

Cossee Publishers

Frankfurt Highlights 2018



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Saskia Goldschmidt

Breaking Ground

- Rights sold: option on **film rights**
- Moving portrait of two conflicting generations of Dutch farmers
- By the author of the **success novels** *The Hormone Factory* (sold to seven countries) and *The Vintage Queen* (Germany, dtv)
- **English sample** available

Femke, her mother Trijn and her grandfather have very different ideas about how to run their farm. Tensions between mother and daughter are growing, as Femke wants to switch to sustainable agriculture, whilst her mother considers this an attack on tradition. To make matters worse, the Dutch province of Groningen is experiencing a series of earthquakes, and Femke increasingly comes under the influence of an ambitious young female farmer. While the cracks in their farmhouses increase, the relevant authorities and the state-owned gas company keep refusing to help the local farming community.

In *Breaking Ground*, Saskia Goldschmidt investigates what it means to have your identity intensely entwined with your place of birth. And how to keep standing when the world as you know it is slowly falling apart.

Saskia Goldschmidt (1954) studied at the Arts Academy Utrecht. *The Hormone Factory* was reprinted several times and was sold to seven countries – Germany (dtv), France (Gallimard), Turkey (Bence), US (The Other Press)/UK (Saraband), South Africa (Protea) and Bulgaria (Lettera). Film rights have been sold to the French production company Film Talents. *The Vintage Queen* (2015) is a favourite among Dutch bookshops and was published in German by dtv in May 2018.

80,000 words, to be published in October 2018 by Cossee Publishers

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Bregje Hofstede

Drive

- By the author of *The Sky above Paris* (**German, Danish and Arabic rights sold**) and *The Rediscovery of the Body*
- Confrontingly personal, no-holds-barred analysis of a relationship
- **English sample** available

On a winter's night, a young woman leaves her flat, carrying a backpack containing a decade in diaries. With this archive on her back, she roams through Brussels, trying to come to terms with what she is leaving behind: the teenage lover who became her husband and a woman in whom she no longer recognizes herself.

Moving from one cheap sleeping place to the next, she tries relentlessly to unravel their lost love – with her diary entries, her parents' scrap books, photos and memories as evidence. But as the lovers drift apart, the memories start fading.

In *Drive*, Bregje Hofstede follows the seeping transition from childhood to adulthood: What if the plethora of possible lives slowly starts narrowing down and there is only one role left to play?

Bregje Hofstede (1988) made her debut with *The Sky above Paris*, which was nominated for the Libris Literature Award, the Anton Wachter Award and the Gouden Boekenuil, and which has been translated into German, Danish and Arabic. In 2017, her essay collection the *The Rediscovery of the Body* followed. She writes for the Dutch investigative newspaper *De Correspondent*.

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Dorothee Albers *A Mariner's Grave for a Short Story*

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- Intricately composed novel about **three generations of musicians**
- Intriguing debut on musical talent
- **English sample** available

Spinning around herself a few times, a young woman throws a scarf containing memories of a short, but passionate love into the lake, a mariner's grave for a short story. In three parts, the novel tells the story of three generations of musicians, the mother, the son and the granddaughter.

When Jet becomes pregnant with the child of a gifted cellist, her parents forbid a marriage. Just after the war, a Jewish boy is no match for a Catholic girl. She is sent to a monastery and forced to give the boy up for adoption.

Jurre is raised in a farmer's family. He discovers the saxophone as a teenager, and much to his parents' grief, decides to become a musician. When he discovers that they are his foster parents, he never finds the strength to confront them.

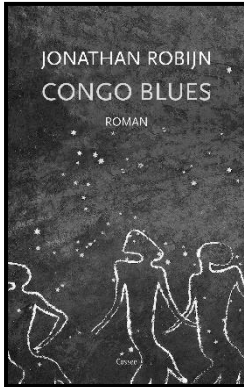
Both Jet and Jurre remain silent about their past. And just like them, Jurre's daughter Fine tries to express in music what she cannot say with words. But when she can no longer control her stage fright, her talent starts to become a burden.

Why is it that a talent can be a gift, but also a curse? Evidently, an outstanding talent can complicate leading an ordinary life enormously, and may entail making difficult choices.

