

# Historical Fiction: A Selection



19th century to the modern age

January 2008

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## *19<sup>th</sup> Century*

### **Bird of another heaven**

by James D. Houston

**F H8432b 2007**

Sheridan Brody sets out to rediscover his family through the journals of his great-grandmother, Nani Keala, a half-Indian, half-Hawaiian woman who became a consort and confidante to the last king of Hawaii.

### **The Marchesa**

by Simonetta Agnello Hornby

**F A271m 2007**

The beloved child of Baron Domenico Safamita, Costanza Safamita becomes her father's sole heir and is forced to take on the glittering society of Palermo, where she falls in love with a charming but dissolute young marchese.

### **Ravel**

by Jean Echenoz

**F E18r 2007**

Journeying by luxury liner to the United States, where he launches a triumphant grand tour, eccentric curmudgeon and dandy Maurice Ravel travels aboard a series of fabled trains while smoking a precious stash of Gauloises, in an evocation of the last ten years of the music genius's life.

### **The Last Empress**

by Anchee Min

**F M6635L 2007**

This novel continues the story of the resourceful Tzu Hsi, or Empress Orchid, as she is transformed from a strong-willed young woman into a politically savvy leader. She moves from the concubine quarters on to the world stage, while confronting the perilous status of the Chinese empire, social unrest, and devastating personal loss

### **The snake stone**

by Jason Goodwin

**M G656s 2007**

When a French archaeologist arrives in 1830s Istanbul determined to track down a lost Byzantine treasure, the local Greek communities are uncertain how to react.

### **Black Hats: A Novel of Wyatt Earp and Al Capone**

by Patrick Culhane

**F C9673b 2007**

Visiting Brooklyn to assist deputy-turned-sportswriter Bat Masterson during a showdown with Prohibition-era mobsters, detective Wyatt Earp struggles to protect a speakeasy once belonging to the late Doc Holliday from falling under the rule of a young Al Capone.

## **The Companions of Paradise**

**by Thalassa Ali**

**F A3985c 2007**

Torn from her Punjabi husband and stepson by an assassination attempt, Mariana Givens is reunited with her aunt and uncle, but as they try to bring Mariana back into British society in Kabul, she dreams only of Lahore and is forced to make a difficult choice between the ties of blood and her own heart.

## **Liszt's Kiss**

**by Susanne Dunlap**

**F D921L 2007**

Enamored of the celebrated composer and pianist Franz Liszt during a concert, young pianist Anne secures an introduction in spite of her recently widowed father's objections. She finds herself swept up by a shocking family secret that her father will go any length to protect.

## **Blackest Bird: A Novel of Murder in Nineteenth-Century New York**

**by Joel Rose**

**F R7961b 2007**

During the sweltering summer of 1841, High Constable Jacob Hays, New York City's first detective, finds himself investigating a series of brutal crimes. Mary Rogers a young clerk at a Mahattan tobacco shop is found raped and murdered, a scion of a firearms fortune beats his publisher to death with an axe and Tommy an Irish gang leader is accused of killing his daughter, wife and her lover, the leader of a rival gang.

## **Rhett Butler's people**

**by Donald McCaig**

**F M1211r 2007**

Chronicles the life and times of dashing hero Rhett Butler and the people who shaped his world. They were his unyielding father Langston, best friend and onetime slave Tunis Bonneau, former love Belle Watling, and the passionate Scarlett O'Hara.

## **Effigy**

**by Alissa York**

**F Y61e 2007**

Dorrie, a solitary child with a mass of black hair, spends her spare time learning the art of taxidermy, completely fascinated by the act of bringing new and eternal life to the bodies of the dead. At fourteen, her parents marry her off to Erastus Hammer, a polygamous horse breeder and renowned hunter, who puts her to work as creator of trophies of his most impressive kills.

## **Heyday**

**by Kurt Andersen**

**F A5443h 2007**

Benjamin Knowles, a young English gentleman, heads for America to build a new life for himself. He falls in love with New York actress and sometime prostitute Polly Luckin. He

meets her troubled war-veteran brother Duff, and befriends journalist Timothy Skaggs. Then they all decide to head west to seek their fortunes in the gold fields of California.

### **The Conjurer**

**by Cordelia Frances Biddle**

**M B584c 2007**

The disappearance of her father, a wealthy financier in 1842 Philadelphia, draws Martha Beale into an alliance with Thomas Kelman as they investigate the case, one that could be tied to a series of ritual slayings of young prostitutes.

