

Roberto Alajmo
L'estate del '78, Sellerio



July 1978. Roberto Alajmo is a student waiting to take his A-level oral exams. At the end of a day filled with studying, he goes out in Mondello, near Palermo, to relax with his classmates. It is after a short walk that he finds his mother Elena sitting on the sidewalk; she looks at him, her hand cupped to shield her eyes from the sun, and he cannot imagine that is going to be their last meeting.

Alajmo's book tells the story of this unexpected farewell, his search for the meaning behind his mother suddenly leaving her husband, her children and life itself; it is a drama about the domestic hardship -hidden behind the closed doors of the flats of the Italian middle class- that many families so frequently had to endure in those years. It is an extremely personal and original literary work, filled with breathtaking suspense and

emotions transformed into thoughts and words, never without a necessary, yet sophisticated, sense of humour.

Alajmo transforms a very intimate and awkward occurrence into a passionate and moving novel about life; he urges the readers to make his past their own, «Listen to me» he seems to tell us. We have no choice but to listen and be reminded, yet again, of literature's extraordinary power to lay bare our feelings.

Roberto Alajmo was born in Palermo, Italy in 1959. He is a writer, a journalist and he has been Director of the Biondo Theatre in Palermo since 2013. He published: *Notizia del disastro* (2001), *Cuore di madre* (2003), *Nuovo repertorio dei pazzi della città di Palermo* (2004), *È stato il figlio*, (2005) -later adapted into a film by Daniele Ciprì, with Toni Servillo- *Palermo è una cipolla*, (2005) and *L'arte di annacarsi* (2010). He successfully published *Carne mia* with Sellerio in 2016, which won *Premio Croce* 2017.

Jean Echenoz
Inviata speciale, Adelphi
Translated by Federica and Lorenza Di Lella



Thirty-four years old, tight blue blouse, skinny anthracite pants, short Louise Brooks bob. This is how lovely Constance appears: little active and little qualified, but very inclined to sentimental misadventures and mysteriously able to unleash the unpredictable. About fifteen years ago, among other things, Constance was the interpreter of a planetary success, "Excessif", one of those songs that make the whole world dance, from Lapland to Yemen, and assure those who compose them -in this case her ex-husband, Lou Tausk- an idle and wealthy existence. A song that everyone remembers and that continues to be very popular, particularly among the *apparatchiks* of North Korea, including one of the most influential advisors of the Supreme Leader, Gang Un-ok. Young, charming, educated in Switzerland and presumably open to dialogue with the West, Gang is the ideal target of Constance's

attractiveness, which will lead her to an opulent villa in Pyongyang with the mission of seducing Gang, thus destabilizing North Korea. With *Inviata speciale* Jean Echenoz goes back to authentic storytelling and with noir and spy story put together, he succeeds in ironically being of service to the celebration of the euphoria coming from reading.

Jean Echenoz was born in Valenciennes, France in 1946. He moved to Paris in 1970 after studying Sociology and Civil Engineering. His first manuscript was accepted and published in 1979 by *Les Éditions de Minuit*, at the time directed by Jérôme Lindon. His first four books are presented as literary exercises and as a tribute

to the genre codes: *Le Méridien de Greenwich* for fiction, *Cherokee* (1983) for crime, *L'Équipée malaise* (1989) for adventure and *Lac* (1989) for the spy story. Among his latest works find: the fictional biographies *Ravel. Un romanzo* (Adelphi, 2007; dedicated to Ravel), *Correre* (Adelphi, 2009; dedicated to Emil Zátapek), *Lampi* (Adelphi, 2012; dedicated to Tesla) and the novel on World War I '14 (Adelphi, 2017). Critics call his work emblematic of the so called "Postmodern Literature".

Yewande Omotoso

La signora della porta accanto, 66thand2nd

Translated by Natalia Stabilini



Cape Town, South Africa. Hortensia James and Marion Agostino are neighbours. One is black and one is white. Both are successful women with impressive careers, both have recently been widowed and both are sworn enemies. They share hedge and hostility, which they prune with a zeal that belies the fact that they are both over eighty. One day an unforeseen event forces the women together and gradually the bickering and sniping softens into lively debate and from there into memories shared. But could these sparks of connection ever transform into friendship? Or is it too late to expect these two to change? Yewande Omotoso creates, adopting a light look and caustic humour, a story about women's empowerment, the impact of Colonialism in South African society and, above all, friendship.

