

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter



February 2011

AUTHORS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

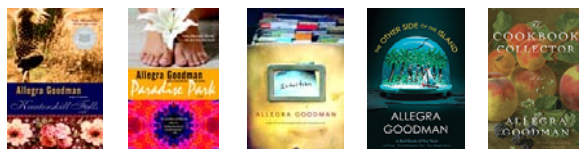
This month we're starting a new feature in Fiction News called "Authors in the Spotlight." Each month we'll feature one or more authors and their works. Our intention is to introduce you to authors you may be unaware of and to books by your favorite authors that you've missed. If you are a fan of an author that you think we should feature, please let us know. Adult Services Librarian Dorothy Pawlowski would love your suggestions for authors who deserve the spotlight.



Allegra Goodman

Allegra Goodman's engaging stories about modern life convey a richness of character that goes well beyond the everyday settings. She creates carefully crafted worlds, full of closely observed detail that provokes consideration of important personal issues from religious faith to moral dilemmas that arise in business or

academics.



Novels:

Kaaterskill Falls (1998)

Kaaterskill Falls is the tiny town in upstate New York where Orthodox summer people and Yankee year-rounders live side by side from June through August.

Paradise Park (2001)

A woman's tragic-comic search for spiritual meaning.

Intuition (2006)

A struggling cancer lab in Boston becomes the stage for its researchers' personalities and passions.

The Other Side of the Island (2008)

This post apocalyptic novel is about love, loss, and the power of human choice.

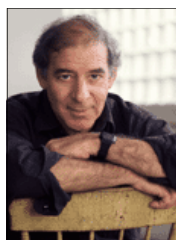
The Cookbook Collection (2010)

Goodman weaves together the worlds of Silicon Valley and rare-book collecting in a delicious novel about appetite, temptation, and fulfillment.

Short Stories:

The Family Markowitz (1996)

Total Immersion (2006)



Alan Furst

This author of historical espionage writes of reluctant heroes--ordinary, pragmatic men and women--fighting against totalitarianism and fascism in European countries of the 1930s and '40s. Well-researched and suffused with a strong sense of time and place, Furst's novels are written in a cinematic style that keeps the fast-paced

action from bogging down in historical detail, and Furst's atmospheric, complex novels don't always resolve themselves neatly.



Dark Star (1991)

Dark Star is set in the back alleys of 1937 Paris, Moscow, Berlin, and Prague where war is already underway.

The World at Night (1997)

In the Paris of 1940, film producer Jean Casson is offered the chance to take part in an operation of the British secret services.

Kingdom of Shadows (2001)

An Hungarian aristocrat becomes embroiled in a daring and perilous effort to halt the Nazi war machine in eastern Europe.

Blood of Victory (2002)

In the autumn of 1940, a Russian émigré journalist is recruited in Istanbul by an agent of the British secret services for a clandestine operation.

Dark Voyage (2004)

This is an epic tale of war and espionage, of spies and fugitives, of love in secret hotel rooms, and of courage in the face of impossible odds.

The Foreign Correspondent (2006)

An international news correspondent's secret life leads him to become a target for assassination.

The Spies of Warsaw (2008)

A decorated hero of the 1914 war is drawn into a world of abduction, betrayal, and intrigue in the diplomatic salons of Paris.

Spies of the Balkans (2010)

As the Nazi invasion threat looms in Greece, a detective undertakes various secret missions. (See "Staff Picks").

NEW FICTION

(Annotations from BookLetters)



The Red Garden by Alice Hoffman.

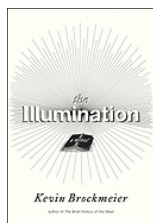
BookPage Notable Title

From the bestselling author of *The Third Angel* and *The Story Sisters* comes a shimmering, unforgettable new book. Hoffman offers a transforming glimpse into small-town America, presenting readers with 300 years of passion, dark secrets, loyalty, and redemption in a web of tales where characters' lives are intertwined by fate and by their own actions.

The Fates Will Find Their Way by Hannah Pittard.

BookPage Notable Title

Pittard presents a masterfully crafted, haunting literary debut about a missing girl and the boys she grew up with who find themselves caught in the mysterious wake of her absence for the rest of their lives.

