

Penguin  
Random House  
Verlagsgruppe

Best of  
Penguin Random House  
Verlagsgruppe

**Fiction**  
**Spring 2021**

## Eerie, profound, archaic – a breathtakingly atmospheric image of post-Communist Romania

**New Books  
in German**

English sample translation  
available

[English video pitch](#) available



Dana Grigorcea  
**Those Who Never Die**  
[Die nicht sterben]  
Novel

Penguin  
272 pages  
March 2021

**Dana Grigorcea**, born in 1979 in Bucharest, studied German and Dutch literature in Bucharest and theatre and film directing as well as quality journalism in Krems, Austria. She worked as journalist and has been living in Zurich as freelancing writer since 2013. Her novels and stories won multiple awards, among them the 3sat Prize of the Ingeborg Bachmann awards and have been translated into numerous languages.

Transylvania. After studying art in Paris, a young Bucharest artist returns to her home in the Romanian Carpathians, to a world that has become alien to her. When a defiled body is found upon the grave of Vlad the Impaler, better known as Dracula, she decides to tell the town's story and eventually comes to realize that it is not about causes and effects but about one thing only: Fate.

Dana Grigorcea paints an image of a society which still to this day appears to be caught in a kind of limbo. She leads her readers into the heart of a horror which can only be conjured in one's own imagination, and breaks the silence between the generations.

### Press

"A vibrant and poetic tale of vampirical transformation, and what happens to a society that would rather awaken the evil spirits of the past than confront the present." *SRF 2*

"A masterpiece of storytelling." *Schweizer Buchjahr*

"Grigorcea's vivid and powerfully written novel is a nightmarish fairy tale, thriller and bleak social commentary rolled into one." *Kulturnews*

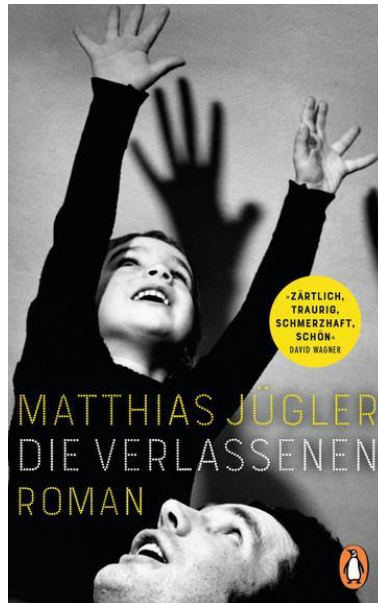
"A fantastic, free-floating but rational look at the horrors and everyday life of Romanian society before and after Ceausescu." *Frankfurter Rundschau*

## Nobody is safe from those crucial moments that change everything

**New Books  
in German**

English and Norwegian sample translations available

[English](#) and [Norwegian](#) video pitches available



**Matthias Jügler**  
**The Forsaken**  
[Die Verlassenen]  
Novel

Penguin  
176 pages  
March 2021

**Matthias Jügler**, born in 1984, did a degree in Slavonic and history of art in Greifswald and Oslo and studied creative writing at the Institute of Literature in Leipzig. His 2015 debut novel *Raubfischen* was awarded numerous prizes. Jügler has been a writer-in-residence in Pfaffenhofen, won a scholarship from the Literarisches Colloquium Berlin, and was a writer-in-residence at the Goethe Institute in Uzbekistan. He lives in Leipzig with his wife and children, and is a freelance editor.

Johannes looks back on his childhood in East Germany, and the cracks that ran through it: his mother's early death, his father's mysterious disappearance. All his questions remained unanswered, and he now treads carefully on his path through life. When Johannes finds a letter in an old chest – addressed to his father and sent only a few days before he left his son without a word – the discovery transforms not only his future, but also his past as a child in the GDR before the Wall came down.

With penetrating vigour and forceful clarity, Matthias Jügler tells a story of loss and betrayal, of the value of memory and the urgent questions that are troubling a whole generation. A warm-hearted, radiant novel written with extraordinary linguistic intensity.