### **By a Lady: Being the Adventures of an Enlightened American in Jane Austen's England**

**by Amanda Elyot**

**F E522b 2006**

During an audition for a play about Jane Austen, New York actress C. J. Welles is transported back in time to Bath, England, at the turn of the nineteenth century, where she is befriended by the eccentric Lady Euphoria Dalrymple, falls for Owen Percival, the Earl of Darlington, the cousin of Jane Austen, and finds herself torn between two different eras.

### **Against a Crimson Sky**

**by James Conroyd Martin**

**F M3811a 2006**

This novel tells the stories of four characters who are irrevocably linked in the aftermath of Poland's violent dissolution in 1794, a break culminating in the doomed 1812 winter march into Russia.

### **Devotion: A Novel Based on the Life of Winnie Davis, Daughter of the Confederacy**

**by Julia Oliver**

**F O483d 2006**

The life of Varina Anne Davis, the youngest daughter of Confederate president Jefferson Davis, is re-created in a novel that portrays a young woman who became a cultural symbol of the lost South and whose conflicted existence reflects the tenor of the country following the Civil War and its aftermath.

### **Fort Pillow**

**By Harry Turtledove**

**F T962f 2006**

A tale based on the events of the controversial 1864 Fort Pillow Massacre traces the Confederacy attack against the mixed-race Union garrison at Fort Pillow, a battle led by ruthless cavalry commander Nathan Bedford Forrest that resulted in the deaths of nearly every African-American troop.

## **An Imperfect Lens**

**by Sally Beauman**

**F R741im 2006**

Twenty-seven-year-old Louis Thuillier, a protege of Louis Pasteur arrives in 1880s Alexandria, Egypt, as part of a French expedition searching for the source of the cholera epidemic raging through the city, and falls in love with Este Malina, the daughter of a respected Jewish doctor, but their growing love is threatened by the epidemic, intrigue, and political unrest.

## **Intoxicated: A Novel of Money, Madness, and the Invention of the World's Favorite Soft Drink**

**by John Barlow**

**F B258i 2006**

In an over-the-top spoof of the \$200 billion soft drink industry, midget Rodrigo Vermillion is a savvy schemer. His genius for persuasion finally pays off when, in a chance meeting on a train, he convinces Victorian woolman Isaac Brookes and his son to invest their fortune in his latest money-making scheme.

## **The Masque of the Black Tulip**

**by Lauren Willig**

**F W7323m 2006**

When a London War Office courier is murdered for the confidential dispatch he carried for an elusive spy known as the Pink Carnation, Henrietta Uppington and Miles Dorrington deciphers a secret message and work with the War Office to prevent the Pink Carnation's assassination by a deadly French spy.

## **Our Lives are the Rivers**

**by Jaime Manrique**

**F M2853o 2006**

A sweeping historical novel offers a fictional account of the life of Manuela Sáenz, a woman who abandoned her position as one of the wealthiest women in Peru to join forces with her lover Simón Bolívar to overthrow the rule of the Spanish conquerors.

## **Saving the World**

**by Julia Alvarez**

**F A4732s 2006**

Suffering from writer's block, Alma finds herself enamored of a story she stumbles upon which involves Isabel, director of La Casa De Expâsitos, who selected twenty-two orphan boys to be live carriers of the smallpox vaccine in 1803.

## **To the Ends of the Earth: The Last Journey of Lewis and Clark**

**by Frances Hunter**

**F H9457t 2006**

By October 1809, Meriwether Lewis was a man in trouble. He should have been well placed for future greatness. But beset by backbiting subordinates and the plotting of Gen. James

Wilkinson, he descended into alcoholism, disease, and possibly madness. Lewis set out in September to journey to Washington, D.C. and died mysteriously en route.

### **The Janissary Tree**

**by Jason Goodwin**

**M G656j 2006**

When the Ottoman Empire of 1836 is shattered by a wave of political murders that threatens to upset the balance of power, eunuch intelligence agent Yashim Togalu conducts an investigation into clues within the empire's once-elite military forces, which had been crushed by the Sultan when they became too powerful.

### **Last Days of Newgate**

**by Andrew Pepper**

**M P424L 2006**

A sometime Bow street runner and sometime crook, Pyke falls under suspicion after a series of murder, and finds himself a prisoner in the Newgate prison. The novel moves from the violent world of 1800s Belfast to the top levels of Machiavellian pre-Victorian politics.

