

LBF 2025  
International Fiction & Non-fiction

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**Sebastian Haffner**  
**PARTING**

A lighthearted yet melancholic love story set in 1930s Paris – a discovery: an unpublished novella by Sebastian Haffner

The young legal trainee Raimund travels from Berlin to Paris to visit his girlfriend, the lively and free-spirited Teddy. It is the interwar period, a time when life still sparkles. Together with Teddy's colorful entourage – the charming bon vivant Franz, the serious Mademoiselle Gault, the eccentric Mr. Andrews, and a motley crew of artists and lost souls – they roam through Parisian cafés and restaurants, celebrating their freedom, aware that nothing will stay as it is. Raimund savors the carefree bohemian lifestyle, always hoping that the universally adored Teddy will choose him alone. A day and night full of lightness and longing, with the inevitable farewell ever-present in their minds.

“Parting” is a novella that, in its lightheartedness, recalls Tucholsky's “Schloss Gripsholm” or “Jules & Jim”, while its keen insight evokes Erich Kästner's “Fabian”. It is an autobiographical narrative of the last precious hours before exile, fascism, and war.

The historian and journalist Sebastian Haffner (real name Raimund Pretzel) wrote this novella in the autumn of 1932, based on his experiences in Paris in the spring of that year. He had already fallen in love with Teddy in Berlin and often visited her in Paris. In 1934, he even considered moving there into exile before a twist of fate brought him to London instead. Teddy fled to Stockholm, and the two remained in contact.



- About 160 pp.
- Germany: Hanser NL: Arbeiterspers, Fr: R. Laffont
- Publ. June 2025

**Sebastian Haffner** (b. 1907) was a German historian, journalist, and author. He earned a doctorate in law before emigrating to England in 1938, where he worked as a journalist and writer. In 1954, he returned to Germany as a correspondent for *The Observer* and later wrote for *konkret*, *Die Welt*, and *Stern*. He published several bestsellers, including *Notes on Hitler* and his memoir *Defying Hitler*. With his linguistic and analytical talent, Haffner became one of the most influential public intellectuals in post-war Germany. He passed away in Berlin in 1999.

**Tina Mendelsohn**  
**WOMEN IN THE ARTS**  
**Artists, Critics, and Curators - Reinventing Germany After 1945**

A fascinating new postwar history and an impressive example of art building societies.

Art as dissent or propaganda – these models shaped postwar Germany and were gendered masculine. This book presents another model: art as education for shaping society, gendered female and led by women after 1945. With politics and men discredited, women’s marginality meant independence from compromise. Through art, they articulated problems and tested solutions. How could the Germans be reformed? What pasts could be used? Art created images of new Germanies (FRG and GDR) and reinvented new states.

This is not just an art or women’s history, but a new perspective on the changes after 1945. The book highlights well-known artists such as Käthe Kollwitz, Marianne Werefkin and Hannah Höch, as well as newly discovered curators and activists like the communist illustrator Lea Grundig or the influential collector Erna Kroen. Art is not only about creation but also about curation, interpretation, and preservation. Women in the arts played a key role in shaping both Germanys after 1945.



- Total word count: ca. 120,000 words (approx. 70,000 words text)
- Ms: May 2025
- To be illustrated with selected art works and historical photographs



**Tina Mendelsohn** is a historian, journalist, and filmmaker, focusing especially on twentieth-century Germany. In 2024, she completed her doctorate in history at the University of Oxford with a thesis titled “Across Divides: Art, Women, and Politics in the Remaking of Germany after 1945”, funded by a Clarendon Foundation scholarship. She is currently teaching Cold War history at Oxford. She earned a master’s degree in art history from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, graduating with distinction.

