help of an ageing policeman and a reluctant lady prosecutor. Gradually he discovers the subtle ins and outs of local society, the town's past history, and who is connected to whom. In his efforts to solve the mystery he investigates a love triangle, an ancient Jewish ritual and some Nazi symbols.

In his latest detective novel Zygmunt Miłoszewski takes us to the Polish equivalent of Twin Peaks, where the scenery is coloured by present-day emotions and desires, as well as events from the seemingly distant past.

This is flinty, quirky crime writing from poland with a pungent sense of locale and a nicely jaded protagonist in szacki, the past-his-sell-by-date prosecutor energised by the case.

"Crime Time"



#### RAGE

Prosecutors and police officers don't like domestic violence. They prefer "real" crimes such as murder or theft. Then everything is clear from the very start, and the only problem is to figure out who committed the crime. But as for terror at home, taking place in a private sphere between four walls – they treat it with scorn. They don't like these cases, in which one person's words are weighed against another's in court. They don't like the victims of domestic violence, who withdraw their testimony overnight.

On November 25th, 2013, prosecutor Teodor Szacki is summoned to the ruins of a bunker near a former German public hospital. During roadworks, an old skeleton has been found there Little does he know that what appeared to be the end of a routine procedure was, in fact, the beginning of the most difficult case in his career as a prosecutor. A case which would strip him of legal distance, force him to make binding decisions and turn out to be the last investigation of prosecutor Teodor Szacki.

Anger is a crime novel presenting a mystery set against a background formed by a serious social problem. While staying within the principles of the genre, the author changes the rules of the game he plays with the reader – and instead of pondering over the murderer's identity, we try to guess who was killed, and why.

Unfortunately the author – as resolutely as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in his own time – has announced the end of his protagonist's adventures!

CRIME 32 33 CRIME



#### **PRICELESS**

#### movie rights sold

*Priceless* is a thriller about an attempt to recover the most valuable work of art to have gone missing during the Second World War, Raphael's Portrait of a Young Man (known as the male equivalent of the Mona Lisa). Before the war the painting hung in a museum in Krakow, but near the end of the conflict it disappeared in extremely mysterious circumstances. In the novel, the Polish government finds out where the painting is, but as it has no possibility of getting it back in a legal way, it sends a special task force to steal the masterpiece back for Poland. This four-person team consists of: a woman who works for the Foreign Ministry's department for the recovery of lost art; a man who is an art dealer; a retired special services officer; and a Swedish female thief, specially released from jail for this purpose. These four are the book's heroes.

Raphael's painting turns out to be just a small part of a much bigger mystery, involving a mythical collection of 19th-century Impressionist paintings and some historical secrets whose exposure would disturb the balance of the world's superpowers.

Under the guise of a thriller, *Priceless* is an erudite story about the role played by works of art in national memory, about the enigmas of art looting during the Second World War, when everyone stole from everyone, and about how to this day the owners are still trying to recover their property. In Poland alone there are still about 60,000 masterpieces missing, worth some 20 billion dollars.

Miłoszewski makes full use of the traditions of this genre. Priceless includes references to Indiana Jones, James Bond, books about historical conspiracy theories and dozens of other classic thrillers, spy and adventure novels. The inter-textual juggling alone makes it a sheer joy to read. On top of that Miłoszewski adds a fluent style, lots of well-crafted humor and the occasional very biting commentary on reality. And plenty of information about art, of course. I'm sure that if Miłoszewski had been born in the USA, he'd have been far more popular than Dan Brown long ago.

Robert Ostaszewski in Polityka



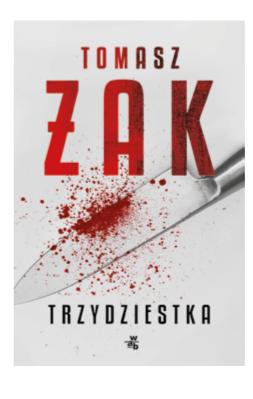
#### THE MATTER OF PRICE

#### movie rights sold

In 1905, Benedykt Czerski – an exile, ethnographer and anthropologist researching the tribes of far Siberia – returns to Europe. He brings back not only his notes, photographs, and cultural artefacts of the Ainu people, but also their secret. As it turns out, Ainus enjoyed longevity, unbothered by dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Over a hundred years later, professor Zofia Lorenz is contacted by Czerski's descendant, Bogdan Smuga, who makes her an offer she cannot refuse – to find the trunk brought by Czerski grom Siberia. Zofia's difficult personal situation, her husband's illness, losing her job at the National Museum, and a secretly-harboured wish to experience something like the search for the Portrait of a Young Man once again – all those things make her accept the challenge. In her search for the lost treasure, Zofia will find herself in Paris, Siberia, and finally, on the board of a ghost ship serving as a secret laboratory. She will also have to deal with some people ready to do anything to keep the Ainu secrets uncovered.

Miłoszewski lets the story unfold with his usual graceful style, in which things are seldom what they seem. In this sweeping continuation of *Priceless*, he gives us a solid dose of sensational events, sudden plot twists, and a mystery that might decide the world's fate. But that's not all – Miłoszewski also discusses the issues of ethics and responsibility upon the shoulders of scientists, as well as our responsibility for the planet.



#### THIRTY

"What's that voice?" He thought. It came from behind, so there must have been at least two of them. While he tried summoning all the scenarios that could still lead to a happy end, his neurotransmitter going crazy, a knife blade sank deep into his stomach. Once, twice. And again, and again. When he felt he was about to die – suddenly just like he always expected – he wanted to say one more thing. The only thing he managed was a gurgle of blood. And the last thing he heard was that voice, again.

'Happy birthday.'

#### Your sins are closer than you think.

In a small provincial town well past its best times, a man is murdered on his thirtieth birthday. The victim turns out to be Tomek, the son of the local mayor who rules with an iron fist, blindly obsessed with his position.

Modern-day Poland. In a small provincial town well past its best times, a man is murdered on his thirtieth birthday. As it turns out, the victim was Tomek, son of the local mayor – a man who rules with an iron fist and is blindly obsessed with his position. And it seems significant that the man was stabbed exactly thirty times.

