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One can hardly breathe when one reads Hoffmann.
—Robert Schumann

Hoffmann is the unrivaled master of the uncanny in literature.
—Sigmund Freud

Ringing crystal bells herald the arrival of a beguiling snake, and a student's descent into lunacy; a young man abandons his betrothed for a woman who plays the piano skilfully but seems worryingly wooden; a counselor's daughter must choose between singing and her life. Music and madness are tightly wound strands flowing through E.T.A. Hoffmann's phantasmagoric stories. Whether a surrealist exploration of the anxieties surrounding automation, or a mystery concerning a goldsmith, missing jewels, and a spate of murders, each tale in this collection reveals the complexities of human desire and fear. Peter Wortsman's masterful new translation allows Hoffmann's distinct and influential style to shine, while breathing new life into stories that seem both familiar and uncanny.

Prussian-born E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776-1822) was one of the most influential authors of the German Romantic era. An artistic polymath with a fierce passion for music, Hoffmann spent much of his life struggling to reconcile his career as a bureaucrat with his commitment to his art. His stories, renowned for their macabre psychological realism, blur lines between the real and supernatural in their explorations of artistic madness. His works exercised a profound influence on writers such as Balzac, Poe, Dostoevsky, and Kafka, as well as composers such as Schumann, Offenbach and Tchaikovsky.

Translator Peter Wortsman is the author of several short fiction collections and plays, an essay collection, and a travel memoir Ghost Dance in Berlin. His translations from German include works by Peter Altenberg, Heinrich Heine, Robert Musil, Adelbert von Chamisso, Heinrich von Kleist, the Brothers Grimm, and Franz Kafka.
One of my favorite Argentinian authors.
—Samanta Schweblin

January

Sara Gallardo

translated from the Spanish by
Frances Riddle & Maureen Shaughnessy

Sara Gallardo’s work possesses such radical originality it would be most appropriate to categorize it with the kind of literature that doesn’t resemble anything else, that doesn’t even fit the canon of the established heterodoxy, and that will always be read as a discovery.
—Martin Kohan

In the Argentine pampas, all things bow to Nefer, a 16-year-old farmworker. She measures the distance between her body and the table, and feels something filling her up, turning against her. Her belly swells. Unable to confide in the medicine woman and unable to confess to the priest, Nefer finally blurts out her secret to her mother. January is the first Argentine novel to represent rape from the survivor’s perspective and to explore the life-threatening risks pregnancy poses in a society where abortion was long-outlawed. With narcotic musicality, Gallardo hangs before us an experience that has been lived and silenced a thousand times over. Nefer closes her eyes. We listen to her and we see.

Sara Gallardo, a celebrated Argentinian writer, was born in Buenos Aires in 1931. She was 27 when she published her powerful debut, January (Enero), and by the time she died in 1988, she had published more than a dozen novels, collections of short stories, and essays. January is considered required reading in Argentina and Uruguay.

Frances Riddle has translated Isabel Allende, Claudia Piñeiro, Leila Guerriero, and María Fernanda Ampuero. Her translation of Claudia Piñeiro’s Elena Knows was shortlisted for the 2021 International Booker Prize.

Maureen Shaughnessy has translated works by Hebe Uhart, Nora Lange, Margarita García Robayo, and Luis Nuño. She has also translated Guadalupe Urbina’s Mayan folktales, as well as several Cañari legends. Her translation of Uhart’s Scent of Buenos Aires was a finalist for the PEN Translation Award in 2020.
Tali Girls

—Justin Torres

Tali Girls is a harrowing novel about the brutal lives of women in a terrorist-controlled state. In the end, Kowsar’s fate remains an open question. This is, perhaps, the kindest possible conclusion to her story. —Eileen Gonzalez, Forward Reviews, starred review

Tali Girls follows three girls coming of age amidst brutal realities of a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Told in a direct, conversational prose, this chorus of voices offers us a vivid picture of the endless cycle of suffering that girls and women in the grip of the Taliban authorities endure, of the imbalance of power and opportunity. Based on true stories, the central figures illuminate the power of love, friendship, and generosity in the face of poverty and oppression. The novel is a testament of resilience, hope, and courage. In Sara Khalili’s vibrant and nuanced translation from the Persian, Tali Girls tears down the curtain and exposes the treacherous realities of what women are up against in modern-day Afghanistan.