Dorothee Albers (1966) studied French and Communication at the University of Amsterdam. She worked for fifteen years in the cultural sector, amongst others for the Dutch national TV. Dorothee Albers now teaches creative writing.

66,000 words, published in September 2018 by Cossee Publishers

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Jonathan Robijn *Congo Blues*

- Rights sold: **Italian (Marsilio), Turkish (Cumartesi Kitapligi) and German (Nautilus)**
- “Jonathan Robijn is a subtle stylist. He proves to be a master in creating atmospheres, he suggests a lot, but more often he lets his readers fill in the blanks.”
– *De Standaard*****1/2
- **English sample** available

Morgan is a Jazz pianist who earns his money with the occasional gigs in bars. His childhood in the tropics he has banned from his memories. An unexpected encounter on New Year’s Day changes his life. When he returns home in the morning from a performance, he finds an elegant, young woman in a black dress, collapsed against the wall of the bike shop next door. To keep her from freezing, he offers her shelter without thinking twice. But it becomes quickly obvious that she triggers long-lost memories from his past. Or does she actually know him and is their meeting not as accidental as it seems? Their chance encounter quickly turns into an adventure of unexpected proportions.

Working for Doctors Without Borders, Jonathan Robijn heard about organizations in the south of Ruanda, where fifty years ago children of Belgian fathers and Congolese mothers were raised. Shortly before the Congolese Independence, these Métis-children were ‘evacuated’ to Belgium. Most of them never saw their biological parents, brothers and sisters again. Just like Morgan.

Jonathan Robijn (1970) studied Sociology and Psychology, and has since then worked for Doctors Without Borders. In 2013, his literary debut *The City and the Time* (*De stad en de tijd*) was published, which was nominated for the Gouden Boekenuil.

47,000 words, published in October 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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<https://www.flandersliterature.be/grants/translation-grants> | For more information, please contact Stella Rieck: rieck@cossee.com or visit www.cossee.com/foreignrights



Marjolijn van Heemstra *And His Name Is*

- Rights sold: **German (HoCa), World English (pre-empt Atria Books), French (Les Escales), Italian (Rizzoli), Spanish (pre-empt Seix Barral), Albanian (Ejal), film rights**
- Winner BNG Literature Award 2017
- **English sample, French transl.** available

“A beautiful novel about the importance of myths and the necessity of unmasking them.” – Tommy Wieringa, author

On December 5th 1946, a bomb is delivered in The Hague, disguised as a Saint Nicholas present. Three ‘bad guys’, collaborators during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands during WWII, are killed. The brain behind the operation is a great uncle of Marjolijn van Heemstra. In the family, the attack is subsequently considered an act of heroism.

On her eighteenth birthday Marjolijn is given the signet ring of the “bomb-nephew” bearing the family crest – with the request to name her first son after him. Years later, when she is pregnant, she starts a quest to uncover the true story of the Saint Nicholas murders. With her belly the doubts are growing: was the bomb-nephew really a hero or just an ordinary criminal? Marjolijn van Heemstra’s novel is a fascinating page-turner about a myth and about reality, about the good and the bad and about the question what connects a new-born child with its ancestors.

Marjolijn van Heemstra (1981) studied Religious Studies with a specialization in Islamic Studies in Amsterdam. She is a successful theatre director of engaged, experimental performances, staged in the Netherlands as well as abroad. As a writer she is a multi-talent, writing poetry and novels as well as columns for the Dutch newspapers *NRC* and *Trouw*.

50,000 words, published in May 2017 by Das Mag Publishers

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Lia Tilon

The Archivist of the World

- Rights sold: **German (dtv), Albanian (Ombra)**
- *Humans of New York* avant la lettre
- Based on **fascinating archive material** from the Albert Kahn Museum in Paris
- **English sample** available

In 1907, the French banker Albert Kahn hands his driver Dutertre a brand-new camera. Kahn wants him to realise his dream: capturing all the different inhabitants of the world on photograph in order to create an ‘archive of the planet’. He is convinced that his pictures will eliminate fear of and prejudice against strangers, bringing about a more peaceful world.

Soon, Kahn begins sending out a number of photographers all over the globe – to the Native Americans, to African tribes and to the plains of Mongolia. Dutertre has his doubts about the project and has problems grappling with the new equipment. But as he gets closer to Kahn, he begins to understand his by now senior employer.