Investigation takes off, involving the local journalist, a policewoman with shadowed past, and Tomek's friends, who enjoy illegal substances and intense experiences. Everything is taking place right before the elections, making those in power increasingly ruthless about protecting their own interests. Only one thing is certain: after the brutal murder of a prominent politician's son, everyone in town will sleep with one eye open for a long time. The only question remaining is whether anybody was able to sleep peacefully before the tragedy.

Tomasz Żak – (born in 1987) has lived a life of many trades: he was a journalist, real estate agent, trader, customer happiness manager, singer in a hardcore punk band, and city councillor. He could easily obtain one PhD in meme studies and another in Polish rap, if he says so himself. His friends describe him as a one-man band with a big mouth. Right now he runs an e-commerce company together with his girlfriend, and during his free time, he chases the state of euphoria induced by running or weightlifting. Whenever he's not asleep, he's reading or playing video games (too much).

CRIME 34 35 CRIME



# THE GIRL WHO CLAPS

Two young men travel to the middle of nowhere to see a house that one of them has unexpectedly inherited from his mother. A mother whom he never met because he was put up for adoption.

Time seems to stand still in the small town. The collapsing buildings and broken windows, the locals who blend in with their surroundings and never sober up-it's all very real. When the newcomers try to ask for directions to the house, they encounter a conspiracy of silence and a wall of resentment. To make matters worse, their car breaks down and it looks like they'll be forced to spend the night in the scary house where they've ended up. A scary house inhabited by a young girl who claps.

Tomasz Kozioł Born in 1988, Tomasz Kozioł has worn multiple hats over the years. He started out studying mathematics and physics, before switching to the humanities. He chose one of the few non-technical faculties at the Warsaw University of Technology. He began his professional life as an editor, then temporarily became an accountant, and eventually evolved into an analyst.

Currently, he processes and visualises as many data sets as possible by day. By night, he writes horror fiction and fairy tales for children. He remains a jack of all trades, regularly adding to his array.



#### SECOND CHANCE

Movie rights sold to Netflix



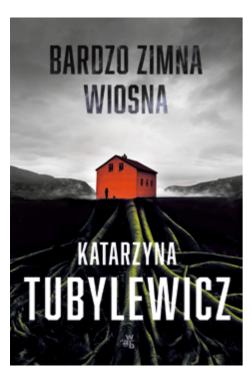
#### You've had a Second Chance. Now, Open your Eyes...

Read it before you watch the series on Netflix! A combination of psychological thriller, horror and detective novel! Julia wakes up in a mysterious hospital. She doesn't recognise her own reflection, and she can't remember how she got there. Eventually, she learns that her whole family died in a fire. Only Julia survived, but she's lost her memory as a result of her injuries. The name of the rehab centre, Second Chance, should give patients hope... But what about the woman who predicts Julia's death, the unknown girl who appears out of the blue, or the whispers echoing all around? Something strange is going on, and it's hard to explain. Julia grows more and more confused and scared, and her treatment isn't achieving the desired results. Finding herself in a situation where she's losing confidence day by day, even in herself, what will she do?

An edition with a cover image from the Netflix series *Open Your Eyes*.

Katarzyna Berenika Miszczuk is a doctor by training. She's a versatile writer whose trademark is a non-obvious mixture of literary worlds invariably peppered with a large dose of humour. She wrote her debut novel, Wolf, aged fifteen and published it three years later (2006). A continuation of this book, She-Wolf, was published in 2009. She is best known among readers for her devil-angel series: I, Devil (2010), I, Angel (2011) and I, Damned Soul (2012). The Fern Flower series consists of: The Folk Healer (2016, voted Book of the Year 2016 by Lubimyczytac.pl), Midsummer (2016), and The Sacrificer (2017, voted Book of the Year 2017 by Lubimyczytac.pl). The first novel from her new series Obsession was also published by W.A.B. in 2017.

CRIME 36 37 CRIME



# A VERY COLD SPRING

'What's the missing person's name?' 'Greta Sjöwall...'

'Age?'

'Eighty-four.' Rebeka was visibly irritated with those questions.

'Did she have any problems with her memory? Dementia, maybe Alzheimer's?' Asked Björn.

'Not at all. Her memory is better than yours,' said Rebeka. 'I'm sorry, I'm a bit nervous. Couldn't we...?' 'Any other health issues?'

'Not really, no... I mean, she does get tired quickly because she smokes too much. In secret.'

Björn noticed Ewa react to the last remark. The woman looked down, biting her lip.

'Apart from that, she's like any other elderly person. Sometimes, something hurts. Some days are better, some are worse.'

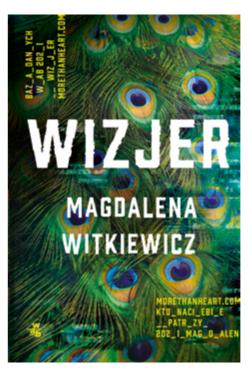
It's Sunday like any other in modern-day Stockholm when a man accidentally finds an abandoned Volvo left on a supermarket parking lot. Inside, he discovers the body of an old lady, her mouth stuffed with scrunched newspaper. But who would want to kill eighty-year-old Greta Sjöwall, a wealthy and respected citizen known for her goodwill and charity work?

Criminal inspectors Jens Vikander and Björn Fågel from the Nacka Strand police station begin investigating several leads in the case. The most promising one follows the trail of young Afghan refugees who were frequent guests at Greta's home. Ewa, a Polish woman who has been caring for Mrs Sjöwall since not long ago, also has some secrets she would rather keep to herself.

The case becomes even more difficult to untangle in the light of an increasing crisis within the Swedish police forces. Soon, it becomes clear that Greta's murder was just the first of a series of deaths... And that modern, culturally diverse Stockholm still echoes with its past.

A Very Cold Spring is a dynamic and surprising crime-novel debut of a seasoned writer and translator. Katarzyna Tubylewicz laces a dark, thick Scandinavian intrigue with social, political, and cultural aspects. It perfectly reflects and portrays the problems of modern-day, multicultural Swedish society, offering an in-depth analysis of the post-war Swedish mentality and traumas.