Tali Girls was born in Herat province, Afghanistan, in 1968. He studied Persian language and literature at Kabul University and later Russian literature in Moscow. Herawi began a career as a reporter and in 2003 was appointed deputy spokesperson to President Hamid Karzai. In 2012, he was appointed chargé d’affaires of the Embassy of Afghanistan in London. Siamak Herawi is now recognized as one of Afghanistan’s most original and vital writers.

Sara Khalili is an editor and translator of contemporary Iranian and Afghan literature. Her translations include Moon Brow, Censoring an Iranian Love Story, and Season of Purgatory by Shahriar Mandanipour; The Pomegranate Lady and Her Sons by Goli Taraghi; and The Book of Fate by Parinoush Saniee. She translated In the Meadow of Fantasies by Hadi Mohammadi and Nooshin Safakhoo.
To the Letter

Tomasz Różycki

translated from the Polish by
Mira Rosenthal

The map of Eastern and Central Europe is a palimpsest, bearing the traces of countless traumatic erasures and obliterations, and still changing day to day ... Tomasz Różycki’s idiosyncratic rapprochement with tradition is an attempt to make peace with his losses, even as they mount.

—Times Literary Supplement

Tomasz Różycki’s To the Letter follows Lieutenant Anielewicz on the hunt for clues that might lead 21st century humans out of their despair. With authoritarianism rising across Eastern Europe, the lieutenant admits, “This lunacy needs a full investigation.” So he turns to the hidden codes of the natural world for answers. Fruit tutors him in the ways of color, he drifts out to sea to study the grammar of tides, and he gazes at the sun as it thrums away. Diacritics on Polish words form a “flock of sooty flecks, clinging to letters,” and Anielewicz studies the letters’ twisting tails, accents, and strokes. While he can’t write a code to solve life’s mysteries or fill the absence of a country rent by war, his search leads him to an affirmation of the importance of human love.

Tomasz Różycki is the author of eleven volumes of poetry and prose. Over the last decade he has garnered almost every prize Poland has to offer as well as critical acclaim internationally. His volume Colonies (translated by Mira Rosenthal) won the Northern California Book Award and was a finalist for the International Griffin Poetry Prize and the Oxford-Weidenfeld Translation Prize.

Mira Rosenthal is the author of The Local World, which won the Wick Poetry Prize. Her work has appeared in Poetry, Ploughshares, Threepenny Review, Guernica, Harvard Review, New England Review, and A Public Space. She’s received a PEN/Heim Translation Fund Award, a Fulbright fellowship, a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies, and residencies at Hedgebrook and MacDowell.
For Now, It Is Night

Hari Krishna Kaul

translated from the Kashmiri by
Kalpana Raina, Tanveer Ajsi, Gowhar Fazili, & Gowhar Yaquoob

Rescued from an old Kashmiri home and brought together from the pages of out-of-print magazines and fading library copies, this collection resurrects the work of a doyen of Kashmiri Pandit literature, never before translated into English. Kaul’s candid stories spill over with the details of everyday life in a Kashmir simmering with political conflict during the 1990s exodus of the Pandit community. In prose that captures the dramatic intensity of the radio and television plays Kaul wrote for a Kashmiri-speaking audience, his characters navigate their ever-changing environs with biting humor as they make uncomfortable compromises to survive. Kaul’s stories catalog and dissect the tenuous way people struggle to find relevance in their new surroundings.

Hari Krishna Kaul was born in Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, in 1934. His Kashmiri short stories span over forty years. Kaul also wrote extensively in Hindi after leaving the Kashmir Valley, including his only novel, Vyeth Vyevasta, published in Hindi in 2005. He died in 2009.

Kalpana Raina is a translator, financial advisor and committed patron of translation. She is a board member of Words Without Borders, and the director of ISG, a technology research and advisory firm.

Art historian and filmmaker, Tanveer Ajsi has worked as a professor at Jamia Millia Isamia in New Delhi and as the curator of the MF Husain Art Gallery at JMI. Ajsi co-founded a series of experimental performance pieces, Harkats.

Gowhar Fazili teaches political science and sociology. His published work explores political subjectivity in Kashmir and explores how fictional writing interacts with the very real, intimate agitations of life for Kashmiri people.

Gowhar Yaquoob writes on Kashmiri literature and arts and has presented her work at various symposiums throughout India. She has received fellowships from the Indian Council of Social Science Research and the Indian Institute of Advanced Study.
The Brush

Eliana Hernández-Pachón
translated from the Spanish by Robin Myers

A poetic, polyphonic work that explores what the El Salado massacre might have been like . . . As the story progresses, so does the forest, the Brush, which gains ground. Its song has no limits . . . Hernández’s fragmented chorus, takes an oblique approach to horror — or, in the words of artist Juan Manuel Echeverría, it observes through reflection, to keep from being paralyzed by horror. For the author, this kind of gaze avoids two possible risks: narrating violence as a spectacle and looking away.