### **The Sultan's Seal**

**by Jenny White**

**M W5853s 2006**

A naked body of a white woman had been found floating in the Bosphorus. For Kamil Pasha, the city's magistrate, there are echoes of a similar murder of an English governess. Sybil is the daughter of the English Ambassador and she uses her connections to help Kamil Pasha. As they work to untangle the threads of both murders, they make powerful enemies.

### **When Gods Die: A Sebastian St. Cyr Mystery**

**by C.S. Harris**

**M H3133wh 2006**

In Brighton, England, in 1811, when the wife of an aging marquis is found dead in the arms of the Prince Regent, wearing an ancient necklace with mysterious ties to Sebastian St. Cyr, Sebastian turns sleuth to investigate the woman's death.

## *20th Century*

### **The air we breathe**

**by Andrea Barrett**

**F B2745a 2007**

Detached from the rest of the country on the eve of World War I, the tuberculosis-stricken residents of an Adirondack lakeside sanatorium languish in their isolation before an enterprising patient initiates a weekly discussion group

## **The Russian concubine**

**by Kate Furnivall**

**F F989r 2007**

Living in exile with her mother in turbulent 1928 China, young Lydia Ivanova, who had fled Russia after the murder of her father by the Bolsheviks, falls in love with Chang An Lo, a young freedom fighter, but their love is threatened by the violence and danger that surrounds them.

## **The savior**

**by Eugene Drucker**

**F D7944s 2007**

Ordered to play for the Jewish prisoners of a Nazi concentration camp, young German violinist Gottfried Keller reluctantly complies in spite of his growing horror about the camp's atrocities and his own culpability in renewing its prisoners' hopes.

## **The chrysalis**

**by Heather Terrell**

**F 73253c 2007**

Hard-driving Manhattan attorney Mara Coyne is asked to defend a prestigious auction house against claims that a mysterious Dutch masterpiece about to be sold is a Nazi wartime theft.

## **Rivalry : a geisha's tale**

**by Nagai Kafu**

**F N147r 2007**

Originally published in 1918, 'Rivalry' is regarded as the masterpiece of Nagai Kafu, a Japanese novelist known for his brilliant renderings of Tokyo in the early years of modern Japan. It is a sweeping story in which sexual politics compete with sisterly affection in a world ruled by material transaction.

## **The visible world**

**by Mark Slouka**

**F S6342v 2007**

Growing up in New York as the American-born son of Czech immigrants, the narrator journeys to Prague as an adult in the hope of learning more about his mother, Ivana, her love affair with a member of the Czech Resistance, and their possible involvement in the assassination of a high-ranking Nazi official.

## **Ascent**

**by Jed Mercurio**

**F M556a 2007**

Rising from the disadvantages of a Stalingrad orphanage to the prestige of the cosmonaut corps, Yefgenii Yeremin struggles with the covert nature of his Korean War missions, which cause his heroics to go unreported, and pursues glory when he is called to join the race to the moon.

## **At Some Disputed Barricade**

**by Anne Perry**

**F P4621a 2007**

In 1917, when an arrogant and incompetent British commander turns up dead, a reluctant Joseph Reavley searches for the truth about the crime and about the twelve men accused of the murder. Racing against time and journeying behind enemy lines, he strives to find the individual responsible, while the fierce fighting continues along the Western front of World War I.

## **Lust, caution : the story**

**by Eileen Chang**

**F Z633Lu 2007**

An espionage thriller set against the backdrop of World War II Shanghai recounts the relationship between Mr. Yee, a powerful political figure, and Wang Chia-chih, a young woman who is swept up in a perilous game of emotional intrigue.

## **A hatred for tulips**

**by Richard Lourie**

**F L892h 2007**

In modern-day Amsterdam, an elderly man named Joop describes his desperate efforts to feed his starving family during the Nazi occupation of World War II and reveals how his struggle to provide for them set in motion a horrifying chain of events.

## **The kingdom of Ashes**

**by Robert Edric**

**F E241k 2007**

In spring of 1946, Alex Foster interrogates a succession of lesser war criminals, deciding their futures in the soon-to-be-reborn Germany.