### Press

"A profoundly moving story, told vividly and with much empathy."  
*NDR 1*

"Dizzily intense and compelling." *MDR Kulturmagazin*

"A novel that calmly unfolds its power, and amplifies that power without pageantry. [...] Jügler's coolness is reminiscent of Scandinavian storytellers." *Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*

## Persecuted, Smuggler, Prisoner, Thief, Sailor, Fighter, Saviour. The story of a hero.

*Spiegel*  
BESTSELLER

English sample translation  
available

[English video pitch](#) available

**Rights sold to:**

Czech Republic (Host),  
The Netherlands (Signatuur)



Takis Würger  
**Noah**  
[Noah]  
By one who survived

Penguin  
188 pages  
With 1 colour illustration  
March 2021

**Takis Würger**, born in 1985, works as journalist for the news magazine *Der Spiegel* reporting from Afghanistan, Libya or Iraq among others. His reports won numerous awards such as the German Reporter Prize and the CNN Journalist Award. At 28, he left for England to study history of ideas at the University of Cambridge. 2017 saw the publication of his debut novel *The Club*, which was nominated for the Aspekte Literature Prize and was awarded the Lit.Cologne Debut Prize.

Noah Klieger was 13 when he joined a Jewish underground organisation during the German occupation of Belgium. He was 16 when he arrived in Auschwitz as prisoner. He was 20 when the extermination camp was liberated. Noah Klieger survived three death marches and four concentration camps. This is the story of his life.

Takis Würger tells Noah Klieger's story from his childhood days in 1920s France and his survival of the Nazi concentration camps to his commitment to the founding of Israel. The report of a great life – breathtakingly well written.

- **SPIEGEL bestseller – 29.000 copies sold**

**Press**

"The memories of a Jewish hero. Good that Noah Klieger's story is recorded for future generations. A moving, harrowing, wonderful book." *Jüdische Allgemeine*

"Würger's new book follows the tradition of 'oral history'. [...] A great gift for the reader and an important contribution to the memory of the Shoah." *Prof. Michael Brenner*

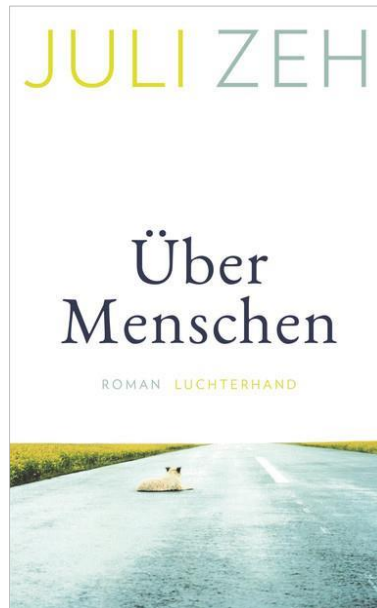
"A moving, deeply affecting, enlightening and absolutely essential book." *NDR Kultur*

## Do we dare to be truly human?

*Spiegel*  
BESTSELLING  
AUTHOR

**Rights sold to:**  
The Netherlands (AmboAnthos),  
Norway (Gyldendal)

**Juli Zeh**, born in 1974, studied law and took her PhD in the field of European and international law. This was followed by longer stints in New York and Kraków. Her debut novel *Eagles and Angels* was an international bestseller, and since then her books have been translated into 35 languages. She has been awarded myriad prizes for her work, including the Carl Amery Literature Prize, the Thomas Mann Prize and the German Order of Merit. She is also a judge at the constitutional court in the state of Brandenburg. For more information visit [www.juli-zeh.de](http://www.juli-zeh.de)



Juli Zeh  
**On Humans**  
[Über Menschen]  
Novel

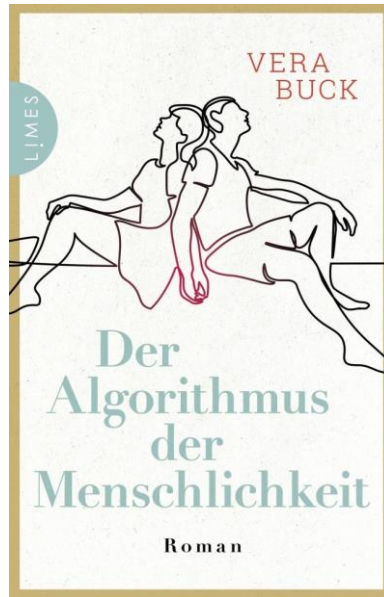
Luchterhand  
416 pages  
March 2021

Dora moved to the countryside with her little dog. She desperately needed a change of scenery, more freedom and room to breathe. But Bracken, the small village in Brandenburg, is not quite as idyllic as she thought. There is no furniture in the house yet, the garden resembles a wilderness, and the bus connection to the district town is a joke. But above all, behind the high garden wall there resides a neighbour who, with his shaved head and right-wing slogans, seems to conform to all the prejudices.