— Beatriz Valdés Correa, El Espectador

The Brush is a tangled grove, a thicket of vines, an orchid pummeled with rain. Told from the voices of Pablo, Ester, and the Brush itself, Hernández-Pachón’s epic poem is an astounding response to the 2000 El Salado massacre, in which Colombian paramilitary forces tortured and killed sixty people. Music was piped into the town square’s loudspeakers to camouflage the devastating violence. The Brush is a bold, incantatory exploration of collective trauma. It is also an extraordinary depiction of ecological resilience, of the natural world that both endures human cruelty and lives on in spite of it.

Eliana Hernández-Pachón received a BA in Anthropology from the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá. Her research interests include contemporary Latin American literature and visual art, gender studies, and environmental humanities. She received an MFA in Creative Writing from New York University. The Brush received the Colombia National Poetry Prize in 2020.

Robin Myers is a Mexico City–based poet and translator. Her latest translations include Bariloche by Andrés Neuman (2023), The Book of Explanations by Tedi López Mills (2022), and Copy by Dolores Dorantes (2022). A 2023 NEA Translation Fellow, Myers’s collections of poetry have been published bilingually in Mexico, Argentina, Chile, and Spain.
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fiction

What Kingdom

Fine Gråbøl

translated from the Danish by
Martin Aitken

An incredibly moving and gripping novel.
—Olga Ravn

“I’m not inarticulate, but I leave language to the room around me,” says Fine Gråbøl’s nameless narrator as she dreams of furniture flickering to life. A chair greets you, shiny tiles of floor follow a grammar of their own, a bookshelf can be tossed on like an apron. Our narrator is obsessed with the way items rise up out of their thingness, assuming personalities and private motives. She lives in a psychiatric care unit for young people, where daily routines – peeling a carrot, drinking prune juice – become the key to forging a home, to survival. Echoing the writings of Janet Frame on electroconvulsive therapy, or Linda Boström Knausgård’s meditations on silence, Fine Gråbøl renders a delicate and deep disentanglement from the world.

What Kingdom is Fine Gråbøl’s debut novel. Together with the poetry collective BMS, Gråbol published a collection of poetry, Knoglemarv lavendel (Bone-marrow Lavender) in 2018. What Kingdom is inspired by the author’s own experiences with psychiatric care. Olga Ravn called it “such a strong debut, so sure-footed, clear, vibrating, like chiffon or a cigarette.”

Martin Aitken has translated works by Karl Ove Knausgaard, Peter Høeg, Jussi Adler-Olsen, and Pia Juul. In 2019 he was awarded the PEN Translation Prize for his translation of Love by Hanne Ørstavik. His translation of Ørstavik’s The Pastor appeared in 2020 and, in 2022, his translation of Ørstavik’s Ti Amo was named a Financial Times Best Book of the Year.
Seemingly naïve but tremendously sharp, Hebe Uhart’s vision is one that could belong to a child, but a child who has up her sleeve the reflective tools of an adult.

—Alejandra Costamagna

Edgar loves nothing more than listening to the birds in the trees, the squeaking of moles in nearby chalk quarries, the conversations trickling out of the carpeted offices surrounding his favorite park in the suburbs of Paris. He also listens to the hushed conversations of passersby, strangers who whisper that he is “not all there.” But what constitutes the supposedly insufficient nature of Edgar’s interior life? Dominique Fabre gives himself over to Edgar’s way of seeing, his sensitivity, his innocence and wisdom, his longings and perceptions, his tentative interpolations into the social fabric of 1960s France, and in each passage we find a stirring answer. Fabre’s lucid, layered, and utterly fresh bildungsroman will take you by surprise and leave an immutable mark on your heart.

Born in 1936 on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, Hebe Uhart is one of the most original voices in the Spanish language. Best known for her short fiction, Uhart explores the lives of ordinary people in small Argentine towns. Her Collected Stories won the Buenos Aires Book Fair Prize (2010), and for her body of work she received Argentina’s National Endowment of the Arts Prize (2015) as well as the Manuel Rojas Ibero-American Narrative Prize (2017).