Katarzyna Tubylewicz is an author, culture expert and Swedish literature translator (including Majgull Axelsson novels, Jonas Gardell's trilogy on AIDS in Sweden Don't Ever Wipe Tears Without Gloves, and Niklas Orrenius's reportage Shootings in Copenhagen, for which she was shortlisted for the Ryszard Kapuściński Award). Tubylewicz is an author of a collection of feature writing on Sweden Moraliści [Moralists], three novels: Własne miejsca [Own Places], Rówieśniczki [Peers], and Ostatnia powieść Marcela [Marcel's Last Novel], and city guide Sztokholm. Miasto, które tętni ciszą [Stockholm. A City Thrumming With Silence]. Together with Agata Diduszko-Zyglewska, she co-edited a collection of essays and interviews Szwecja Czyta [Reading in Sweden]. For many years, she has been practising Ashtanga Yoga, and now she teaches it, too. Tubylewicz lives in Stockholm and spends a lot of her time in Warsaw.Her novel Bardzo zimna wiosna (A Very Cold Spring, W.A.B., 2020) is the first instalment of a series of crime novels.



#### **PEEPHOLE**

Magdalena Witkiewicz enters the worldwide action genre with a bang. Peephole is a thriller that will leave you scared to switch on your computer

Wojciech Chmielarz

Laura is raising her son alone.

One day, seemingly insignificant information triggers an avalanche of events.

Some friends disappear unannounced, others take their own lives, someone appears from the past, and Laura quits her job without thinking, only to receive a dream job offer straight after. Laura has the impression that she is starting to see her life as if through a pane of glass, as the discovery of new secrets leads to even bigger mysteries. Could it have something to do with her work – database analysis and influencing the behaviour of Internet users? Is someone actually controlling us? If so, who? And more importantly, why? And what does the MoreThanHeart dating app have to do with all this?

Magdalena Witkiewicz the author of several dozen novels for adults and children, she was interested in the topic of big data before it even became popular. For several years, she worked as an analyst creating econometric models and carrying out data analysis.

She had her own marketing company, and for a while she ran it and wrote novels at the same time. Today, her professional life revolves around her books, which have sold tens of thousands of copies.

The novel Cherries Always Come in Twos was named Book of the Year 2017 by Lubimyczytac.pl. She has received nominations in this popular vote on many occasions for various titles: First on the List; Hey, What's Up; We'll Meet Again Someday; The Bura Brigade and the Secret of the Library; and Letters Full of Dreams.

### Małgorzata Oliwia Sobczak

is a writer from Gdańsk who lives in Sopot. A cultural specialist and journalist by education, she is the author of the postmodern fairy tale *Mali, Boli and the Ice Queen* (published in 2015 – her literary debut) and the novel *She and the House that Dances* (published by Novae Res). She's a member of the Kochamy Żuławy (We Love Żuławy) Association. On a day-to-day basis, she carries out scientific research and development work in the social sciences and humanities. Her creative work combines existential notions with magical realism. She is inspired by Ibero-American literature (Julio Cortázar). *Red* is the first volume of her criminal series *Colours of Evil*.



#### RUSTLE

Journalist Alicja Grabska is commissioned to test out a new mobile app called Place to Rest, which leads her to mysterious locations around the Tri-City area. During one of her 'forays', she discovers the body of a murdered woman. The investigation conducted by detective Oskar Korda leads to a dark world full of secrets in which the past can never be forgotten.



#### COLOURS OF EVIL: WHITE

One winter's morning, a law student jumps from the window of a tenement house in Sopot. Marks on her body indicate that the young woman was restrained and strangled before her death. The prosecutor who arrives at the scene, Leopold Bilski, has recently returned to the Tri-City after a case in Kartuzy. The clues point to the clubbing scene, where shady desires are entangled with secrets deeply rooted in the past.

This is the third volume of the dark series Colours of Evil.

There was a body lying in the courtyard near the entrance to the stairwell. The blood from her head had already stained the snow around her. But that wasn't the most striking thing. Above all, it was the girl's thick pink socks that stood out against the perfect white of her surroundings.

Iwona looked on, speechless. Finally, she raised the camera to her eye and pressed the shutter



#### COLOURS OF EVIL: BLACK

Following the Skalpel case, prosecutor Leopold Bilski is banished from Sopot to the Kartuzy office. Even though he was acquitted, he went against standard procedure during the investigation. Bilski doesn't take this demotion very well. Meanwhile, Ania Górska passes her exams with flying colours and starts work as an independent prosecutor. Her first serious case is the disappearance of a thirteen-year-old girl. One of the clues leads to Kartuzy.

Writer Julia Sarman returns to Kartuzy to face her dark past after many years of absence. She's a widow raising her young son alone. She's also hiding a murky secret, and since her arrival in Kartuzy, disturbing things have been happening.



#### COLOURS OF EVIL: RED

Two crimes, twenty years apart. One thing in common: Tri-City beach hiding more than one dreadful secret. Parties late into the night in the actors' club, lots of alcohol, drugs, Monte Cassino cemetery at night, the power of romantic love from the past, an unhappy marriage, unsolved family problems, a wish for quick money – what exactly was the story behind the murders of two mysterious women, similar in appearance, whose faces were brutally mutilated by the murderer? This is the mystery that the protagonists are about to probe.

It is a very successful first attempt at a crime story by Małgorzata Oliwia Sobczak. The author aptly portrays the Tri-City milieu of organised crime, lawyers and doctors. We can see great attention to detail when portraying the local environment, perfectly constructed criminal intrigue and a uniquely dark atmosphere.

Movie rights sold to the whole series



### Jakub Szamałek

was born in 1986 in Warsaw. He is a novelist and principal writer at the CD Project Red (publisher of *The Witcher* video games). Szamałek studied at the University of Oxford and holds a PhD in Mediterranean Archeology at the University of Cambridge. He was awarded the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation scholarship.