## **Changing Light**

**by Nora Gallagher**

**F G162c 2007**

Fleeing a crumbling marriage in New York for rural New Mexico, Eleanor falls in love with the disoriented, ill man she rescues. But she is unaware that he is Leo Kavan, a troubled scientist who has gone AWOL from the Los Alamos atomic bomb project.

## **Killing Ché**

**by Chuck Pfarrer**

**F P523k 2007**

In 1967 CIA agent Paul Hoyle is sent to Bolivia with a team of Green Berets to eliminate a threatened communist insurgency and its leader Ernesto Che Guevara. Hoyle becomes involved with an unlikely ally, an illegal KGB operative pursuing a deadly Soviet agenda, that puts Hoyle on a collision course with the murder of Che Guevara.

## **The Moments Lost: A Midwest Pilgrim's Progress**

**by Bruce Olds**

**F O446m 2007**

Franklyn Shivs works as a newspaper reporter in turn of the century Chicago, to which he is ill-suited as he loves the bohemian life. Assigned to cover the bloody, Wobbly-led 1913 copper mine strike in northern Michigan, Franklyn is drawn into an illicit and passionate affair with one of the strike's most militant leaders. When she becomes pregnant with their child, he is faced with a decision, he must either betray himself or endure the loss of the woman he loves, the consequences of which must not only impact the strike's outcome but test the full mettle of his humanity.

## **Fellow Travelers**

**by Thomas Mallon**

**F M2552f 2007**

In early 1950's Timothy Laughlin, a recent college graduate and devout Catholic, arrives in Washington D.C. to join the crusade against Communism, only to find himself falling for Hawkins Fuller, a State Department official. He begins his struggle to reconcile his political convictions, his love for Fuller, and his devotion to his faith.

## **Stormy Weather**

**by Paulette Jiles**

**F J613s 2007**

Witnessing the rise and loss of her family's oil business in the wake of her father's gambling problems, proud young Jeanine accompanies the other women in her family to an abandoned farm when her father dies under dubious circumstances.

## **Tallgrass**

**by Sandra Dallas**

**F D145t 2007**

Her life turned upside-down when a Japanese internment camp is opened in their small Colorado town, Rennie witnesses the way her community places suspicion on the newcomers when a young girl is murdered. The event prompts Rennie's own perspective to change and the discovery of dangerous secrets.

## **The Time it Takes to Fall**

**by Margaret Lazarus Dean**

**F D2822t 2007**

Dreaming of a future in space travel while growing up in 1980s Cape Canaveral, young Dolores Gray struggles with the harsh realities of her increasingly unstable home life and is shocked by the devastating 1986 explosion of the space shuttle Challenger.

## **The Visible World**

by Mark Slouka

F S6342v 2007

Growing up in New York as the American-born son of Czech immigrants, the narrator journeys to Prague as an adult in the hope of learning more about his mother, Ivana, her love affair with a member of the Czech Resistance, and their possible involvement in the assassination of a high-ranking Nazi official.

## **Up in Honey's Room**

by Elmore Leonard

F L5813u 2007

Secretly passing intelligence through a spy ring while running a butcher shop in Detroit, Walter Schoen becomes estranged from his wife and is targeted by Marshals serviceman Carl Webster, who believes he is hiding an escaped prisoner of war.

## **We Shall Not Sleep: A Novel of World War I**

by Anne Perry

F P4621we 2007

With the war coming to a close, chaplain Joseph Reavley and his family learn that the identity of the sinister ideologue called the Peacemaker is about to be revealed by a German counterpart, but the family must first solve the mystery of a murdered nurse.

## **In Dublin's Fair City**

by Rhys Bowen

M B7864i 2007

Searching for the long-lost sister of an Irish-American impresario, P.I. Molly Murphy leaves turn-of-the-century New York to head back to her native Ireland, only to be confronted by the murder of her maid and the disappearance of a famed Irish actress.

## **Murder in Chinatown: A Gaslight Mystery**

by Victoria Thompson

M T477mc 2007

Midwife-turned-sleuth Sarah Brandt encounters a group of Irish women without family, who are married to Chinese men in the same predicament, and finds herself searching for a new mother's half-Irish, half-Chinese niece.

## **Away**

by Amy Bloom

F B655a 2007

Arriving in America alone after her family is destroyed in a Russian pogrom, Lillian Leyb receives word that her daughter Sophie might still be alive and embarks on a risky odyssey that takes her from New York's Lower East Side to Siberia to find the missing girl.

