Fresh Lit!

Rosalind Reisner
www.areadersplace.net
roz@thereisners.net

LibraryLinkNJ Webinar
July 10, 2013
Books we’ll talk about today—literary fiction

• Recent and forthcoming
• Publicized and not...
• Well-reviewed
• First novels
• New novels by favorite authors
• Titles for reading groups
• Titles with YA appeal
THE BIG LITERARY BOOKS
The ones we probably don’t need to talk about today

• *The First Phone Call From Heaven*, Mitchell Albom. Nov.


• *MaddAdam*, Margaret Atwood. Sept.

• *The Signature of All Things*, Elizabeth Gilbert.
A Constellation of Vital Phenomena by Anthony Marra

May 2013, Hogarth/Wm. Morrow

First novel

Appeal: story, character, writing, setting.

Themes: Chechnya; social issues, complex structure; guilt; loss; redemption; book groups
Sparta
by Roxana Robinson

June 2013, Farrar, Straus & Giroux

Previous: Cost

Appeal: character; story; writing.

Themes: returning soldiers; PTSD; psychological study; leisurely pacing; family relationships; *book groups
THE BIG LITERARY BOOKS

Additional suggestions

- **Americanah**, Chimamanda, Ngozi Adichie, May 2013
- **Necessary Errors**, Caleb Crain, Aug 2013
- **Transatlantic**, Colum McCann, June 2013
FAMILY AND DOMESTIC DRAMA
The Explanation for Everything
by Lauren Grodstein

Sept. 2013; Algonquin Books

Previous: A Friend of the Family; NJ author

Appeal: story; characters

Themes: faith vs science; family relationships; *book groups, YA
Big Brother
by Lionel Shriver

July 16, 2013; Harper

Previous novel: We Need to Talk About Kevin

Appeal: story; character.

Themes: Sibling relationships; family responsibility; YA, *book groups
Replacement Child: A Memoir
by Judy L. Mandel

March 2013; Seal Press
NJ author; small press

Appeal: story, character, writing.

Themes: NJ history; interesting structure; family secrets; *book groups, YA
One-Way Bridge
by Cathie Pelletier

May 2012, Sourcebooks

Previous book: Running the Bulls

Appeal: story, setting, dry humor

Themes: small-town life; Maine; eccentricity; loneliness
Family and domestic drama

Additional suggestions

• *Is This Tomorrow*, Caroline Leavitt, May 2013
• *The Last Summer of the Camperdowns*, Elizabeth Kelly, June 2013
• *The Burgess Boys* Elizabeth Strout, March 2013
• *We Are Water*, Wally Lamb, Oct. 2013
• *The Innocents*, Francesca Segal, May 2013
• *The Husband’s Secret*, Liane Moriarty, July 2013
WOMEN’S LIVES, SISTERS, MARRIAGE
Sisterland
by Curtis Sittenfeld

June, 2013; Random House

Previous: Prep, American Wife; critical attention

Appeal: character, story

Themes: Sibling relationships; life choices; YA; book groups
The Other Typist
by Suzanne Rindell

May 2013; Amy Einhorn/Penguin

First novel

Appeal: character and setting.

Themes: unreliable narrator; 1920s; women’s lives; psychological study; ambiguity; book groups; YA
The Silver Star
by Jeannette Walls

June 2013; Scribner

Previous: memoir The Glass Castle

Appeal: story, character.

Themes: sisters; dysfunctional families; similar to her memoir; book groups; YA
WOMEN’S LIVES/SISTERS/MARRIAGE

Additional suggestions

• *The Interestings*, Meg Wolitzer. April, 2013
• *You Are One of Them*, Elliott Holt. May, 2013
COMING OF AGE STORIES
Someone
by Alice McDermott

Sept., 2013; Farrar, Straus & Giroux

Previous: Charming Billy

Appeal: setting and character.

Themes: 1950s Brooklyn; psychological insight; leisurely paced but absorbing; interesting structure; book groups
Brewster
by Mark Slouka

Aug., 2013; W.W. Norton
First novel

Appeal: story, character, tone.

Theme: Edgy, noirish; strong 1960s setting; dysfunctional families; YA
We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves by Karen Joy Fowler

May 2013, Putnam

Previous: The Jane Austen Book Club

Appeal: character and writing.

