



Melanie Ostell Literary

August 2020 Forthcoming Adult Titles list

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Melanie Ostell has worked in trade publishing as an editor, publisher, educator and now literary agent. In 2002 she spent three months in-house in London and New York on a Churchill Fellowship. A senior editor at Text Publishing for over ten years, Melanie has since freelanced with all major Australian publishers and held publisher positions in Perth and Sydney. She has led writing workshops across the country, taught at several universities and is a registered mentor with the Australian Society of Authors. Melanie’s current focus is on building her client list.

FICTION

A LONELY GIRL IS A DANGEROUS THING

Jessie Tu

DEBUT BESTSELLER

Twenty-two-year-old Jena Lin plays the violin. Once a child prodigy she now uses sex to fill the void left by fame. Her professional life is rehearsals, concerts, auditions and practice; her personal life is spent managing the demands of her strict family and creative friends, and hooking up. Then she meets Mark – much older and worldly-wise – who consumes her. Could this be love?



'I absolutely inhaled this book. **Gutsy, bold and surprising**, with a darkness that draws you in and keeps you hanging onto every word.'

Bri Lee, author of *Eggshell Skull*

'A powerful new voice.'

Christos Tsiolkas, author of *Damascus*

'Bold, enthralling and sharp ... Tu has created a character who challenges society's expectations and assumptions of Asian-Australian women.' Australian *VOGUE*

'What a title, and what a debut novel ... **a remarkable and strong entry into the national literary scene.'** *Australian Book Review*

'Most of the time for Jena, sex is just sex [though] as Jessie Tu unravels in her debut novel, sex can mean many things: agency, power or being desired; punishment, a distraction, or a salve to being alone ... Jena sleeps with a variety of men who lay "claim" to her. She ultimately transcends them ... **Selfish, motivated, duplicitous, brilliant: Jena is unapologetically complex ... An absorbing, occasionally confronting and often captivating first novel.'**

Jack Callil, *Sydney Morning Herald/The Age*

'An engaging and ambitious debut filled with ideas that need to be heard.' *Saturday Paper*

'Jena discards men like autumn leaves. She uses them and they use her ... **Tu sheds light on driving ambition, the role of parents and the fine line between excellence, cruelty and punishment ... A raw and illuminating book. Highly recommended.'** *The Canberra Times*

'A novel of race, class, discrimination within creative communities, youth, and familial expectation ... **my most dog-eared book of 2020 ... gorgeously expressed lines, as well as stinging abject and visceral ones ... go out and read it as soon as you can.'** Ellen Cregan, *Kill Your Darlings*

PDF of final pages available to read • 80,000 words • Literary fiction Rights: ANZ publication July 2020 by Allen & Unwin; Chandler Crawford Agency is co-agenting in US, UK, Canada. All other rights available.

FICTION

OTHER PEOPLE'S HOUSES

Kelli Hawkins

Even ordinary homes can house extraordinary secrets.

Kate Webb still grieves for her young son, ten years after his loss. She spends her weekends hungover, attending open houses on Sydney's wealthy north shore and imagining the lives of the people who live there.

Then Kate visits the Harding house – the perfect house with, it seems, the perfect family. A photograph captures a kind-looking man, a beautiful woman she once knew from university days, and a boy – a boy that for one heartbreaking moment she believes is her own son. When her curiosity turns to obsession, she uncovers the cracks that lie beneath a glossy facade of perfection, sordid truths she could never have imagined.

But is it her imagination? As events spiral dangerously out of control, could the real threat be Kate herself?

Comparisons with recent thrillers such as Paula Hawkins's *The Girl on the Train* and A. J. Finn's *The Woman by the Window* are warranted, though Kate has more grit than those women. And there's also a generous nod to Liane Moriarty with its unmistakable wry Aussie humour.



Kelli Hawkins is a journalist and designer who currently writes reports for a private investigator as well as novels for adults and children. She lives in Newcastle with her two teenagers. This is her debut adult novel.

Edited mss available; 83,000 words • crime/thriller

ANZ rights acquired by HarperCollins (two-book deal), to publish in May 2020.

Rights: All other rights exc. ANZ available. Please note vigorous interest in screen rights.

FICTION

FED TO RED BIRDS (wto)

Rijn Collins

Elva-Bjalla is the granddaughter of Afi, an Icelandic author famous for his children's book *Fed to Red Birds* published forty-odd years ago. Recently Elva has swapped blistering Australian summers for subzero Arctic winters by moving to Reykjavik. She loves it – the snow, the capital, the countryside, the grand myths, its tinkling language and its pervasive strangeness. It suits Elva as she has some strange habits of her own – her counting and taxidermy being the least of them.