Dora has to ask herself what she is looking for: Distance from her boyfriend, who is becoming increasingly alien to her in his dogged climate activism? Refuge from the inner turmoil that keeps her up at night? Answers to the question of when the world actually got so mixed up? While Dora is trying to keep her thoughts and demons in check, things happen in her vicinity she could not have expected. She encounters people who do not fit into any mould, who fundamentally challenge her ideas and her previous life, and who make her experience something she would never have thought she was looking for.

Juli Zeh's novel tells the story of today – of our prejudices, weaknesses and demons, as well as the hidden strengths we reveal when we allow ourselves to be truly human.

## Why do people not want to be happy? And how can it be that only a machine can find the true path to happiness?



Vera Buck  
**The Algorithm  
of Humanity**  
[Der Algorithmus der  
Menschlichkeit]  
Novel

Limes  
384 pages  
March 2021

[English outline available](#)

[English book trailer](#) available

**Vera Buck**, born in 1986, studied journalism in Hannover and scriptwriting on Hawaii. During this time she wrote texts for radio, television and print media and later short stories for anthologies and literary magazines. After working at universities in France, Spain and Italy, Vera Buck now lives and works in Zürich.

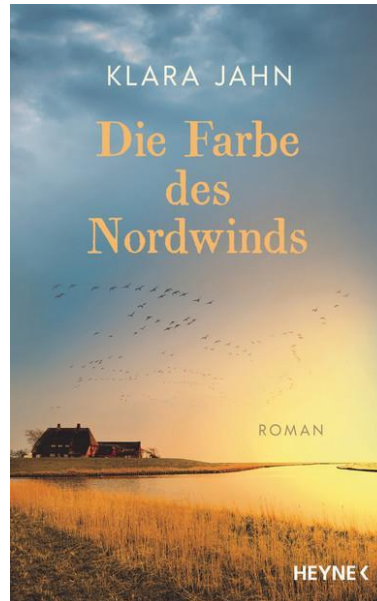
If you meet Mari, you will notice that she is beautiful and almost hauntingly perfect. But also that she fails to get jokes and vies everything rationally. And if you get to know her better, you will notice that Mari needs neither sleep nor food. Because Mari is only almost human. Her artificial intelligence is constantly learning to do one job: to make people happy.

When Mari ends up in a Berlin apartment after an unfortunate chain of circumstances with a motley crew of people, including the rebellious blogger Frieda and the lonely student Linus, she realizes that her mission is all but easy. The world follows its own logic, people's desires are irrational and Mari has to understand that there exists a world beyond provable facts. How is she supposed to make beings happy that have no clue what they want? She comes up with a solution no human would have ever expected...

*The Algorithm of Humanity* deals with questions that are becoming incredibly important in the current developments in the technology sector: What makes us human? Why do we need each other? And why do we actually need more of each other, and less of the new technologies that are constantly being developed?

For all readers of Graeme Simsion's *The Rosie Project* and Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me*.

## When the search for home turns into a search for yourself



Klara Jahn  
**The Colour  
of the North Wind**  
[Die Farbe des Nordwinds]  
Novel

Heyne  
400 pages  
March 2021

English synopsis available

**Klara Jahn** is the pseudonym of a famous bestselling author. She is a historian, and loves telling big stories – and to dive deep into the history and people of her locations, guided by her love for nature and fascination with rugged landscapes. *The Colour of the North Wind* is her first book for Heyne in which she takes on northern Germany, whose austere beauty has enthralled her for years.