## **Another Green World**

**by Richard Grant**

**F G762a 2006**

The fates of four Americans--failing restaurateur Ingo Miller; Marty Panich, who works for the Roosevelt administration; expatriate Isaac Tadzieski; and journalist Sammy Butler--who meet in 1929 at a youth summit in the mountains of Germany intertwine as they uncover information about Hitler's Final Solution.

## **City of Shadows**

**by Ariana Franklin**

**F F8313c 2006**

In a decadent and turbulent Berlin of the 1920s and 1930s, Nick, a scheming cabaret owner, enlists the aid of his secretary, Esther Solomonova, to pass off a woman in a local asylum as the Grand Duchess Anastasia, daughter of the murdered Russian czar, in order to claim the Romanov fortune, only to discover that they have unleashed a nightmare of murderous violence.

## **The Communist's Daughter**

**by Dennis Bock**

**F B6652c 2006**

Bock fictionally reinvents Bethune as a man with an idealistic heart, but who is tragically addicted to being a part of history, who practices medicine and preaches peace, but loves the glories of war. He imagines Bethune writing long letters to a daughter he conceived with a Swedish woman he met during the Spanish Civil War, a woman who, unbeknownst to Bethune, may be a spy. The novel is filled with historical detail and remarkable accounts of war and battle, and most powerfully describes moments of Bethune's romances and psychological flaws.

## **The Foreign Correspondent**

**by Alan Furst**

**F F991f 2006**

In 1939 Paris, the murders of an Italian political émigré--editor of a clandestine newspaper opposing Italian facism--and the wife of a French politician by OVRA, Mussolini's secret police, brings new danger to his successor, Carlo Weisz, who finds himself the target of OVRA, MI6, Stalin's NKVD, and Hitler's Gestapo as the war in Europe escalates.

## **Half of a Yellow Sun**

**by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

**F A2352h 2006**

Re-creates the 1960s struggle of Biafra to establish an independent republic in Nigeria, following the intertwined lives of the characters through a military coup, the Biafran secession, and the resulting civil war.

## **The Lightning Keeper**

by **Starling Lawrence**

**F L423L 2006**

Arriving in New York in 1914, inventor Toma Pekocevic designs a powerful water turbine that leads to a career within General Electric and a love affair with Harriet Bigelow, the daughter of a New England dynasty that has fallen on hard times.

## **Rasputin's Daughter**

by **Robert Alexander**

**F A3772r 2006**

Interrogated by the provisional government of revolutionary Russia on the details of her father's death, Maria, the daughter of Rasputin, remembers her father's powerful influence over the throne and her struggles over the discovery of his true nature.

## **Resurrection**

by **Tucker Malarkey**

**F M237r 2006**

When Gemma Bastian's father, a renowned British archeologist, suddenly passes away in Egypt, she journeys from postwar London to Cairo to bury his ashes. Yet her investigation into his last project-an attempt to recover and make public the lost Gnostic Gospels-raises troubling questions about his death.

## **Roaring Thunder: A Novel of the Jet Age**

by **Walter J. Boyne**

**F B7928r 2006**

Blending the real-life exploits of aeronautical pioneers with fictional characters, this novel set against the backdrop of the birth of the jet age follows the adventures of American test pilot Vance Shannon and his aviation family.

## **Days of Rage**

by **Kris Nelscott**

**M N424d 2006**

With racial tensions threatening the city of Chicago during the 1969 celebrity trial of the Chicago Eight, African-American private detective Smokey Dalton discovers that his son Jimmy knows a dark secret about the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. The situation that becomes complicated when he stumbles upon a group of skeletons tied to the city's racist past.

## **Interpretation of Murder**

by **Jed Rubinfeld**

**M R895i 2006**

In 1909, as a sadistic killer stalks Manhattan's wealthiest heiresses, Sigmund Freud is called in by American analyst Dr. Stratham Younger to assist him in interviewing Nora Acton, a hysterical survivor of the killer who can recall nothing about the attack.

## **The Last Full Measure: A Katy Green Mystery**

by Hal Glatzer

**M G549L 2006**

The cruise ship Lurline sails for Hawaii in late 1941 with the Swingin' Sarongs, an all-female band, entertaining the passengers. When the brother of one of the band members is murdered, fellow musician Katy begins to investigate, but she does not know that the United States is about to be attacked by Japan.



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