He was listed as one of Eastern and Central Europe's Young Leaders (New Europe 100) by the Res Publica Foundation, Google, and Financial Times. Szamałek is an author of a crime trilogy about the Athenian detective Leochares. This series earned him the Wielki Kaliber Readers' Choice Award (2011, Kiedy Atena odwraca wzrok [When Athene Looks Away]), and the Wielki Kaliber Award (2016, Czytanie z kości [Bone Reading]). In collaboration with Maria Pawłowska, he published a children's book Kim jest Ślimak Sam? [Who Is Sam the Snail?], introduced to the Hall of Treasures of the Children's Books Museum in Poland. In January 2018, W.A.B published his second bestselling novel Cokolwiek wybierzesz [Whatever You Choose], the first in the Hidden Web series. The second book, Kimkolwiek jesteś [Whoever You Are] was published in October 2019. Gdziekolwiek spojrzysz [Anywhere You Look] is the final instalment of the trilogy.



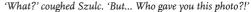
#### **EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK**

#### The third novel in a bestselling Hidden Web series

2020. Journalist Julita Wójcicka continues an investigation started by Emil Chorczyński. In Żelazna Góra, a disastrous copper mine spill alarms the local community. A team of malware analysts comes across a mysterious virus. In the meantime, the journalist discovers that a group of criminals she's been closely following became interested in... library collections. All those events seem to have one thing in common: artificial intelligence.

#### **Book sample**

Damn, she thought. Now or never. There won't be another meeting. 'Right, just one more question.' Julita reached into her bag, pulled out the photo with Daniel Królak taken in Shironeko Sushi and put it on the table. 'I'd like to know what were you doing with this man.'



<sup>&#</sup>x27;I found it. Online.'

'I really don't like the direction of this conversation.' The man got up behind the desk. 'Have you been following me? What is this supposed to mean, are you trying to provoke me or something?'

FICTION

'No, I just...'

'That's enough. I'll show you out.'

'You didn't answer my question.'

'Miss, do you want me to call the police?'

'Perhaps you should,' she nodded. 'Because the man you were seen with is suspected of working with foreign intelligence services.'



#### HIDDEN NETWORK 2. YOU KNOW WHO

Part 2 of the cycle titled Hidden network

November 2018. Kandy Kroosh, camgirl from Mińsk Mazowiecki, is strangled in front of thousands of Internet users.

Julita Wójcicka takes over the investigation started by Emil Chorczyński, in order to reveal the identity of an elusive admin managing the child porn forum. Among the material she receives there is a file that clearly does not match the rest. It is an article about the death of the camgirl, accompanied by a short note: "check it out."

Julita Wójcicka picks up the trail, which leads her on a route she never expected to follow – out of the country, towards political plotting, secret meeting of hackers and... a mortal threat. It turns out that in a world where everything can be found online, nothing can remain secret.

Whoever you are is a story about the price you have to pay for following your ambitions and about determination bordering on obsession. This book also proves that in the 21st century such things as privacy, anonymity or free choice are not to be taken for granted. Whatever we do on the Internet is registered and may be used against us.



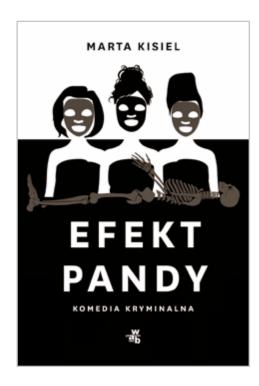
#### YOU KNOW WHO. THE HIDDEN NETWORK. 1

By the time you realise what's going on, it might be too late...

There's been a road accident in Warsaw. Ryszard Buczek, leading actor in a popular children's programme, has died. Everything points to the fact that he lost control of his vehicle. But Julita Wojcicka, a gossip site journalist, has grounds to believe that someone helped the celebrity to depart from this world. The young, inexperienced journalist launches her own investigation. She quickly realises that the truth about the TV star's death is more frightening than anyone could have imagined.

Movie rights sold to the whole series

CRIME 42

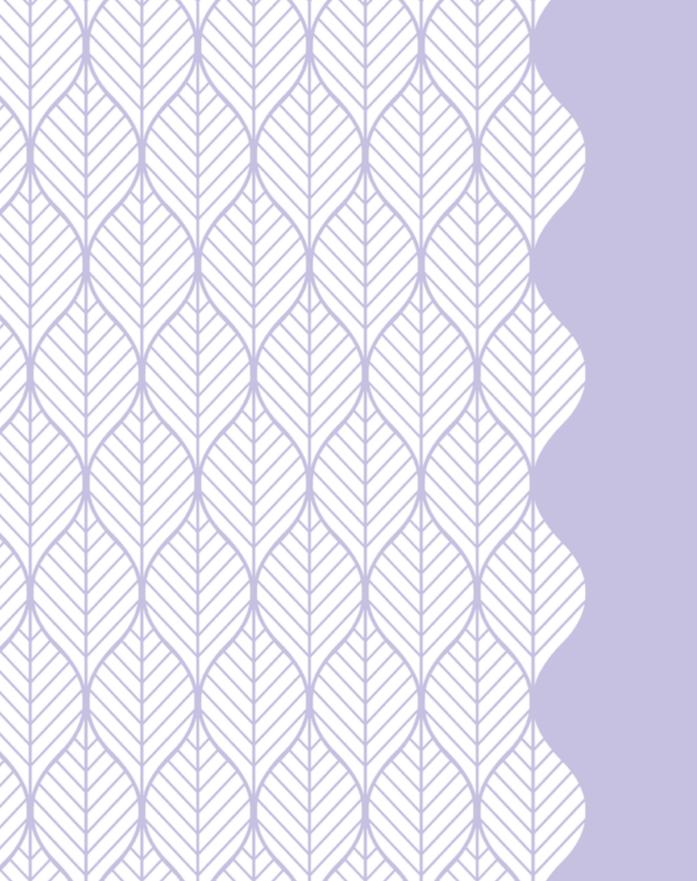


# THE PANDA EFFECT

Spas and smog, romance and murder, a vixen in furs and a missing corpse.