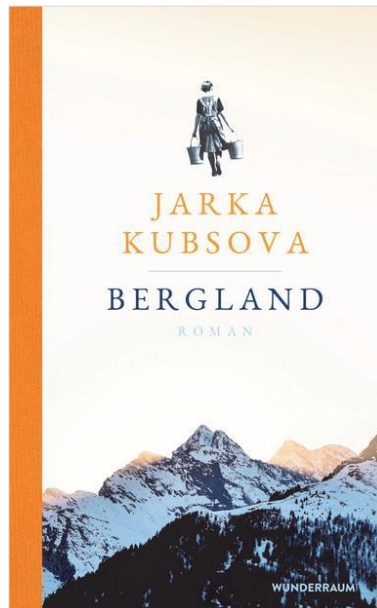
Ellen has always felt like a visitor in her own life. Except once, when she was young and briefly lived on the Halligen islands with her mother. She never wanted to leave, but had no say in the matter. Now she returns to these oddly familiar marshes – and to Liske, who once was like a sister to her.

As they grow closer, old conflicts are stirred up again; but Ellen refuses to give up. Because she knows that this is her true home.

For readers of Delia Owens' *Where the Crawdads Sing*.



**An old mountain farm in South Tyrol.  
A woman battling against nature.  
A world with its very own rules.**



Jarka Kubsova  
**Mountain Country**  
[Bergland]  
Novel

Goldmann  
280 pages  
May 2021

**Jarka Kubsova** was born in the Czech Republic in 1977. When she was ten, her family emigrated to Germany. After studying nursing in Hamburg, she joined the *Financial Times Germany*, first as a trainee and then as a reporter. She has also worked for *Stern* and *Die Zeit*. *Mountain Country* is her first novel.

Rosa is a woman like no other in Tiefenthal. During the early 1940s, as the sons of South Tyrol are being devoured by the war, the youngest daughter of the Breitenbergers remains behind on the farm with her father. In the tough years following her father's death, Rosa is left to her own devices in this isolated landscape, battling against nature to forge a life for herself.

Two generations later, Rosa's grandson Hannes and his wife Franziska depend on tourists for the farm's survival. But life up here is no picnic. And with their new problems comes an old question: should they stay or leave?

For all readers of Robert Seethaler and Dörte Hansen.



## Charming, warm-hearted and fresh as a spring day

*Spiegel*  
BESTSELLING  
AUTHOR



Emma Sternberg  
**A Garden for Two**  
[Ein Garten für zwei]  
Novel

Heyne Paperback  
400 pages  
May 2021

**Emma Sternberg** was born in 1979. After studying media science for four years she was given a job in radio and never finished her M.A. thesis, which she has always regretted – even if only a little. Her debut novel *Five by the Sea* was a big success and has been on the *Spiegel* bestseller list for weeks.

Lu is smart, quick-witted and super-successful as a lawyer in a top law firm. But then her big brother Pip dies and all of a sudden Lu no longer knows which way is up and which way is down. At first she just wants to hole up in Pip's gazebo, but then spring comes.

Nature awakens, and while Lu digs in the earth, she discovers not only that happiness is something you can touch with your hands. But also what she really wants from life.

## Berlin in the Roaring Twenties: two sisters conquer the heart of the city – and its men



**Rights sold to:**  
Hungary (Central Media)

**Nora Elias** is the pseudonym of a writer of historical novels. She started writing as a student and is now devoting herself increasingly to recent German history. She loves traveling and long hikes. Her novel *Antonia's Daughter* was awarded the much sought-after DELIA Literature Prize in 2018.

Berlin, 1924. Helena Rosenberg has grown up in modest circumstances. One day, she discovers that the father she never knew has named her as heir in his will, and that she has a half-sister. So she decides to leave her provincial home and move to the big city – but when she arrives, she finds not only a sister who's far from happy to see her, but also a pharmacy up to its eyes in debt.

Then Helena has a splendid idea: They're going to produce and sell their own make-up. Together, Helena and Charlotte conquer the market, as well as the hearts of men – and the dazzling city of Berlin. But they're dancing on the edge of a volcano ...

### Press

"A stunningly vivid novel that makes you think – it'll stay with me for a very long time. A must-read!"