In 1939, Kahn has lost his fortune due to the collapse of the stock exchange and the impending war is rendering the realisation of his idealistic project impossible. His villa is in demise; Paris full of anti-Semitic posters. In the last days of his life, he has nothing but his pictures to look back upon. We, the readers and Dutertre, his last and only friend, are breathlessly looking back with him.

Lia Tilon (1965) is working as a communication and writing coach. She did a residency in the Institut Néerlandais in Paris in order to research the life of Albert Kahn. After coming across the diary of his driver Dutertre, she decided it was to form the basis of *The Archivist of the World*.

60,000 words, published in December 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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Eva Meijer
The Limits of My Language
A Small Philosophical Essay on Depression

- A moving and personal philosophical study of depression by the renowned Dutch philosopher Eva Meijer
- Included in the ‘10 Books from Holland’ brochure
- **English sample** and chapter synopsis available

In 2016, more than a million people in the Netherlands were using an antidepressant. While a lot has been written about the treatment of depression, its broader meaning has received far less attention. In *The Limits of My Language* Eva Meijer uses her own experiences with depression as a resource for a surprisingly new analysis of the phenomenon.

She explains how people with recurring depressive periods come to resemble trees growing crookedly – how not their brain but their soul keeps adapting. She discusses the benefit of therapy, the way in which language gives us shape and how we can sometimes reshape ourselves in conversations with others. The essay is a plea for literally moving on, for going for a run and walking the dogs; a plea for being perseverant.

And finally, it is a search for what makes our lives valuable after all – from philosophy and art to useless things, from the consolation of silence to cats and trees in winter.

Eva Meijer (1980) is a philosopher, author, and singer-songwriter. In 2016, her highly successful novel *The Bird Cottage* was published. Followed in 2017 by *Animal Languages* with translation rights sold to 12 countries. Eva Meijer recently concluded her PhD on ‘political animal voices’ at the University of Amsterdam. In 2018, she started working on a postdoctoral project at the University of Wageningen.

29,000 words, to be published in January 2019 by Cossee Publishers

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Eva Meijer

Animal Languages & The Bird Cottage

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Animal Languages **Rights sold:** German (Matthes & Seitz), World English (pre-empt John Murray), French (Presses de la Cité), Arabic (Dar Oktob), Polish (Marginesy), Turkish (Kaplumbaa), Finnish (Art House), Korean (Kachi), Swedish (Weyler Förlag), Complex Chinese (Ye-Ren), Czech (Grada), Simplified Chinese offer

The Bird Cottage **Rights sold:** German (btb), World English (Pushkin Press), French (Presses de la Cité), Arabic (Kotob Khan), Polish (Marginesy), Turkish (Nebula), Swedish (Weyler Förlag), Simplified Chinese offer

Dolphins and parrots call each other by their names. Fork tailed drongos mimic the calls of other animals to scare them away and then steal their dinner. In the songs of many species of birds, and in skin patterns of squids, we find grammatical structures. In *Animal Languages*, Eva Meijer discusses many examples of recent empirical research, presenting us with a new perspective on ‘other animals’, while also raising philosophical questions. Can we call nonhuman animal communication language? What exactly is language? Can we speak with other animals and if so how? After reading *Animal Languages*, you might not be able to speak with all animals, but you will see them in a different light. In 2016, Eva Meijer was shortlisted for the Socrates Beker with *Animal Languages* and she received the Halewijn Award for her entire oeuvre in 2017.

In her most recent novel *The Bird Cottage*, Eva Meijer retells the life of the British scientist Len Howard, who spent the second half of her life in a small, remote house in the English countryside, where she wrote two international bestsellers about robins, tits, sparrows and other birds living in and around her house. Although originally a musician, she was a pioneer in the field of animal research, studying the birds on the basis of their mutual trust. With *The Bird Cottage*, Meijer was nominated for the BNG, ECI and Libris Literature Award.