At the prompting of her husband, Tereska Trawna once again gives in to the temptation of peace and quiet with a view. Before long, four women and a dog are on their way to a girly spa break. Unfortunately, the blissful image of wellness and relaxation with a mountain vista is already a distant memory by the first day, when a lurking villain appears on the horizon.

Marta Kisiel (1982) – born in Wrocław, a writer, translator and specialist in Polish studies. Her work includes the much-loved series For Life (For Life, Force Mineure, Scatterbrain, Enchanting Eyes), children's books The Little Bogeyman and the Mystery of the Poor Little Thing and The Little Bogeyman and the Angel of Stone, the short story collection First Word, and novels from the Wrocław series: What's in a Name and Sink and Weep. Nominated six times for the Janusz A. Zajdel Award, she won it in 2018 for her short story Scatterbrain, and again in 2019 for First Word. The Little Bogeyman and the Mystery of the Poor Little Thing won the Ferdynand Wspaniały Award for the best children's book of 2018, and The Little Bogeyman and the Angel of Stone was the Polish Section of IBBY's Book of the Year 2019 in the children's book category.



# NONFICTION

NONFICTION 46 47 NONFICTION



# CONVERSATIONS WITH A CAT

A comprehensive guide that takes the reader on a journey around the feline world. In ten in-sightful chapters, the author explains various questions and issues, from the ways of organising the cat's space, through feeding, to health issues and challenges that come with looking after an elderly cat. All that comes with a solid dose of scientific research and the professional experi-ence of a cat behaviourist. This book is a compendium of practical knowledge on how to take care of our cat while meeting all its natural needs.

Małgorzata Biegańska-Hendryk – veterinary technician, cat nutritionist, and certified behaviourist of companion animals. Since 2012, she has been building her brand Kocibehawioryzm.pl, helping people better understand their feline companions. She works as a consultant, runs workshops and webinars, publishes articles in specialised magazines, is an author of an educational blog for feline lovers, two books, and an educational children's games. Since October 2019, she has been working as a lecturer at the Tischner European University in Cracow at her bespoke course Animal Behaviour Studies: Cats. Privately, she takes care of four feline individuals: Stefan, Bunia, Kiwi, and Opek.



# LISTEN TO YOUR DOG

A guidebook to help you get to know the dogs and understand them better. Zofia Zaniewska and Piotr Wojtków, professional dog trainers, will show you how to combine teaching and training with the observation of the moods and emotions of your furry friend. Thanks to a positive bond between the dog and its people, the animal will be less prone to external stimuli or stress, less excitable or aggressive. A handful of valuable hints on how to bring up and train a dog, both for experienced dog-owners and for anybody who has only just started thinking of adopting a dog.

The book also includes instructional photos to show you how to teach your dog to follow commands and do tricks.

Zofia Zaniewska-Wojtków – behaviourist and dog trainer, studied Applied Animal Psychology, has an M.A. in Bioethics (University of Warsaw). She studied sociology at the University of Bath. She's a member of COAPE (Centre Of Applied Pet Ethology). Together with Piotr they run a company called PSIEDSZKOLE and a school for trainers, WOJTKÓW szkolenia.

**Piotr Wojtków** – dog behaviourist, studied Environmental Protection at the Warsaw University of Technology. He spent years training dogs to assist physically disabled people. In 2008 he started conducting first group trainings. He specialises in working with troublesome dogs, expressing aggressive or fearful behaviour. He collaborates with NGOs to help dogs intended for adoption and their new owners. He conducts lectures and classes in many seminars for behaviourists and trainers.

## Sylwia Majcher

The author of the best-selling book *Cook, Don't Waste*. Polish approach to zero-waste cuisine will be perfect for anybody who wishes to come up with an individual plan for introducing changes in one's lifestyle, so as to suit specific, subjective needs. In this book you will also find interviews with experts (psychologists, lecturers, activists), useful tips and interesting solutions for a journey, for everyday life at work, at home, in the kitchen or at school. You will also see many recipes for tasty seasonal dishes and hints on how to cook without wasting anything.

Use, Don't Waste is perfect for those who want to implement positive changes in their life, which will also impact the environment.

The planner is divided into four sections, corresponding to four seasons of the year, so as to better suit individual needs.

You can start filling it in whenever you want to!



#### FLEXITARIAN EATING

Another cookbook by Sylwia Majcher, teaching us how to prepare meals that can cater to different dietary requirements of vegans, vegetarians, and carnivores.

This book includes recipes for preparing all kinds of meals – breakfasts, dinners, suppers, holiday dishes and family gatherings – with easily-swapped ingredients when we need to make a meat – or dairy-free version. And all this in keeping with the zero-waste spirit.



#### USE, DON'T WASTE

*Use, Don't Waste* is a planner that will help you switch into a more responsible, conscious lifestyle. It is inspired by the popular Bullet Journal and it will be perfect for anybody who wishes to create an individual model of changes in one's lifestyle, to suit specific, subjective needs. What is more, thanks to interviews with experts and numerous challenges that require all sorts of involvement, it will be a great source of ideas on how you can use virtually anything you have at home and derive joy from minimalism.

NONFICTION

Changing your everyday habits may be easy and quite pleasant! Start positive changes in your life with ECOplanner and see how your decision can impact the environment! You will find weekly challenges for the whole year, to help you take small, but effective and deliberate steps towards a zero-waste lifestyle.

Sylwia Majcher, the author of the best-selling book *Cook, Don't Waste.* Polish approach to zero-waste cuisine will be perfect for anybody who wishes to come up with an individual plan for introducing changes in one's lifestyle, so as to suit specific, subjective needs. In this book you will also find interviews with experts (psychologists, lecturers, activists), useful tips and interesting solutions for a journey, for everyday life at work, at home, in the kitchen or at school. You will also see many recipes for tasty seasonal dishes and hints on how to cook without wasting anything.

*Use, Don't Waste* is perfect for those who want to implement positive changes in their life, which will also impact the environment.

