

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter



October 2011

AUTHOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Alice Hoffman

Alice Hoffman entralls fans with a blend of earthy and ethereal characters, and thoughtful plots with hints of magic and the supernatural. Readers are drawn to Hoffman's seemingly ordinary women and their lives but quickly learn there is something mysterious about them and their situations. Hoffman often creates

characters who are experiencing grief, but discover inner strength to deal with life's troubles. The haunting and gothic nature of New England is often used as a backdrop to these novels. Her latest novel *The Dovekeepers* revolves around the Roman siege of Masada in 70 CE and is somewhat of a departure for Hoffman.



Partial list of titles by the prolific Alice Hoffman:

The Dovekeepers (2011)

Hoffman weaves a tale of four extraordinary, bold, resourceful, and sensuous women, each of whom has come to Masada by a different path. The lives of these four fiercely independent women intersect during desperate days. All are dovekeepers, and all are also keeping secrets.

The Red Garden (2011)

Traces the multi-generational story of wintry Blackwell town through the experiences of multiple characters such as a wounded Civil War soldier and a woman who meets a fiercely human historical figure.

The Story Sisters (2009)

Elv, Claire, and Meg are the Story Sisters, and each has a fate she must meet alone - one on a country road, one in the streets of Paris, and one in the corridors of her own imagination. At once a coming-of-age tale, a family saga, and a love story of erotic longing.

The Third Angel (2008)

Follows the lives of three women in love with the wrong men--Madeleine Heller, attracted to her sister's fiancé; Frieda Lewis, the muse to an ill-fated rock star; and Bryn Evans, engaged to be married but secretly obsessed with her ex-husband.

The Probable Future (2003)

Struggling to cope with her unwanted ability to see the future, Stella must confront her legacy when her father is jailed, wrongly accused of homicide, and Stella joins forces with her grandmother and mother to uncover the truth.

Practical Magic (1995)

The story of two sisters, Gillian and Sally Owens, brought up by their elderly guardian aunts in a small New England town. The aunts possess magic that they in turn hand down to their nieces.

DOWNLOADING LIBRARY EBOOKS TO A KINDLE

Yes, it's true. The Library's downloadable eBook service through OverDrive is now compatible with the Kindle. As of the end of September, Kindle owners can borrow eBooks from the Ridgefield Library. In addition, these titles can also be downloaded to any device with a Kindle app, including computers, tablets, and smartphones. For more information, visit the Library's website or contact Adult Services Librarian Dorothy Pawlowski at 438-2282 x1003 or dlpawl@ridgefieldlibrary.org.



UPCOMING AUTHOR TALKS

Save the Dates!

Ridgefield Library and Books on the Common present:

An Author Talk with Tom Perrotta

Wednesday, October 19th

7:30 PM

Dayton Program Room

Please register at www.ridgefieldlibrary.org

Ridgefield Library and Books on the Common present:

An Author Talk with Stewart O'Nan

Via Speakerphone

Wednesday, November 9th

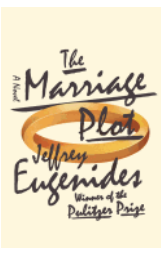
7:30 PM

Dayton Program Room

No registration required.

NEW FICTION

(Annotations from BookLetters)



The Marriage Plot by Jeffrey Eugenides.

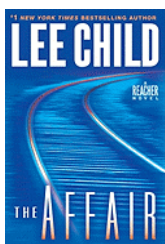
It's the early 1980s--the country is in a deep recession, and life after college is harder than ever. Madeleine Hanna, dutiful English major, is writing her senior thesis on Jane Austen and George Eliot, purveyors of the marriage plot that lies at the heart of the greatest English novels. But real life, in the form of two very different guys, intervenes.

Falling Together by Marisa de Los Santos. Close to a million copies of *Belong to Me* and *Love Walked In* by reading group favorite and *New York Times*-bestselling author de los Santos have been sold, and *Falling Together* is sure to follow in their footsteps.



The Affair by Lee Child.

Ever wonder why Jack Reacher left the Military Police and became a one-man freelance vigilante squad? Child goes back 14 years to show how it all happened.