Yewande Omotoso was born in 1980. Originally from the Barbados Islands on her mother's side, and Nigeria on her father's side, she grew up in Nigeria and then moved to South Africa with her family in 1992. She defines herself as a result of a multicultural identity, coming from the mixture of traditions and cultures of the different countries where she lived as a girl. She studied Architecture and Creative Writing at the University of Cape Town, becoming first an architect, a designer and then a writer. She published her first book, *Bom Boy*, in 2011, winning the *South African literary Award for Best Debut Work*. With *La Signora della porta accanto* (2016), she entered the longlist of *Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction 2017* and is one of the finalists of the *International Dublin literary Award 2018*.

Alessandro Perissinotto

Il silenzio della collina, Mondadori



Domenico Boschis, born and raised in the Langhe, now lives in Rome, where he succeeded as a TV series actor. An unexpected news compels him to return to his native hills: his father, with whom he is no longer in touch, is ill and has little time left. The old man can barely speak anymore, however there is one thing he seems to desperately want to say to his son.

A news report from fifty years before tells the story of a thirteen-year-old girl living a few kilometres away from Domenico's childhood home, who is "stolen" from her own house on a December night in 1968. Nothing happens for eight years, then the truth suddenly comes out in all its strength and Domenico starts to doubt his father's innocence.

In this true-crime novel, Alessandro Perissinotto tells a real story -first told by the newspapers of the time and then guiltily forgotten- thus breaking the silence about the very first child abduction in Republican Italy. The author speaks through a ferocious, yet necessary, book and encourages

all readers to understand where violence against women comes from; he urges us to think about how, sometimes, men should be the lead characters in this battle against barbarity.

Alessandro Perissinotto was born in Torino, Italy in 1964. Graduated in Literature, with a Final Dissertation on Semiotics, he soon devotes himself to multimedia and is now a professor at Università degli Studi di Torino. He publishes *Dizionario della fiaba* with Gian Paolo Caprettini. He starts publishing fiction books, later defined as crime and detective novels, in 1997, such as: *L'anno che uccisero Rosetta*, *La canzone di Colombano*, *Treno 8017*, and *Al mio giudice* (2004). In his later novels *Una piccola storia ignobile*, *L'ultima notte bianca* and *L'orchestra del Titanic* (Rizzoli), the investigations are conducted by psychologist Anna Pavesi. Among Perissinotto's most recent books find: *Semina il vento* (Piemme), *Lo sguardo oltre l'orizzonte*, *Le colpe dei padri* (Piemme, 2013), second place at Premio Strega, *Coordinate d'oriente* (Piemme, 2014), *Quello che l'acqua nasconde* (Piemme, 2017). In the meanwhile, he has been publishing crime and detective novels, such as *Il treno per Tallinn* and *La neve sotto la neve*, under the name of Arno Saar since 2016; these are set in Estonia and detective Marko Kurismaa is the main character.

Christoph Ransmayr
***Cox o Il corso del tempo*, Feltrinelli**
Translated by Margherita Carbonaro



The great Chinese emperor Qiánlóng, the most powerful man of his time, invites the famous British watchmaker Alister Cox to his court in Beijing. He wants him to create precious and refined instruments that can measure the different speeds at which human existence flows, from the time of childhood, of love and happiness to that of sickness and death, but also a clock capable of measuring eternity. Set in 18th century China, Christoph Ransmayr tells the story of an encounter of two historical figures who, in reality, never really happened. The impossible dream of a reproduction and multiplication of the forms of time and existence, of a redemption of lost lives, of human domination over the inevitable flee of experience give power to the story and suggests an important reflection on the flow of life, in a language as elegant and precise as the subtle devices that mark the time. *Frankfurter Allgemeine*

Christoph Ransmayr was born in Wels, Austria in 1954. Raised in the rural areas of Upper Austria, he then studied Philosophy and Ethnology in Vienna from 1972 to 1978. He was Cultural Editor of the periodical *Extrablatt* from 1978 to 1982, when he made his debut in literature with the four-handed essay *Radiosa fine*, written in collaboration with Willy Puchner. Author of a great number of novels and essays translated into more than thirty languages, his most famous work is probably *Il mondo estremo*, a novel inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphosis* to tell the story of Cotta, his admirer lost in the labyrinths of Toma's fancy city among the characters of the Epic Poem. Among his main works find: *Der Wolfsjäger. Drei polnische Duette* with Martin Pollack (2011), *Atlante di un uomo* (Feltrinelli, 2015), *Gerede: Elf Ansprachen* (2014). He writes for magazines such as *Geo*, *Merian* and *TransAtlantik*. He moved to Vienna in 2006.