The planner is divided into four sections, corresponding to four seasons of the year, so as to better suit individual needs. You can start filling it in whenever you want to!

### Kasia Sawko

is a linguist, French language teacher, culture animator, and lomi lomi nui masseuse. Due to her keen interest in media education, she worked in Creative Commons Poland and the Coalition of Open Education for several years. Kasia is a co-founder of the InfoPraga information point and a coordinator of the Otwarte Zabytki [Open Monuments] project. She was also a founder of the project Wióry lecą – stolarka dla kobiet i nie tylko [Girls At Work. Carpentry Made Easy – Not Just For Women] and author of the book Wióry lecą. Tapicerka i renowacja mebli dla początkujących [Girls At Work. Upholstery And Furniture Renovation For Beginners].



### WHAT COMES OUT OF THE WOODWORK. CARPENTRY FOR BEGINNERS

This carpentry guide for beginners is a result of over one thousand workshops Kasia Sawko and her husband organised all over the country. In this book, she tells all about the life in her carpentry studio Wióry Leca and how to get started with this hobby, no matter what gender you are and whether you have any previous DIY experience or not. The handbook also includes 25 manuals on how to make a sandbox, nightstand, garden table, laptop stand, and many others – all this in an easy and user-friendly format!



#### FLYING WOODCHIPS

What furniture should you take to a workshop? Which tools are absolutely essential? How should you approach a renovation job without losing your faith and enthusiasm as soon as you've started? This book leads you on an accelerated course in the renovation and upholstery of furniture, learning the basic steps and indispensable tips. You'll be inspired by several furniture stories – before, during and after renovation. "When I started my business, I worried that there was only one way of doing a job. Experience has shown that there's a lot of freedom in manual work, some things are done intuitively, and a large part of the work is based on patents and making life easier," explains the author, who is keen to share her clever methods for quickly renovating furniture. So, time to renounce your fears and pull out those old armchairs from the cupboard under the stairs. Let's get to work!

### Kasia and Zosia Pilitowska

are mother and daughter, owners of the Ranny Ptaszek café in Kraków, and cooking devotees. Kasia has been successfully running the largest food festival in Kraków, 'Najedzeni Fest', for several years and is active in the culinary world. She is also the owner of Hummusija bar, which has operated for years in Kraków's Kazimierz district, and a journalist for *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Przekrój*.



### THE POTATO. SIMPLE AND ORIGINAL RECIPES STARRING POTATOES

Following on from the success of *The Egg*, the zany mother-daughter duo from Kraków's Ranny Ptaszek cafe take us on a potato-based journey. Quite literally, because the book includes dishes from all over the world, all of which cast potatoes in the lead role. Therefore, in addition to Polish delicacies such as *pyzy*, *cepeliny* and Silesian dumplings, *The Potato* offers a recipe for vada pav from Bombay, an African peanut butter soup, and the Austrian rösti that ski enthusiasts know and love. The book is divided into five chapters. There are basic recipes, ideas for kneaded, baked and fried dishes from all over the world, and finally, ways of turning potatoes into dessert. A true potato feast!



#### THE EGG

Everyone knows what an egg looks like. But how it tastes is a different matter! Kasia and Zosia Pilitowska, mother and daughter, owners of cult Kraków café Ranny Ptaszek ('Early Bird'), are of the opinion that nothing enhances the taste of food like adding an egg. For this reason, they're sharing their recipes for dishes in which the egg plays a major role: from eggy basics (including a recipe for the perfect soft-boiled egg!), through all-day breakfasts and pancakes from around the world, to undemanding but compelling desserts. The simple and inspiring recipes alternate with stories from both Kasia and Zosia, as well as their Kraków friends: chefs, artists and enthusiasts who share their memories and secret recipes for the best eggs in the world. As it turns out, everyone has their favourite flavour. What's yours?

NONFICTION 52 53 NONFICTION



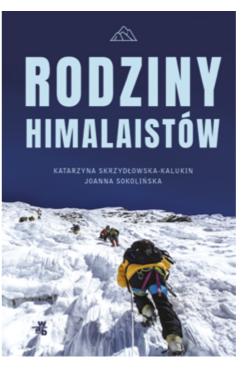
# STATISTICALLY SPEAKING



How much chocolate does one have to eat to get a Nobel Prize? Why neither a horse nor a raccoon never got a PhD? Does the English language cause heart attacks, and can butter make you live longer? And most importantly: are scientists like wives – never wrong? Those questions have been nagging humanity since the dawn of time. Only one statistical heroine of our times can shed some light on those pressing issues: Janina Bak.

Statistically Speaking will make your stomach hurt (from laughter, that is – no need to run to your doctor. In fact, we strongly recommend running only when chased). But wait; it gets even better. This book can help you understand what this whole statistics business is all about, how not to let the cunningly designed charts manipulate our perspective, and how people manipulate data in the first place. No wonder it became a pandemic überbestseller, trumping the most popular crime novels on its way to the top.

Janina Bak is the stat-woman we didn't know we needed. An author of the blog Janina Daily, a tour de farce of the business world, a virtuoso of mathematical shenanigans, a commander of comedy, the BLT of marital life – take your pick. Her DIY workshop on how to weave a basket out of thin dried sausage racked up over 65,000 times views so far. The TEDx Talk on statistics was – for a brief moment – more popular than that YouTube video featuring baby elephant playing football. Whenever she has to travel anywhere, it is more than likely she will leave on Tuesday instead of Thursday, a month too early or too late, and it won't matter at all – because she'll go in the wrong direction anyway. She believes the bar needs to be kept as high as possible – so that you don't have to duck when walking underneath it.



### LOVING MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

Are mountain climbers allowed to have children? A husband? A wife? Is their struggle to make their dreams come true egoistic, or is it just their right to live their life on their own terms? Families of the most accomplished Polish mountain climbers talk about loving the people who climb the highest mountains – and how it affected their own lives.