## **Kirsty Bell** **MOTHER'S MOTHER**

*"All silences are the same, and each silence contains anything you can imagine."*  
Anne Enright

Mother's Mother is about the seepage of matriarchal ancestry. Set in the Lowlands of Scotland, it follows three generations of working women backwards through a century and a half, into the mid 1800s. Each woman – Kirsty Bell's grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother – appears entangled in the attitudes, prejudices and limitations of their time, as a cross-generational trajectory is plotted out, leading up and out of working-class illiteracy, poverty and precarity and into the stable property-owning merchant classes. A trajectory which stalls in the 1950s with Kirsty's grandmother as the limits placed on post-war social emancipation become apparent.

As the lives of these three ordinary women are delineated, assumptions about progress and freedom are dislodged. In their place arise questions about indebtedness, revealing secrets twisted into the DNA of successive generations, a matriarchal lineage that ends with the author, the final female offspring.

Piece by piece, an episodic narrative of female lineage is unearthed and surveyed in relation to the entrancing Lowland landscape, in thrall to daily weather patterns. The assembled facts are embellished with the aid of contemporaneous literature as well as social histories, urban analysis, local mythology and speculative imaginings, drawing correspondences between inner states and the outer world.

- About 210 pp.
- World English: Fitzcarraldo Editions, German: Kanon Verlag
- Manuscript: May 2025



**Kirsty Bell** is a British-American writer and art critic living in Berlin. She has published widely in magazines and journals including *Tate Etc.* and *Art in America*, and was a contributing editor of *frieze* from 2011-2021. She was awarded a Warhol Foundation Grant for her book *The Artist's House*, and her essays have appeared in over seventy exhibition catalogues for major international museums and institutions.

Her recent publication *The Undercurrents. A Story of Berlin*, a hybrid narrative of memoir, cultural history and literary biography, was published in 2022 by Fitzcarraldo Editions (UK), The Other Press (US), Errata Naturae (Spain), EDT, (Italy) and Kanon Verlag (Germany).

## Nikolas Jaspert

### FISHERMEN, PEARL, WALRUS TOOTH - The Sea in the Middle Ages

Coral and pearls, herring, tuna and whales, amber, narwhal tusks and shells – in this first-ever marine history of the Middle Ages, the acclaimed historian Nikolas Jaspert writes about the close relationship between the sea and mankind across a period of 1,000 years.

His account brings together history with marine biology, geology and geography with archaeology, literary history and art history. It offers a double new perspective on the Middle Ages. The period is usually seen as a time that was predominantly marked by the land. Here, by contrast, the mediaeval millennium is seen from the point of view of the sea. But most of all this book is about the treasures of the sea, its marine creatures and substances, what people knew about the sea and what lived in it, and how they used what they found. This is not just about fishing and catching whales, trading elegant sea silk, fragrant ambergris and imperial purple, however, but also how, for example, religions incorporated the seas into their religious concepts of the world, and especially where and how these treasures of the sea lived.

By turning our traditional, anthropocentric gaze towards the sea and its creatures, Jaspert shows that a consciousness of our fragile dependency on this unique ecosystem influenced the relationship between mankind and the sea back in the Middle Ages. Such a thorough study of the sea in the mediaeval era is surprisingly timely and to date unique.



- About 590 pp. with illustrations
- Germany: Propyläen/Ullstein, March 2025
- Galleys available



**Nikolas Jaspert** (1962 in Melbourne) is Professor of Mediaeval History at the University of Heidelberg. He studied History, Spanish, Art History and English in Berlin and Madrid. After academic posts at the FU Berlin and at the University of Erlangen–Nuremberg, in 2005 he obtained a chair as Professor of Mediaeval History at the Ruhr University Bochum. He has been a professor at the University of Heidelberg since 2013.

For many years Nikolas Jaspert was president of the ‘Société Internationale des Historiens de la Méditerranée’ and he is a co-editor of the *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, *Mittelmeerstudien* and *Geschichte und Kultur der Iberischen Welt* as well as various other academic journals.

He is the author of numerous publications about the Reconquista, the history of the Crusades, chivalric orders and the history of the Mediterranean.