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Thomas Rueb

Laura H. / The Caliphate Girl from Zoetermeer

- Rights sold: option of **film rights**
- Fascinating story of a young woman struggling to find her place in society
- First Dutch woman to return with her children from IS
- **English sample** available

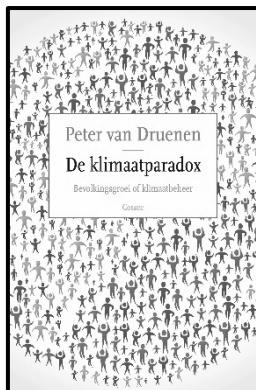
In the summer of 2016, near the self-proclaimed caliphate of IS, a young woman is found running through the desert, carrying two small children. Her name is Laura, she says. She is twenty years old and from 'Sweet Lake City'. She has escaped. She is crying. She wants to go home to the Dutch village of Zoetermeer. In a last attempt to save her, her father had set up a rescue mission with the help of a shady network of private soldiers.

However, once Laura arrives at Schiphol Airport in the Netherlands, she is immediately arrested. The Dutch Public Prosecution Service thinks IS has sent her back with the task of committing a terror attack. And where is Ibrahim, the handsome jihadi from Alkmaar for whom she left everything behind? Laura from Zoetermeer becomes Laura H. of the terrorist detention facility in Vught: the first Dutch woman to return from the caliphate – straight into the eye of a media storm.

Thomas Rueb (1986) works as a reporter for the Dutch newspaper *NRC*. In 2017, he won the Tegel-publieks Award, the most prestigious award in Dutch journalism.

120,000 words, to be published in November 2018 by Das Mag Publishers

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Peter van Druenen

The Climate Paradox

- Confronting take on the moral dilemmas of the climate debate
- **Revisiting of the climate change classic *The Limits to Growth* (Club of Rome) with intriguing conclusions**
- **English sample available**

We dream of a long and healthy life for everyone, invest to the utmost in the future of humanity. By doing so, we nourish the monster called overpopulation, which is responsible for today's rapid climate change. When we look at the increase of the world's population combined with the increase in prosperity, the consequences for our climate become very clear. With the bestseller *The Limits to Growth*, the Club of Rome already pointed out this problem in 1972, a wake-up call for the world. Over the past decades, however, population growth as a decisive factor has disappeared entirely from the climate debate, as it is linked to exceptionally difficult moral questions. Is it even possible to regulate population growth. And if so, how?

Van Druenen places the discussion in a historical perspective, naming several thinkers who expounded controversial positions centuries ago, and are denounced until this very day. In his well-substantiated argumentation, he opts for a pragmatic position between climate change deniers and defenders.

Peter van Druenen (1952) is a historian, specialized in demographic studies, author, publisher, and internet pioneer. In 2015, van Druenen wrote *Kapers, arbeiders*, an urban history of the Dutch city of Vlissingen, which was longlisted for the Zeeland Book Award. He is currently working on a study of the scale of migratory movements in the early modern period.

22,000 words, published in September 2018 by Cossee Publishers

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A.H. Nijhoff *Two Girls and I*

- A novel way ahead of its times
- **Controversial yet moving portrait of a relationship**
- **English sample, Danish translation available**

August 1931. The publication of the novel *Two Girls and I* causes some upheaval in the Dutch literary scene.

The name Nijhoff, according to the Dutch press, had been disgraced forever. Indeed, the readers are given a lot to digest: two young girls and their relationship with a much older doctor, a Frenchman with a showy young lover, a foul-mouthed colonel, a moody nurse, allusions to a lesbian love, abortion and drugs. In short, a novel by an author who couldn't care less about conventions and who wanted to be in charge of her own life, and all this in 1931. The décor is a small hotel and a beach house, rocks and rain, green-grey water and a little strip of sand. The characters encounter each other by coincidence, in a remote town on the southern coast of England. A.H. Nijhoff observes and analyses the complex development of their relationships. She carefully sketches how throughout the years they meet again, many experiences richer and illusions poorer, ready for new developments.

At its publication, critics had trouble with the inescapable atmosphere of this tough novel, the very aspect that appeals to contemporary readers.

As a writer, **Netty Nijhoff-Wind** (1897 – 1971), the wife of the famous Dutch poet Martinus Nijhoff, chose the gender-neutral name A.H. Nijhoff. A clear choice, which nonetheless became subject of rumors and speculation. *Two Girls and I* was reissued many times over the years, until in the eighties this once controversial and pioneering novel was more or less forgotten. Lately however, we see a clear revival of interest: the 'Two Girls' are back.