Jerzy Kołakowski remembers the day when his mother got a call informing them of his father's death. He was two – too young to remember, and yet he will never forget the shock of it. Ryszard Kołakowski died while climbing Makalu. Jerzy followed his father footsteps and devoted his own life to climbing them, too. But he doesn't want to have children – or anything else that would stop him from reaching the highest peaks.

Tomasz Jankowski, climbed Rysy for the first time when he was three. It was his father, Bogdan Jankowski – responsible for facilitating communication for the climbing teams.

Marcin Latałło, grew up without his father, who died on Lhotse in 1974. His father was not a climber and participated in the expedition as a member of the film crew. Later, Marcin made a documentary in which he attempted to confront his trauma after losing his father.

Joanna Kondracka, is protecting her two children from the media narratives of their father and her ex-husband Tomek 'Czapkins' Mackiewicz, who died while fulfilling his dream of climbing Nanga Parbat.

Someone said this is a book about the side effects of living with a mountain climber. This book tells the story of how one person's great passion shapes the lives of their loved ones.

Katarzyna Skrzydłowska-Kalukin has been working as a journalist for twenty-six years. She wrote for several daily newspapers, including Gazeta Wyborcza, Dziennik Polska Europa Świat, and for weeklies Newsweek and Wprost. She writes articles and books on a wide range of social issues. She loves the Tatra Mountains and understands how a mountain can render a human being speechless.

Joanna Sokolińska – sociologist by education, reporter by trade. For twenty years, she worked at *Gazeta Wyborcza* as a journalist, reporter, and editor. In *Wysokie Obcasy*, she wrote about the daily realities of various women and had her own column on parenthood. Her literary debut was a crime novel *Trzewiczki Matki Boskiej* [Virgin Mary's Boots].

NONFICTION 54 55 NONFICTION



# THE BEST CITY IN THE WORLD.

REBUILDING AND RECONSTRUCTION OF WARSAW 1944-1949

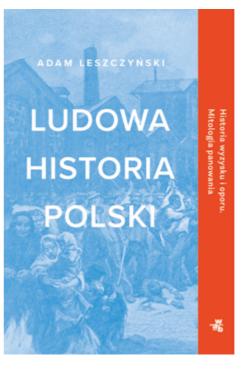
2021, nominated to The Nike Literary Award 2021, winner of the Architectural Award of the Mayor of Warsaw

The Best City In the World is a book about enthusiasm and optimism – about coming up with the idea of the 'best city in the world' on the ruins of the old order, and about the architects from the Capital City Reconstruction Office who, when designing a city of their dreams, helped to build a totalitarian state.

After the failure of the Warsaw Uprising, the city once known as Paris of the North turned into an ocean of rubble. It took a lot of imagination to look at the stumps of tenement houses and plan the fast route to revival. And yet, the decision to rebuild Warsaw was made almost immediately. The task looming ahead of the architects and builders was immense.

Even though the rebuilt Old Town became the showcase example of the post-war reconstruction of Warsaw, the rest of the city was never going to go back to its former shape. Instead, it was to become a perfect modern metropolis. The Best City In the World is a book about enthusiasm and optimism – about coming up with the idea of the 'best city in the world' on the ruins of the old order, and about the architects from the Capital City Reconstruction Office who, when designing a city of their dreams, helped to build a totalitarian state.

Grzegorz Piątek (born in 1980) – a historian and architecture critic, Warsaw history researcher, graduate of the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology, publicist, curator of exhibitions and architectural projects. In the years 2005-2011, he was the editor-in-chief of the monthly magazine Architektura-Murator. He also published in Gazeta Stołeczna and Esquire. Piątek wrote a biography of Stefan Starzyński, titled Sanator: kariera Stefana Starzyńskiego [Sanationist: The Career of Stefan Starzyński, W.A.B. 2016] and co-authored numerous publications about Warsaw, including Warschau. Der thematische Führer durch Polens Hauptstadt (with J. Trybuś, 2009).



# THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF POLAND

2021, nominated to The Nike Literary Award

The People's History of Poland is the story of the things lied about or repressed in the collective memory in Poland. It is the story of the 90 per cent of the Polish society, of the poor and uneducated, of those who were expected to work hard and listen to the elites – from the early days od Poland's existence up until today.

The main topic of the book is power – the power of those on top of the society – and of the social institutions, serving elites to take over whatever the people have produced. Therefore, it isn't simply the story of serfdom and corvée, but also of the social relationships in the factories and the 19th-century offices. It is the history of the people, not the history of a nation: the author isn't interested in the wars and uprisings as much as he is in their aftermath – how their successes and failures shaped and changed the relationships between the people who lived in Poland: Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, and other minorities.

It is also the history of ideas – the ideas that justified the power executed by the liege over his subjects, or by the factory-owner over the labourers. The elites conjured up numerous explanations for their status – explanations that changed over time, and so the author examines those changes. At the same time, there was a dispute on emancipation and equality, but the supporters of those ideas in Poland were usually in the minority.

Finally, it is the history of rebellion and resistance – sabotages at work, acts of rebellion against the lieges, factory strikes. There were many such movements in Poland, often carried out with extreme cruelty – as well as the acts of violence executed commonly in everyday life.

Adam Leszczyński — historian, sociologist, and journalist. He is a professor at the SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Warsaw. He is the co-founder of the OKO.press platform and a team member of the Krytyka Polityczna. In the years 2005-2017, he wrote regularly for the Gazeta Wyborcza daily newspaper. Leszczyński is the author of several acclaimed non-fiction books, including Naznaczeni. Afryka i AIDS [Stigma. Africa and AIDS (2003)], and Zbawcy mórz [Saviours of the Sea (2013)]. He also wrote a number of academic books on the social history of the People's Republic of Poland and on the problems of peripheral modernisation (Skok w nowoczesność [Leap Into Modernity], 2013) and developmental politics. His articles were published in a number of magazines, Polityka, Newsweek, Krytyka Polityczna, as well as The Guardian and El Pais.

NONFICTION 56 57 NONFICTION



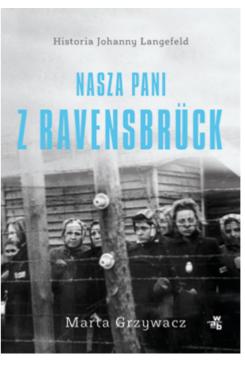
# THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH. WHO KILLED THE JAROSZEWICZ FAMILY?