Themes: Human/animal bond; family secrets; siblings; animal rights; *book groups; YA
Flora
by Gail Godwin

May, 2013; Bloomsbury

Previous: Unfinished Desires; many previous; critical attention

Appeal: story, setting.

Themes: 1940s South; family relationships; YA interest—unreliable teenage narrator; book groups
COMING OF AGE STORIES

Additional suggestions

• *Ordinary Grace*, William Kent Krueger, Atria, Mar., 2013

HISTORICAL FICTION
Wash
by Margaret Wrinkle

Feb. 2013; Grove/Atlantic
First novel
Appeal: character; setting; story; writing
Themes: slavery--effects on whites and blacks; Southern history; sexual abuse; *book groups
The Light in the Ruins
by Chris Bohjalian

July, 2013; Knopf/Doubleday

Previous: Sandcastle Girls, many others

Appeal: story, characters, setting (Tuscany), fast-paced

Themes: WWII; war crimes; murder mystery; revenge; romance; book groups
HISTORICAL FICTION

Additional suggestions

- **House Girl**, Tara Conklin, Oct., 2013
- **Palisades Park**, Alan Brennert, Apr., 2013
- **Orphan Train**, Christina Baker Kline, Apr., 2013
- **The Son**, Philipp Meyer, May, 2013
- **Songs of Willow Frost**, Jamie Ford, Sept., 2013
- **Transatlantic**, Colum McCann, June, 2013
HISTORICAL FICTION---REAL CHARACTERS
Z
by Theresa Ann Fowler

March, 2013; St. Martin’s
Debut novel

Appeal: character, story, setting

Themes: historical fiction based on real lives; strong historical setting with colorful detail; breezy, engaging writing; book groups
Margot
by Jillian Cantor

Sept., 2013; Riverhead

Previous: The Transformation of Things

Appeal: character, setting

Themes: what-if historical fiction; Jewish interest; Holocaust; women’s lives in the 1950s; *book groups; YA
HISTORICAL FICTION--REAL CHARACTERS

...More suggestions

- **Call Me Zelda**, Erika Robuck, Mar., 2013
- **Guests on Earth**, Lee Smith, Oct., 2013 (about Zelda Fitzgerald)
- **Mrs. Poe**, Lynn Cullen, Sept., 2013
- **Havisham**, Ronald Frame, Nov., 2013 (character from *Great Expectations*)
HISTORICAL FICTION---REAL CHARACTERS

...More suggestions

• *Mrs. Lincoln’s Dressmaker*, Jennifer Chiaverini, Jan, 2013

• *Vienna Nocturne*, Vivian Shotwell, Feb., 2014 (about Mozart)

• *Mary Coin*, Marisa Silver, March, 2013

• *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*, Nancy Horan (about R.L. Stevenson’s marriage)
GENRE BENDERS

(Titles that combine or re-interpret genres)
The Golem and the Jinni
by Helene Wecker

Apr., 2013; HarperCollins

First novel

Appeal: magical realism, story, setting (NYC 1900)

Themes: folklore, Jewish interest, human nature; YA
Life After Life
by Kate Atkinson

Apr., 2013; Reagan Arthur/Penguin

Previous: When Will There Be Good News?

Appeal: story, character, writing.

Themes: responsibility; time travel; book groups; YA
Norwegian by Night
by Derek B. Miller

May, 2013; Houghton Mifflin

First novel

Appeal: character, story, setting, humor

Themes: thriller; good and evil; forgiveness; old age; parents and children; war crimes
The Silence of Bonaventure Arrow by Rita Leganski

Feb., 2013; HarperCollins

First novel

Appeal: character, story, setting, magical realism

Themes: silence; children and parents; New Orleans; family secrets; YA
GENREBENDERS

Additional suggestions

• *Night Film*, Marisha Pessl, Aug., 2013
• *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, Neil Gaiman, June, 2013
Small Presses worth watching

• Bellevue Literary Press
• Graywolf Press
• Milkweed Press
• Akashic Press
• Sourcebooks Landmark
• Biblioasis
• Red Hen
• Ig
Some hints for keeping up...

- Shelf Awareness
- Early Word
- The Book Reporter
- Reading Group Choices
- Book blogs: from newspapers, magazines, librarians, and readers
- Goodreads.com
Some hints for keeping up...

- NetGalley and Edelweiss
- Review copies from publishers
- Samples on e-readers
- AAP publisher “sneak peeks”
- Speed dating with publishers (BEA)
- Book blogs