Anna Vilner holds an MFA from the University of Arkansas and is a PhD student in Comparative Literature at UT Austin. Her interests include 20th century Latin American literature, the Russian avant-garde, exile literature, and the relationship between memory and the archive. Her translations can be found in World Literature Today, The Massachusetts Review, Columbia Journal, and The Common.
Chiziane alternates between a dramatic, high-octave style and a terse and humorous frankness . . . She expresses the peaks of emotion, while never forgetting the part of the self which evaluates oneself.

—Sheila Heti, London Review of Books

No one knows where Maria des Dores came from. Did she ride in on the armored spines of crocodiles? Was she carried many miles in the jaws of fish? The only clear fact is that here she is, naked in the river bordering a town where nothing ever happens. The townspeople murmur restlessly that she is possessed by perverse impulses. They interpret her arrival as an omen of crop failure or a sign that womankind might finally seize power from the greedy hands of men. As The Joyful Cry of the Partridge unfolds, Paulina Chiziane spirals back in time to Maria’s origins: the days when the pressure to assimilate in Portuguese-controlled Mozambique formed a distorting bond on the lives of black Mozambicans like Maria’s mother and father. A potent whirl of history, mythology, and grapevine chatter, the novel lures you into its many hiding places and along the wandering paths of its central characters, whose stark words linger long after the journey is done.

Paulina Chiziane, born in 1955, studied Linguistics in Maputo and published her first novel, Balada de Amor ao Vento, after Mozambique gained independence in 1990. It was the first novel published by a Mozambican woman. Chiziane prefers to consider herself a storyteller rather than a novelist, and her work grows out of the oral tradition. In 2021, she won the Camões Prize.

David Brookshaw is a professor emeritus at the University of Bristol, England. His translation of Mia Couto’s Confession of the Lioness was shortlisted for the 2017 International DUBLIN Literary Award. He edited an anthology of stories by José Rodrigues Miguéis, The Polyhedral Mirror: Tales of American Life, and translated Tales from the Tenth Island by Onésimo Almeida.
Told from alternating perspectives, *Fog at Noon* offers readers the chance to methodically decipher the story of Julia. A conceited “ninny,” somewhat-gifted poet, ravishing temptress, and thorny friend, Julia shapeshifts and sparkles in the blinding light of conflicting narrative. Her raconteurs? A frequently fishy chorus of acquaintances, lovers, sisters-in-law, and friends. And from behind the veil, Julia speaks for herself. Tomás González writes of the passionate origins of an affair and its precipitous conclusion, of untraceable debts and the liminal realms between the living and the dead, of New York in a blizzard and the Colombian mountain chains cloaked in fog. Chapter by chapter, each narrator’s story reveals more of Julia’s past, and the tangled love affairs and financial snarls that tie these figures to each other illuminate not just Julia’s absence, but our own human foibles.

Tomás González was born in 1950 in Medellín, Colombia. He studied philosophy before becoming a barman in a Bogotá nightclub, whose owner published *Primero estaba el mar* (*In the Beginning Was the Sea*), his first novel, in 1983. González has lived in Miami and New York, where he wrote much of his work while making a living as a translator. After twenty years in the US, he returned to Colombia, where he now lives. His books have been translated into six languages.

Andrea Rosenberg is a translator from Spanish and Portuguese. Her full-length translations include novels and graphic narrative by Manuel Vilas, Tomás González, Inês Pedrosa, Aura Xilonen, Paco Roca, and Marcelo D’Salete. Two of her translations have won Eisner Awards, and she has been the recipient of awards and grants from the Fulbright Program, the American Literary Translators Association, and the Banff International Literary Translation Centre.
Feed is running low in a rural village in Switzerland. The town council meets to decide whether or not to ascend a chimerical mountain in order to access the open pastures that have enough grass to "feed seventy animals all summer long." The elders of the town protest, warning of the dangers and the dreadful lore that enfolds the mountain passageways like thick fog. They've seen it all before, reckoning with the loss of animals and men who have tried to reach the pastures nearly twenty years ago. The younger men don't listen, making plans to set off on their journey despite all warnings. Strange things happen. Spirits wrestle with headstrong young men. As the terror of life on the mountain builds, Ramuz's writing captures the rural dialog and mindsets of the men.

C. F. Ramuz (1848–1947) was a Swiss novelist whose realistic, poetic, and allegorical stories of man against nature made him one of the most iconic French-Swiss writers of the 20th century. As a young man, he moved to Paris to pursue a life of writing, where he struck up a friendship with Igor Stravinsky, later writing the libretto for The Soldier’s Tale (1918). Ramuz pioneered a Swiss literary identity, writing books about mountaineers, farmers, or villagers engaging in often tragic struggles against catastrophe.