He was strangled in his armchair, she was shot dead. The mysterious murder of Piotr Jaroszewicz and his wife Alicja Solska electrified Poland for years. Now, Monika Góra once again looks at one of the most high-profile murders of the 1990s, trying to find out who and why wanted to hide the real culprits.

March 2018. Polish Minister of Justice Zbigniew Ziobro announces the murderers of the former Prime Minister Piotr Jaroszewicz and his wife Alicja Solska have been found. The alleged murderers are Dariusz S., Marcin B., and Robert S., members of a karate gang that operated in Radom in the 1990s; the men were responsible for a series of brutal burglaries in rich people's villas all around the country. But valuables at the PM's home were left untouched, and the postmortem showed Jaroszewicz was tortured for hours before his death – the murderers pushed a corkscrew between his ribs, put out cigarettes on his skin, and tried to pull his tongue out. At the same time, they dressed his wounds, changed his clothes, and gave him medication. They almost certainly tortured him in order to obtain some information.

Monika Góra tried to find out why, for so many years, the police and public persecution service were unable to find the culprits. How come after almost thirty years, various facts – strange facts, to say the least – are coming out and into the daylight for the first time, and how come certain dots have never been connected before? Who wants to keep the truth hidden? The investigation includes many people, including those we keep seeing on the front pages.

Monika Góra is a reporter and screenwriter. She studied Journalism at the Jagiellonian University and penned over a hundred TV scripts. She works with Duży Format where she published a series of investigative articles about the killing of Iwona Cygan. Her book Miasteczko zbrodni. Dlaczego zginęła Iwona Cygan? [Murdertown. Why Iwona Cygan Had to Die?], published by W.A.B. in 2019, casts new light on one of the most mysterious criminal riddles of the past decades.



# OUR LADY OF RAVENSBRÜCK THE STORY OF JOHANNA LANGEFELD

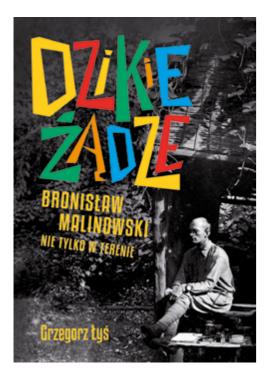
2020, winner of the KLIO award (award given by historians for distinguished contribution in historical reaserch)

The unthinkable story of one of the most mysterious people in the Nazi annihilation system.

*Our Lady of Ravensbrück. The Story of Johanna Langefeld* is a historical reportage, attempting to reconstruct the biography of one of the most secretive and controversial female guards of the Nazi concentration camps in Ravensbrück and Auschwitz, who, with the help of her former prisoners, managed to avoid sentencing in the Auschwitz trials. In her book, Grzywacz also looks for answers to the question: How come the victims saved their oppressor?

November 24th, 1947. The Supreme National Tribunal gathers in the main hall of the National Museum in Cracow to prosecute forty Auschwitz war criminals. The trial is observed closely by the former prisoners, as well as the Polish and American media. One by one, the accused come in. However, someone is missing – Johanna Langefeld, who was supposed to be the 'guest of honour' at the trial because of her prominent role in Heinrich Himmler's scenario. She was the one to organise the first women's concentration camp in Ravensbrück, and then the next one, in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Under her supervision, the Ravensbrück camp became the exemplary prison for thousands of innocent women. Meanwhile, Langefeld escaped. Several years later, there will be rumours that someone helped her – rumours so improbable it will be hard to even consider them. Could it really be that Johanna Langefeld was released from the Montelupich Prison by the former Ravensbrück prisoners? Such things don't happen. Marta Grzywacz talked to the last prisoners alive and to the people who knew Langefeld, went through stacks of almost-unobtainable documents and letters, and created a fascinating portrait of the woman who was one of the most mysterious and controversial figures in the Nazi structures.

Marta Grzywacz studied at the Faculty of Law and Administration at the University of Warsaw. As a journalist, she worked in the press, radio and television. Grzywacz conducted hundreds of interviews with people from the world of science and culture. Since 2012, she's been working with Gazeta Wyborcza and Newsweek. In 2017, she published her first book – a fictionalised historical reportage Obrońca skarbów. Karol Estreicher w poszukiwaniu zagrabionych dzieł sztuki [Treasure Protector. Karol Estreicher On the Hunt For the Lost Works of Art]. In 2017, it was chosen the Best Historical Book, and in 2018, it was shortlisted in the Best Popular Science Book.



# WILD DESIRES. BRONISŁAW MALINOWSKI IN THE FIELD AND BEYOND

#### The first biography of Bronisław Malinowski

A brilliant biography, written with verve and journalistic flair, of Bronisław Malinowski – the famous Polish traveller, sociologist, founder of functional anthropology, one of the pioneers of using participatory observation in social research, and author of the book *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia*. A fascinating portrayal of the era, including the difficult friendship between Malinowski and Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz.

#### **Book sample**

Although his childhood and youth spent among the highlanders helped Malinowski gain world fame, the highlanders themselves were of little interest to him. He disregarded traditional descriptive ethnography, the humble older sister of anthropology, labelling it the study of embroidery on women's knickers. He was completely uninterested in Polish or Slavic folk culture and folklore, nor did he even try to pretend that he valued or liked the Polish people. When his student – the well-known sociologist and socialist politician Feliks Gross, with whom Bronisław became very close in the last years of his life in the United States – spoke with admiration about the talents of Polish workers who were uniting in industrial American cities, Malinowski pondered for a moment before pronouncing sourly: "You must not know them. I know them. They butchered one of my ancestors with a saw during a massacre".

Grzegorz Łyś is a journalist, a populariser of science, and the author of numerous publications on historical tourism.

Gross, Feliks. "Malinowski's Youth and Golden Years", Kultura i Społeczeństwo, 3/1997 pp. 195-212.