Afi lives in Iceland's far north and when he has a stroke Elva's anxieties escalate – most notably in the form of her xylophagia (book eating). Her ritualised obsession has complicated beginnings but it brings her solace and, importantly, only Afi's book is ever used.

As Elva waits for news of her grandfather, she continues her Icelandic studies and starts seeing Remy, a young man from Belgium who has a few eccentricities of his own. Might trusting in each other and revealing themselves to one another transform them in the ways that they both dream of – or is that risk too great?

Fed to Red Birds explores our fragilities, traumas and our desire to connect with others, no matter where in the world we happen to be.



Rijn Collins is an award-winning short story writer and has spent writers' residencies at Listhús in Ólafsfjörður, Iceland, and in Joutsa, central Finland. She currently lives in Melbourne. This is her debut novel.

Edited mss available October 2020; approx 80,000 words, literary fiction.

ANZ rights acquired by Ben Ball, Scrivener (S&S) in a pre-empt, to publish in May 2020.

Rights: All other rights exc. ANZ available.

FICTION

THE CURLEW'S EYE

Karen Manton

Greta's partner Joel was raised on a large property on the outskirts of a small Northern Territory town. Joel came from a big family – seven brothers and a sister – and together with his immigrant parents, and his father's two brothers, his childhood and teenage years were spent in a boisterous house. Now, many years later, Joel returns with Greta and their three young boys during the build-up. Of all the adult children, he is the one tasked with readying the land for sale.

The family of five move in to the cottage further down the hill from the main, burnt-out house to consider what needs to be done and how long it might take. The boys are quick to explore and soon settle into a routine, as does their father; however, only Joel is familiar with blackened ruin perched above them, the husk of the abattoir, and the verdant palms that seem to be everywhere. In marked contrast, Greta wrestles with the eerie, thick lush land and the oppressive heat. And then there is the utter strangeness of *all* living things in this part of the world – including the curlew's sad wailing – and an especially enigmatic, mysterious young waif whom she tries to befriend.

This rich, atmospheric debut envelops the reader. It's big and bold, romantic and earthy, even as it reveals the pain and secrets of generational trauma. It is also a love letter – to family, to the land, to home, and to the power of the imagination and storytelling, especially that of fairy tales.



Karen Manton has won a raft of prizes for her short stories. In 2017 she was the first recipient of the Varuna–Arts NT residency. She recently relocated with her own family to Darwin from Batchelor, Northern Territory. This is her debut novel.

Edited mss available November 2020; approx 83,000 words, literary fiction/contemporary gothic.

ANZ rights acquired by Allen & Unwin (in a hotly contested auction early August 2020), to publish in August 2021.

Rights: All other rights exc. ANZ available.

NON-FICTION

JUST MONEY: MISADVENTURES IN THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN DEBT TRAP

Royce Kurmelovs

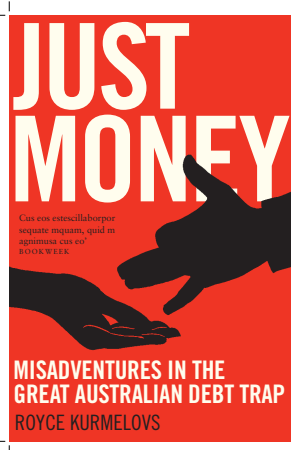
The debt business is booming. Millions of Australians grapple with credit cards, mortgages and student debt repayments each day. As the result of a car crash without insurance, investigative journalist Royce Kurmelovs finds himself among them. Once a debt collector knocks on his door, he decides to dig through the underbelly of the Australian financial system. Though friends tell him not to worry, that it's 'just money', he learns the opposite is true.

Kurmelovs explores the three types of debt – government, commercial and personal. This timely book shows us time and again how years of political opportunism and rapacious business practices have forged a nation that is leaving the next generation to pick up the tab.

Just Money reveals how years of political opportunism and rapacious business practices in the 'Lucky Country' have forged a nation that is leaving the next generation to pick up the tab – a disastrous situation only exacerbated by the current repercussions of Covid-19.

'An extraordinary work that burrows below the surface of a common Australian myth...
Kurmelovs is a master of precision, wit and understanding.' Rick Morton

'One of Australia's most important socio-political voices.' *Kill Your Darlings*



One of Australia's most provocative young writers, Royce Kurmelovs' focus is always on the personal stories of those most affected by the actions of Government and big business. His books include *The Death of Holden*, *Rogue Nation* and *Boom and Bust*. His work has been published by ABC, CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera, The Guardian, News Limited as well as Australian literary journals. He lives in Adelaide.

Edited manuscript available, 85,000 words.

Rights: World, exc. ANZ. To be published by UQP, September 2020.