Bill Johnston is a Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University. His translations include Witold Gombrowicz’s Baccady; Magdalena Tulli’s Dreams and Stones, Moving Parts, Flaw, and In Red; Jerzy Pilch’s His Current Woman and The Mighty Angel; Stefan Żeromski’s The Faithful River; and Fado and Dukla by Andrzej Stasiuk. In 1999 he received a National Endowment for the Arts Poetry Fellowship for Translation. In 2008 he won the inaugural Found in Translation Award for Tadeusz Rozwicz’s new poems, and in 2012 he was awarded the PEN Translation Prize and Three Percent’s Best Translated Book Award for Myśliwski’s Stone Upon Stone.
In sentences of great beauty and restraint, Mukasonga rescues a million souls from the collective noun ‘genocide,’ returning them to us as individual human beings.

—Zadie Smith on Barefoot Woman

When time-worn ancestral remedies fail to heal young Ikirezi’s maladies, she’s rushed to the Rwandan hillsides. From her termite perch under the coral tree, health blooms under Sister Deborah’s hands. Women bear their breasts to the rising sun as men under thatched roofs stand, “stunned and impotent before this female fury.” Now grown, Ikirezi unearths the truth of Sister Deborah’s passage from America to 1930s Rwanda and the mystery surrounding her sudden departure. In colonial records, Sister Deborah is a “pathogen,” an “incident.” Who is the keeper of truth, Ikirezi impels us to ask, Who stands at the threshold of memory? Did we dance? Did she heal? Did we look to the sky with wonder? Ikirezi writes on, pulling Sister Deborah out from the archive, inscribing her with breath.

Scholastique Mukasonga was born in Rwanda in 1956. She settled in France in 1992, only two years before the brutal genocide of the Tutsi swept Rwanda. Her acclaimed debut, Our Lady of the Nile, was followed by equally groundbreaking works including Kihogo, Cockroaches, Igifu, and the National Book Award-nominated Barefoot Woman. In 2021, she won the Simone de Beauvoir Prize for Women’s Freedom.

Mark Polizzotti is a biographer, critic, translator, and poet. He has translated more than fifty books from the French, including works by Patrick Modiano, Gustave Flaubert, Marguerite Duras, André Breton, and Arthur Rimbaud, and authored Bob Dylan: Highway 61 Revisited, among other books. He directs the publications program at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
In the spirit of Pulitzer Prize-winner Jane Smiley’s magical and uplifting novel, *Perestroika in Paris*, *Rosie Runs* is the heart-warming and energetic tale of a race-dog and her sudden dash into the wider-world. Rose runs indeed – through countryside and towns, across water, and past people and animals of all sorts. What a gorgeous gem of a picture book!

—Joy Preble, Brazos Bookstore

Rosie dreams of forests, meadows, hares, and freedom. Trapped at the racetrack, she sprints in endless circles – until one day, Rosie makes a fearless beeline for the world beyond the track. Scared and a little excited, Rosie runs through shadowy forests, a circus, a bustling train station, and even takes a quick dip alongside a ferry. She keeps running through small towns and whirling cities, and on her way catches glimpses of passersby, brief but clear. Readers will find peace in a private look at a man watering his plants, or a jolt of happiness at a long-snouted dog wearing a cap on a train. A book about taking in the wide world around you, *Rosie Runs* beckons young readers to rediscover their favorite hobbies and passions and revel in the joy of playing and being among new friends.

*Marika Maijala*’s versatile body of work includes art books, paintings, drawings, texts, animations, videos, installations and illustrations for public spaces. *Rosie Runs* was nominated for the Nordic Council Children’s and Young People’s Literature Prize, won the Rudolf Koivu Award for the Best Finnish Children’s Book Illustration, and was selected for the Bologna Illustrators Exhibition. In 2022, Marika was nominated for the 2023 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.

*Mia Spangenberg* holds a Ph.D. in Scandinavian Studies from the University of Washington, with a focus on Finnish literature and cultural studies. She is a 2017 graduate of the Finnish to English literary translation mentorship program organized by FILI, Finland’s literary organization. Mia writes articles for *World Kid Lit* about picture books from around the world.