*Monika Schulte on Antonias Daughter*

### The Beauty Salon – The Sisters' Triumph

[Der Schönheitssalon – Der Triumph der Schwestern]

The Beauty Salon saga (Vol. 2)

Goldmann, ca. 450 pp, September 2021



## Flowers are her passion. Love is her destiny. Will her dreams come true?



**Rights sold to:**  
Czech Republic (Euromedia)

Rena Rosenthal  
**The Royal Gardener –  
Dreams of Spring**  
[Die Hofgärtnerin –  
Frühlingssträume]  
The Royal Gardener saga  
(Vol. 1)  
Novel

Penguin  
688 pages  
With 1 b/w illustration  
March 2021

As a child, **Rena Rosenthal** would spend every free minute in her parents' tree nursery. Unlike the rest of her family, she didn't become a gardener, but her love for flowers has persisted. So it was clear from the start that her first family saga would be set amid the scent of lilacs and stunning rhododendrons.

Oldenburg, 1891. All her life, Marleene has dreamt of being a gardener, working with nature and growing the most beautiful flowers in the world.

But her dream seems out of reach: only men are allowed to be professional gardeners. But Marleene won't give up. She cuts her hair and dresses like a boy – and is hired by the famous court nursery. Marleene is beside herself with joy! Yet the other workers make things difficult for her, and it becomes increasingly hard to keep up the masquerade. When she meets the owner's two charming sons, her feelings are thrown into turmoil. Marleene has to decide whether to follow her dream or her heart...

**He only appears where people die.  
He's closer to death than to anything or  
anyone else.**

*Spiegel*  
**BESTSELLING  
AUTHOR**



**Bernhard Aichner**  
**Dark Room**  
[DUNKELKAMMER]  
A Bronski crime novel (Vol.1)

btb  
352 pages  
March 2021

**Bernhard Aichner**, born in 1972, works as an author and photographer and writes novels, audio plays and stage plays. He trained as a journalist at the second largest Austrian daily newspaper, where he grew particularly fascinated by police photographs of accidents, murders and natural disasters. Aichner has been awarded several literary prizes and scholarships for his work, including among others the 2015 Crime Cologne Award and the 2017 Friedrich Glauser Prize. His books are bestsellers and translated into numerous languages.  
[www.bernhard-aichner.at](http://www.bernhard-aichner.at)

Winter in Innsbruck. A homeless man seeks refuge in a long abandoned house in the woods. In the bedroom, he finds a dead body. It has been lying there for twenty years. It's just what the press photographer David Bronski has been waiting for. He and his colleague, the journalist Svenja Spielmann, are tasked with reporting from the scene – but what he won't tell anyone is what connects him to this spectacular case.

Ever since he can remember, Bronski has taken photographs of misfortune. His eye is trained on the darkness in our world. He goes where people die. He immortalises everything that's bad, and is fascinated by the silence of death. It's like an addiction. Bronski is closer to death than to anything or anyone else, and lives only for his secret passion: analogue photography. The dark room is his safe haven – here, he creates his works of art, portraits of dead people. Scarred by a terrible event in his past, this is his attempt to rediscover meaning in life.

- **A thrilling new crime series by SPIEGEL bestselling author Bernhard Aichner**

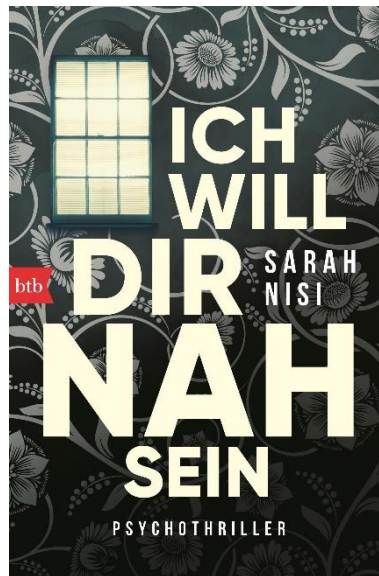
**Backlight**  
[GEGENLICHT]