NON-FICTION

HOMESICKNESS

Janine Mikosza

Homesickness is an artful literary memoir that explores how we remember – the myriad ways a child’s trauma lives on in an adult’s body, responsibility versus accountability, and the shift from silence to finding a voice. It is about finally being believed when speaking the truth, and the consequences of a decades-long silence. At the heart of this complex narrative is a central question: *What is it like not to be safe in a space like home?*

Janine attempts to revisit fourteen houses she lived in before turning eighteen and investigates the physical and psychological spaces there. To help her do so she uses two narrative voices in conversation – to engage, and at times to disengage from the confessional and to experiment with form. This memoir balances trauma and dark humour in ways that call to mind W. G. Sebald, and similarly it also incorporates illustrative material.

Sarah Sentilles was Janine’s mentor and declares *Homesickness* ‘an important contribution to memoir, to conversations about form, to visual studies, and to trauma studies. ***Homesickness* is brilliant, a book that will be considered a masterpiece.**’



Janine’s essays and short stories have appeared in *The Kenyon Review*, *Electric Literature*, *The Best Australian Essays*, and *Meanjin*. She has been shortlisted for the 2020 Fish Publishing Prize (Ireland); the 2014 Commonwealth Short Story Prize; the Bridport and Bristol prizes (UK); and she received an Honorable Mention in the 2018 Zoetrope All-Story Competition (US).

Mss available to read September 2020 • approx 55,000 words • literary memoir (illus.)

On submission with ANZ publishers September 2020.

NB: the manuscript contains 19 illustrations, which necessitates sending via Dropbox.

NON-FICTION

WELCOME TO FAMILY (wto)

Marina Kamenev

Here's an exercise: Get a piece of paper. Grab a pen, pencil, crayon – any drawing utensil within reach. Now, draw a family.

So begins Marina Kamenev's fascinating investigation into the changing shapes and faces of families in the twenty-first century. Pre-supposing that most readers' initial thoughts of 'family' are of a four-person nuclear unit, Kamenev quickly clarifies that this book is 'about the white space on your page, about the households that don't come to your mind when you're asked to draw a family, and the way these relationships are defined and regulated, included and excluded. It is about how they fight for your consideration.'

Kamenev will be looking at childless couples, single-parent families, adoptions, surrogacy, IVF, freezing eggs, sperm donors, the rise of 'dwiiblings', age appropriate mothers and designer babies in many Western countries. Alongside all of these developing complications she will also scrutinise the speed at which technology has outstripped the legal, moral and ethical questions that should be asked around prospective parenthood and in creating a family.

Might it prove, too, that all of these issues can be distilled into one all-encompassing question: with sufficient money, are we all gods now?

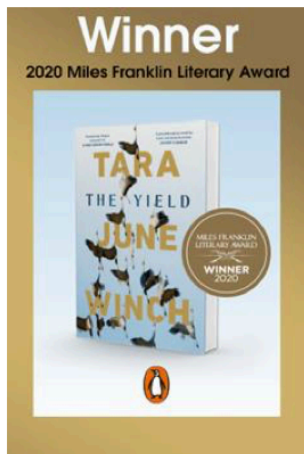


Journalist Marina Kamenev is the former deputy arts editor of *The Moscow Times*. Her work has been recently published in *The Atlantic*, *Time*, *Sunday Life*, *The Monthly*, and *Marie Claire*. This is her first book.

Proposal available end September 2020. Non-fiction • current affairs/society

On submission with ANZ publishers September 2020. Anticipated length 80–90,000 words.

OTHER NOTABLE WORKS REPRESENTED:



Tara June Winch, *The Yield*, published ANZ, July 2019.
Rights: PRH (World); HarperVia (US, UK, Canada); Actes Sud (France)

Winner, Miles Franklin Literary Award 2020 Winner: Christina Stead Award for Best Fiction, People's Choice Award, Best Book – all New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards 2020; shortlisted: Victorian Premier's Literary Award 2020; Stella Prize 2020; Queensland Literary Award 2020.

Greg Woodland, *The Night Whistler*, publication ANZ August 2020.
Crime Thriller.
Rights: Text Publishing (World); Editions Belfond (France); AST (Russia).



BES Animation (and Jess Black), *Kitty Is Not a Cat*
Junior fiction x 4 titles, based on the international bestselling TV series (sold to 30+ countries). ANZ publication August and November 2020.
Rights: Hachette (World); Pandora Publishing SRL (Romania); IS Kultur (Turkey).



Sophie Green, *The Shelly Bay Ladies Swimming Circle*

Rights: Hachette (World), ANZ publication August 2019; 2021 publication in UK, Netherlands, Germany, 2021.