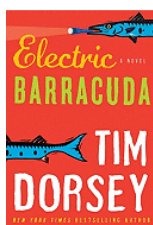


The Illumination by Kevin Brockmeier.

What if our pain was the most beautiful thing about us? From a bestselling and award-winning author comes a new novel of stunning artistry and imagination about the wounds we all bear and the light that radiates from us all.

I Think I Love You by Allison Pearson.

In 1974 Wales, 13-year-old Petra and her friend, Sharon, are obsessed with a contest whose winners will be flown to America to meet their teen idol, David Cassidy. In 1998 London, Petra is pushing 40 and on the brink of divorce. While cleaning out her mother's closet, she finds a letter her mother had intercepted declaring her the winner of the contest. The girls reunite for an all-expenses-paid trip to Las Vegas to meet their teen idol at last.

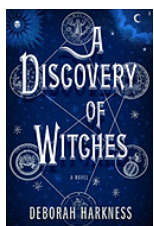


Electric Barracuda by Tim Dorsey.

Serge Storms, that loveable thermonuclear vigilante and one-stop-Florida-trivia-shop, has been leaving corpses strewn across the Sunshine State for more than a decade. The authorities--especially one tenacious state agent--have begun to notice the exponential body count, and send a police task force to track down Serge. Could his luck finally have run out?

A Discovery of Witches by Deborah Harkness.

Debut novelist Harkness has crafted a mesmerizing and addictive read, equal parts history and magic, romance and suspense--a richly inventive novel about a centuries-old vampire, a spellbound witch, and the mysterious manuscript that draws them together.



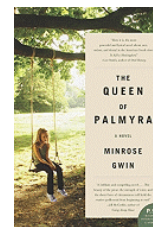
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STAFF PICKS

Jane's Picks

The Queen of Palmyra by Minrose Gwin.

The Queen of Palmyra is a gripping story of race and identity seen through the eyes of a young girl growing up in the South during the turbulent summer of 1963. The sheer force of circumstance, strength of voice, and characterization captivate the reader to the end of the novel.



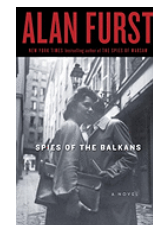
Trespass by Rose Tremain.

Trespass is a psychological thriller and an examination of human moral error. It is about relationships between siblings, disputed territory, remorse and calculated revenge. Revealed is the anguish that can lie just below the surface of everyday lives.

Elise's Pick

Spies of the Balkans by Alan Furst.

On the eve of the Nazi invasion of Northern Greece, Costa Zannis, a senior Salonika police official known for his honesty and his discretion is approached by a "stunning" aristocratic woman. The Jewish wife of a Wehrmacht Commander, she asks Zannis to help her smuggle some German Jews through the Balkans into neutral Turkey. Considered one of the modern masters of the historical spy genre, Alan Furst is admired for his extensive research, rich atmospheric details, and intriguing characters. His espionage thrillers manage to be both highly entertaining and morally thought provoking. Set in a little known theater of WW II, *Spies of the Balkans* is a powerful exploration of what the author calls "serious courage."



Dorothy's Picks



You Know When the Men Are Gone by Siohban Fallon.

These interconnected stories about military families stationed at Fort Hood, Texas capture the myriad ways, both large and small, that army life effects both soldiers and those closest to them. In her writing debut, Fallon neither exaggerates or trivializes how both deployment and return from combat alter the rhythm of life for those who serve and for those left behind. The stories of these men, women, and children are haunting.

The Weird Sisters by Eleanor Brown.

The Weird sisters are Rosalind, Bianca, and Cordelia, offspring of a Shakespearean scholar who speaks to his family via quotes from the Bard. Now in their twenties, the sisters return home to the small Ohio college town of their childhoods. As their mother battles cancer and each sister confronts her own life crisis, lingering issues of sibling rivalry surface. Told in the first person plural of the sisters, this novel is at turns hilarious, heartbreaking, and full of compassion for the challenges of family life. This is a literary debut well worth curling up with.