82,000 words, published in June 2018 by Cossee Publishers

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Loekie Zvonik

Who Was the Hatter?

- Rights sold: **German (Luchterhand/btb)**
- “The combination of literary ingenuity and Zvonik’s compelling and elegant writing style make *The Hatter* a **surprisingly modern novel**.” – Wout Vlaeminck, author
- **English sample** available

Didier and Hermine experience a short affair while studying at the University of Ghent. By coincidence they meet again, twelve years later, to travel together to a congress in Vienna. Their past infatuation turns into an intense friendship and love affair, in which Hermine inadvertently becomes Didier’s muse. Didier is a classic romanticist, with a great fascination for the dark side of life, from which even Hermine is not able to save him. In this breathtaking chronicle of a death foretold, Hermine reconstructs the last weeks of his life. In a serene, elegant and subtle style she tries to unravel his motives. In doing so, trying to answer the question to what extent it is possible to love someone, and to keep one’s distance at the same time.

Who Was the Hatter? was published in 1975. The novel received high praise and was awarded with the VBVB Debuut Award a year later. A compelling work, which in many ways parallels the dramatic relationship between Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes.

Loekie Zvonik (1935 – 2000) was the pseudonym of Hermine Louise Marie Zvonicek. She wrote three novels and a number of short stories. Zvonik studied German Philology in Ghent. There she met fellow student Dirk De Witte, who later became a writer who was obsessed with the theme of suicide in literature. In December 1970, De Witte ended his own life.

40,000 words, published in January 2018 by Cossee Publishers

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Dola de Jong
The Tree and the Vine

- **Rights sold:** Swedish (Nilsson), Czech (Pistorius), World English (Transit Books) and Spanish (Siruela)
- **Fascinating and timely** rediscovered classic
- “A very touching, and delicately rendered portrait of a woman.” – V.S. Naipaul
- Full **English translation** available

***The Tree and the Vine* is a compelling novel about love and friendship between two women.**

Erica and Bea share an apartment in Amsterdam, but they are completely different. Erica, a reckless young journalist, pursues passionate, yet abusive affairs with various women, while Bea is a shy secretary, who leads a quiet life. The novel is set just before the outbreak of the Second World War. Erica, who believes to be half Jewish, lets the opportunity pass to flee to America. Bea finds that her feelings for her friend are growing stronger – yet denial and shame keep her from accepting her affection.

After the publication of *The Tree and the Vine*, Alice van Nahuys, then publisher at Querido, sent a telegram to Dola de Jong with the message: “Don’t answer your fan mail!”, since there was too much of it. A review in *Het Vaderland* made clear: “Writing such a portrait is not possible for just anyone. You have to be blessed with a special talent.”

Dorothea Rosalie de Jong (1911 – 2003) wrote children’s books, novels, and short stories. She decided to flee from the Netherlands in 1940 with the tension of war increasing. She wrote *The Field*, which was an instant success and received the Edgar Allen Poe Award for her thriller *The Whirligig of Time* (1964).

39,000 words, published in February 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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Recent Sales

Gerbrand Bakker, *The Twin*: sold to 27 countries/languages, US (Archipelago), UK (Harvill/Random House), ANZ (Scribe), German (Suhrkamp), French (Gallimard), Spanish (Rayo Verde), Italian (Iperborea), Brazilian (Radio Londres), Chinese (Shanghai 99), (All Prints) Lebanon, film rights (Circe, NL)

Saskia Goldschmidt, *The Hormone Factory*: US (The Other Press), UK (Saraband), German (dtv), French (Gallimard), Turkish (Bence), Afrikaans (Protea), Bulgarian (Lettera), film rights (Film Talents, France)

Marjolijn van Heemstra, *And His Name Is*: German (Hoffman & Campe), Italian (Rizzoli), USA (Atria Books), Spanish (Seix Barral), French (Les Escales), Albanian (Ejal), film rights (Bind Film, NL)

Bregje Hofstede, *The Sky Over Paris*: German (C.H. Beck), Danish (Tiderne Skifter/Gyldendal), Arabic (Dar Oktob), film rights (Sara Verweij, NL)