**Mirjam Brusius**  
**THE MUSEUM OF LOST OBJECTS**  
**Empire, Destruction and the Myth of Preservation**

The British Museum, the Louvre and the Pergamon Museum are not what we think they are:

Cultural historian Mirjam Brusius presents a compelling reassessment of these national museums, challenging the perception of them as stable and orderly institutions. She critically examines the widely accepted argument that Western museums offer the safest refuge for cultural artifacts. Incidents such as lost and damaged collections, theft scandals, and unsuitable conservation practices paint a different picture. From looted objects stored away and forgotten to communities displaced in the name of heritage preservation, Brusius exposes the contradictions within these institutions.

She reveals that, historically, preservation and destruction have not been opposing forces but rather intertwined phenomena. Museums have been shaped by chance, uncertainty, and chaos—evident in the sale of exhibits at the British Museum, flooding in the Louvre, and wartime destruction at the Pergamon Museum. These institutions, often regarded as safe havens for cultural heritage, have in reality reflected the instability of the societies they emerged from and dominated.

This book highlights the need for museums to move beyond their imperial past and redefine their purpose in the present. By confronting their histories and embracing their dynamic nature, they can transform into relevant and inclusive spaces, playing a vital role in the multicultural societies of the future

A strikingly new perspective on the inner workings of national institutions—and a guide to reimagining our approach to cultural heritage and collective coexistence.

- About 310 pp. with illustrations
- Ms available



**Mirjam Brusius** is a cultural historian with a PhD in the History and Philosophy of Science from the University of Cambridge and an MA from the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. She held research positions at institutions such as the University of Oxford and the German Historical Institute London. In 2023/24 she taught as a Visiting Professor at École Normale Supérieure in Paris.

She is specialized in the history of museums, collecting, and the movement of objects in global contexts. Her work critically examines the role of Western museums in shaping narratives around cultural heritage, with a particular focus on colonial histories and the displacement of artifacts. Brusius has published widely on these topics and is a frequent speaker at international conferences and public debates on the decolonization of museums. She is the initiator of the award-winning project [100 Histories of 100 Worlds in 1 Object](#), which foregrounds Global South voices to achieve a more balanced understanding of museum objects, and she is a regular contributor to media such as the BBC, the [Guardian](#), and major German newspapers and radio stations.

**Frank Trentmann**

**GERMANY AT THE CROSSROADS: A Nation between Past and Future**

A behind-the-scenes look at Germany today to better understand its political, economic and international crises and to assess its potential for renewal

The world is looking at Germany. Ever since the the Federal Republic has appeared to be a model of economic efficiency and political stability. Now German trains are notorious for running late and populists make up the second biggest party in parliament. Since reunification, outsiders have asked, sometimes with trepidation, whether Germans would or could play a greater role on the world stage. The war in Ukraine and now the estrangement of the United States from Europe has made this question urgent. What are the roots of the current German crisis? Will the country be able to turn itself around? And, if it does, can the Germans be trusted?

In this short, accessible book, the renowned historian Frank Trentmann places the current challenges facing the Federal Republic into historical context. Trentmann writes from a unique perspective. With roots in Germany but living in London, he is simultaneously a deeply knowledgeable expert and a critical outsider. In this book, he puts Germany in a historical and comparative perspective, explaining unique features to foreign readers and highlighting major parallels that have tended to be overlooked. The book goes up to the present and includes the tensions with Donald Trump and the German election at the end of February 2025.

- About 210 pp.
- Germany: S. Fischer Verlag, Sept. 2025
- Translation rights: [Elisa.Diallo@fischerverlage.de](mailto:Elisa.Diallo@fischerverlage.de)

**Frank Trentmann**, author of *Empire of Things* and *Out of the Darkness*, is professor of history at Birkbeck, University of London, and at the University of Helsinki. He has taught at Princeton University and has been a visiting professor at the École des hautes études/Paris, the EUI/Florence, St Gallen/Switzerland, and the University of Chicago. He has been awarded the Whitfield Prize, a Humboldt Research Award, the Bochum Historians' Prize and he was a Moore Scholar at Caltech. He grew up in Hamburg and lives in London.

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