The Art of Fielding by Chad Harbach. At Westish College, a small school on the shore of Lake Michigan, baseball star Henry Skrimshander seems destined for big league stardom. But when a routine throw goes disastrously off course, the fates of five people are upended.

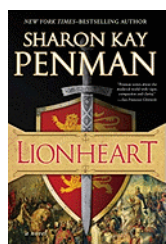


The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern.

To enter the black-and-white-striped tents of Le Cirque des Reves is to enter a world where objects really do turn into birds and people really do disappear. Marco Alisdair runs the operation from London as assistant to the eccentric proprietor. Celia Bowen holds it all together from her role as illusionist. As magicians, Marco and Celia are bound to each other in a deadly competition of powers, creating ever more fantastical venues for circus goers to marvel at. But falling in love was never part of the game, and the players struggle to extricate themselves from this contest while keeping the circus afloat.



Lionheart by Sharon Kay Penman. From a *New York Times*-bestselling novelist comes a stunning story of a great medieval warrior-king, the accomplished and controversial son of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine: Richard, Coeur de Lion. Penman displays her remarkable mastery of historical detail and her acute understanding of human foibles.



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

STAFF PICKS

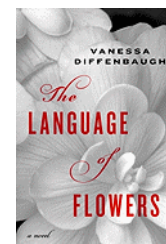
Elise's Picks

The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh.

On her 18th birthday, Victoria Jones “ages out” of the California foster-care system. Homeless, she winds up sleeping in a public park until a local florist discovers her talent for creating personalized bouquets.

Abandoned as an infant and scarred by 30 unsuccessful placements, Victoria learned the meaning and solace of flowers from the one woman who wanted to adopt her, and the novel gradually reveals the tragic

misunderstanding which derailed that opportunity. Written by an author who has first-hand knowledge of the difficulties of foster parenting, *The Language of Flowers* is a touching and cautiously optimistic book about second chances, mother/daughter relationships, and the challenges of convincing children who may never have known love that they are lovable.



The Girl in the Blue Beret by Bobbie Ann Mason.

During WW II over 3,000 Allied airmen were rescued by the French Resistance. Inspired by her father-in-law's account of being one of those survivors, award-winning author Bobbie Ann Mason has written a fascinating portrait of the men and women in the French “escape and evasion network.” Marshall Strong comes home from the war and lands his dream job flying transatlantic jets for a major airline. But after “a life of discipline and



comparative luxury,” he is forced to retire at what to him seems the absurd age of 60. Adrift and haunted by memories of his wartime experiences,

Strong decides to try to find the French families that sheltered him, in particular the intrepid girl who guided him through Paris. Extensively researched and compellingly told, *The Girl in the Blue Beret* honors both

The Greatest Generation and the courageous members of the French Resistance who risked so much to save the downed flyers.

Dorothy's Picks

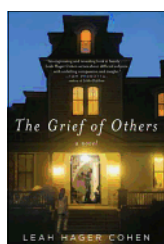
On Canaan's Side by Sebastian Barry.

After the sudden death of her beloved grandson, Lily Beere, the 89-year old narrator of this story, reflects on her own life. Forced to leave Ireland because of her husband's connection with the Loyalists, Lily's life in the United States has been filled with challenges encompassing the Great Depression, World War II, and Vietnam. Lily's lyrical voice recounts a tale of twists and turns worthy of a thriller. Told in flashbacks, this beautifully-crafted novel was long-listed for the 2011 Man Booker Prize.



The Grief of Others by Leah Hager Cohen.

How does a family deal with loss? When Ricky and John Ryrie's child dies 57 hours after birth, the repercussions affect their extended family in subtle and not so subtle ways. Ricky is adrift in a sea of conflicting emotions, her husband struggles to connect with his wife, and thirteen-year Paul and 10-year old Biscuit act out in myriad ways.



The arrival of John's adult daughter, the product of a teenage indiscretion, provides the catalyst for the family to confront what binds them and what is tearing them apart. Cohen's exquisite rendering of her characters and their foibles make this an outstanding portrait of a resilient 21st century family.