A Bronski crime novel (Vol. 2)

btb, ca. 420 pp, July 2021



**He wants to be close to her. Closer and closer. Until he can go no further.**



Sarah Nisi  
**I Want to Be Close to You**  
[Ich will dir nah sein]  
Psychological thriller

btb Paperback  
336 pages  
May 2021

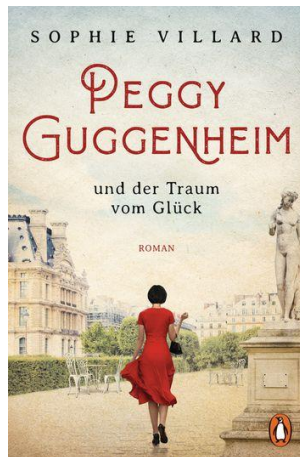
**Sarah Nisi** has lived in London since 2012. She was born in Hildesheim, and worked as a corporate lawyer in Düsseldorf for several years before moving to London to study creative writing. Since then the German–British author has dedicated most of her time to writing. Many of her short stories have already been included in anthologies from various German publishers, and she came second in the German Agatha Christie Prize for crime writing with her story *Clear the Stage*. *I Want to Be Close to You* is her first novel.

In London Underground's lost property office, Lester Sharp looks after abandoned objects: mobiles, keys, wallets – he particularly likes taking care of clothes and medical gadgets. He's a collector in his private life, too, and something of an oddball. Women aren't interested in him, and he generally finds it difficult to have relationships with other people. When he meets the young woman Erin, he doesn't know how to behave at first – but soon finds a way to get close to her. Closer than she might like...

For readers of *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn, *Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins, and Melanie Raabe's books.



## From our backlist:



Penguin, 448 pages  
August 2020

English sample translation  
available

### Sophie Villard: *Peggy Guggenheim's Dream*

**Art was her passion. Love was her destiny.**

Paris, 1937. The rebellious heiress Peggy Guggenheim is enjoying life in the French capital's dazzling bohemian world, where one glamorous cocktail party follows another. But Peggy has a dream. She wants to open her own gallery, and stand on her own two feet at last. Then she falls in love with a tall man with shining eyes: the writer Samuel Beckett.

But their love is doomed from the start, because the only way for Peggy to realise her dream is to go to London, far away from Beckett. Then dark clouds gather on the horizon – and when the war forces countless artists to flee Europe, Peggy helps as many as she can, risking both her life and her love.

- Rights sold to: Bulgaria (Lemur), Czech Republic (Grada/Metafora), Slovakia (Albatros)

#### Press:

"An absolute reading highlight with a detailed insight into the arts scene of the time and the life of a courageous and open-minded woman." *Mainhattan Kurier*

"Villard succeeds in bringing you close to this impressive, courageous woman who found self-confidence in the middle of her life by following her calling." *Freie Presse Chemnitz*

"A fine book about an impressive, courageous personality who followed her own paths." *Dolomiten Magazin*

"If you love art, don't expect to sleep for the next few nights." *Berner Zeitung*

## Contact

### **Penguin Random House Verlagsgruppe GmbH**

#### **Foreign Rights Department**

Neumarkter Str. 28

81673 München

Germany

Fax: +49 (89) 4136-3733

[www.penguinrandomhouse.de](http://www.penguinrandomhouse.de)

### **Gesche Wendebourg**

Foreign Rights Director

Phone: +49 (89) 4136-3313

[Gesche.Wendebourg@randomhouse.de](mailto:Gesche.Wendebourg@randomhouse.de)

English speaking countries; French speaking countries; The Netherlands/Belgium; Greece; Israel;  
Arabic countries

### **Eva-Maria Kunze**

Senior Foreign Rights Manager

Phone: +49 (89) 4136-3716

[Eva-Maria.Kunze@randomhouse.de](mailto:Eva-Maria.Kunze@randomhouse.de)

Italy; Portuguese speaking countries; Spanish speaking countries; Czech Republic; Slovakia; Korea;  
Japan

### **Stephanie Gerdeissen**

Foreign Rights Manager

Phone: +49 (89) 4136-3470

[Stephanie.Gerdeissen@randomhouse.de](mailto:Stephanie.Gerdeissen@randomhouse.de)

Eastern Europe (except Czech Republic and Slovakia) and the Balkans; Scandinavia; China; Taiwan;  
Turkey

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