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**Rosie Runs**

**Marika Maijala**

translated from the Finnish by

**Mia Spangenberg**
A tethered pony stands in front of a worn circus tent. He neighs in longing as Rosie runs by. The magician’s daughter is practicing her tricks for the show. She doesn’t notice the dog passing under her window.
But no one stops. People are hurrying to work, to the subway, wherever they need to go. The city rumbles like a large, wild animal.
The characters draw you into their whimsical world, a place I would like to stay! There are so many sweet details throughout — a feast for the eyes and a delight for the inquisitive reader (or mole)!
—Esmé Shapiro, author of Alma and the Beast

Twin moles, Purl and Crawly, are born on the first day of spring. The newest members of their woodland world, they’re curious about everything. As they grow up, home is always waiting for them, filled with the clacking of father’s typewriter, the sound of mother playing her upright bass, and the smells of quince jam and medicinal moss brews. Who Will Make the Snow? reminds us that the world is always larger and more wonderful than we can see from our own corner of the woods.

Taras Prokhasko is a Ukrainian writer best known for his novel The UnSimple. With his wife, Marjana Prokhasko, he wrote several children’s books, including Who Will Make the Snow?, named a BBC Ukrainian Children’s Book of the Year and Litakcent’s Children’s Poetry and Prose Book of the Year in 2013.

Marjana Prokhasko is a Ukrainian writer and illustrator. With her husband, Taras, she co-authored several books for children, including How to Understand a Goat and Where the Sea Vanished. Her writing has appeared in the Los Angeles Review of Books.

Jennifer Croft was awarded the Man Booker International Prize in 2018 and was a National Book Award Finalist for her translation of Olga Tokarczuk’s Flights. Croft also translated the Polish picture book What Feelings Do When No One’s Looking by Tina Oziewicz and Alexandra Zajac.

Boris Dralyuk is an award-winning literary translator and poet. He has written several volumes on Russian literature of the early twentieth century and has translated Russian and Polish classics. In 2023, he won the National Book Critics Circle's Gregg Barrios Book in Translation Prize.
“I see now what must have happened. Your tunnel led to a cliff over the water. You fell from a height into the river, and the current brought you to the Beech Forest, where we live,” Papa Mole deduced.

“You should have been more careful,” Grumblly grumbled. “When we were first learning to dig, we almost fell into a ravine, but then we learned to sniff out the proper route!”

“Listen, Stormy, why are you called Stormy?” interjected Philo, who was endlessly curious about the origin of mole names.

“Because I’m a little . . . jumpy . . . jittery. Mama always says I’m like the wind . . .” The memory of his mother nearly brought tears to Stormy’s eyes.

“Sweet little Stormy, don’t be sad! You’ll see your parents again in no time. As soon as the rain stops, the crow will fly you home,” Mama Mole assured the guest, hugging him close and stroking his head.

“Just hold on tight and make sure you don’t fall off the crow’s back,” said Purl, only now approaching the table.
Meeselphe

Claude Ponti

translated from the French by
Alyson Waters & Margot Kerlidou

Leaning out of her treehouse window, Meeselphe wonders what it’s like way down on the ground – she’s certain there are many unfamiliar, delightful, and curious things to discover. So she jumps! Landing on the forest floor and striding fearlessly into the wackanana landscape, bristly-haired Meeselphe encounters accomplices and feckless foes. Malicious monsters stand in her way in this whimsical and sometimes unfriendly world, but Meeselphe isn’t fazed: she has an answer for every riddle and a red paintbrush for every self-conscious ladybug. In luminous illustrations and Claude Ponti’s trademark wordplay, miraculously rendered by Alyson Waters and Margot Kerlidou, young readers will experience the joy of adventure and the pleasure of coming home again.

Claude Ponti is a French illustrator and children’s author known for his inventive and playful use of words and the symbolic nature of his illustrations. His first book, L’Album d’Adèle, written for his newborn daughter, already displays the associative and dreamlike presentation of children’s interior lives that characterizes many of his works. Ponti was awarded the 2006 Sorcières Spécial prize for his contribution to literature, which now includes over seventy books.

Alyson Waters’s translations include works by Vassilis Alexakis, Louis Aragon, René Belletto, Jean Giono, Emmanuel Bove, Eric Chevillard, Albert Cossery, Yasmina Khadra, and Tsvetan Todorov. In addition to her work as a translator and professor, she edited Yale French Studies for twenty years. She translated Ponti’s My Valley, Hiznobyuti, and Blaze and the Castle Cake for Bertha Daye.

Margot Kerlidou is a photographer, French tutor, and herbalist. Claude Ponti was her favorite author when she was a child. (And yes, Alyson Waters is her mother!)
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