Dola de Jong, *The Field*: German (Kunstmann), Arabic (Al Kotob Khan), Norwegian (Aschehoug), Swedish (Nilsson), Danish (Turbine), Czech (Pistorius & Olsanská), World English (Transit Books)

Dola de Jong, *The Tree and the Vine*: Swedish (Nilsson), Czech (Pistorius & Olsanská), Spanish (Siruela), World English (Transit Books)

Eva Meijer, *Animal Languages*: German (Matthes & Seitz), World English (John Murray), French (Presses de la Cité), Polish (Marginesy), Arabic (Dar Oktob), Turkish (Kapumblaa Books), Finnish (Art House), Korean (Kachi Publishing), Swedish (Weyler Förlag), Complex Chinese (Yeren Publishing House), Czech (Grada), Simplified Chinese offer

Eva Meijer, *The Bird Cottage*: Turkish (Nebula), German (btb), French (Presses de la Cité), World English (Pushkin Press), Arabic (Kotob Khan), Polish (Marginesy), Swedish (Weyler Förlag), Simplified Chinese offer

Jonathan Robijn, *Congo Blues*: Italian (Marsilio), Turkish (Cumartesi Kitapligi), German (Nautilus)

Lize Spit, *The Melting*: World English (MacMillan), German (S. Fischer), Spanish (Seix Barral), French (Actes Sud), Italian (E/O), Norwegian (Cappelen Damm), Danish (Rosinante), Czech (Host), Polish (Marginesy), Arabic (Madarek), Catalan (Ara Llibres), Bulgarian (Janet 45), Hebrew (Tchelet Books), Greek (Metaixmio), Croatian (HenaCom) and film rights (Savage Film, BE)

Recent Acquisitions & Publications

- Kristine Bilkau – *Eine Liebe, in Gedanken* (Lit. Ag. Michael Gaeb, Berlin)
- Christophe Boltanski – *La Cache/Le Guetteur* (Éditions Stock, Paris)
- J.M. Coetzee – *The Schooldays of Jesus* (Peter Lampack, New York City)
- David Diop – *Frère d'Âme* (Seuil, Paris)
- Milena Michiko Flašar – *Herr Katō spielt Familie* (Wagenbach, Berlin)
- David Foenkinos – *Le Mystère Henri Pick* (Gallimard, Paris)
- András Forgách – *No Life Files Remain* (Bence Sárközy & Co., Budapest)
- Jane Gardam – *Old Filth/The Man in the Wooden Hat/Last Friends/Crusoe's Daughter* (Chatto & Windus, London)
- David Garnett – *Lady into Fox & A Man in the Zoo* (United Agents, London)
- David Grossman – *Collected Essays* (Deborah Harris Agency, Jerusalem)
- Michael Ignatieff – *Ordinary Virtues. Moral Order in a Divided World* (United Agents, London)
- Husch Josten – *Hier sind Drachen* (Piper Verlag, Munich)
- Navid Kermani – *Ungläubiges Staunen* (C.H. Beck, Munich)
- Mick Kitson – *Sal* (Canongate, Edinburgh)
- Felicitas von Lovenberg – *Gebrauchsanweisung fürs Lesen* (Piper Verlag, Munich)
- Stefano Mancuso – *Brilliant Green & Plant Revolution* (Giunti, Florence)
- Francesca Melandri – *Sangue Giusto* (Italian Literary Agency, Milan)
- Pia Pera – *Al Giardino Ancora non l'ho Detto* (Italian Literary Agency, Milan)
- Catherine Poulain – *Le Grand Marin* (Wandel Cruse, Paris)
- Erich Maria Remarque – *Die Nacht von Lissabon & Arc de Triomphe* (Mohrbooks, Zürich)
- Bernhard Schlink – *Olga* (Diogenes, Zürich)
- Susanne Schötz – *Die geheime Sprache der Katzen* (Benevento, Salzburg)
- Aleksandr Skorobogatov – *Cocaine* (Cossee Publishers, Amsterdam and Regal Hoffmann & Associates LLC, New York)
- Elio Vittorini – *Il Garofano Rosso* (Mondadori, Milan)
- Barbara Zoeke – *Die Stunde der Spezialisten* (Aufbau, Berlin)

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Cover image: *The New Novel*
by Winslow Homer (1877)

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