

## **Film Rights Guide**

### **Spring 2024**

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**Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch GmbH & Co. KG**

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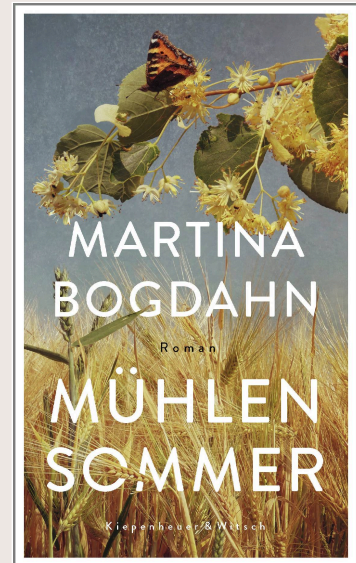
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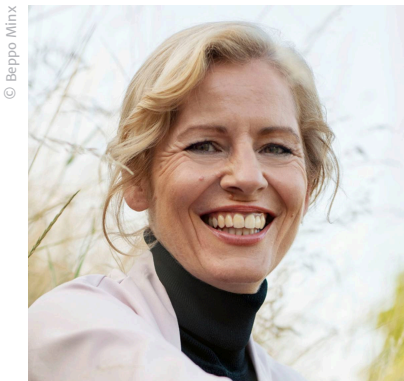
Martina Bogdahn

## Summer at the Old Mill

- A warm and relatable novel about a successful business woman who has to go back to help out on the farm she grew up on
- For readers of Dörte Hansen, Mariana Leky and Katharina Hagen
- English sample translation by Anne Stokes available



April 2024 · 336 pages



© Beppo Minx

**Martina Bogdahn**, born in 1976, grew up in the country, left as soon as she could and became a successful photographer. She now lives in Munich. Once a week, she goes back to her childhood farm, the Mäusleinsmühle, and helps her mother in her bakery, baking bread following a centuries old recipe using a centuries old stove.

**In *Summer at the Old Mill*, Martina Bogdahn tells the story of a single mother and her life between two worlds. Of a youth in the country and an escape to the city. And of mothers and daughters and family ties that bind as well as connect.**

Maria runs an advertising agency in the city and is the single mother of two teenage daughters. She's on her way to a weekend in the mountains with friends and family when she gets a call from her mother: her father had an accident and is in the hospital. It is not sure if he'll survive. Maria has to go and help her mother with the farm as she cannot manage it alone. Fortunately, you don't forget how to muck out a barn and look after the pigs when you did it every day as a child.

As soon as Maria gets back, memories overwhelm her, and she thinks back on the happy times she spent here with her brother, when they were still best friends. Now, they have been estranged for fifteen years, following a dispute about who should inherit the farm. The question of what will happen to the farm once their parents are gone, comes to a head as their father's life hangs in the balance.

As if in passing, the novel asks the big questions: How do we want to live and where? What do we call home and why? How do our origins shape us? What makes us happy and whole?

Paula Fürstenberg

## Everyday Life, Suspended

- “No need to ask your doctor or pharmacist. This book is more healing than many medications.” – Daniela Dröscher
- For readers of Maggie Nelson and Caroline Wahl
- English sample translation by Lucy Jones available



February 2024 · 320 pages

© Jonas Ludwig Walter



**Paula Fürstenberg**, born in 1987, lives in Berlin. Her debut novel *The Family of Winged Tigers* was published in 2016 and **translated into French**. She has been awarded numerous fellowships for her work. *Everyday Life, Suspended* is her second novel.

**In *Everyday Life, Suspended*, Paula Fürstenberg writes with warmth, vigor, and wit about a special friendship that gets put to the test. She writes about what it means not to function in a world where everything has to function; about the body and how we deal with it; about the power of words; and about where empathy begins – and where it has to end.**

They have been best friends since school. Now, in their early thirties, they share an apartment. Max is an architect; she a writer who has been chronically ill since childhood. Regularly plagued by violent bouts of vertigo, she is dependent on Max. He is the *healthy one*, she the *sick one*. That is how it has always been. But then Max learns that his uncle has died and darkness begins to grow inside him. He has to go to the hospital. All of a sudden, everything is teetering.

What helps the writer in the midst of her emerging friendship woes is writing: the attempt to impose order on the past. So she tells her story – and thus Max’s too – from their childhood in the East after the fall of the Berlin Wall to the faltering present. She reflects on the social conditions that have made them who they are, on being ill – and on the language of bodies.

But thinking and writing alone are not enough for her to come to grips with her troubles. To do that, she has to get up and go dancing, let go, and forget everything. Just a few hours, a few days. And then, suddenly, Max is back again, and the terms of their friendship have to be determined anew.

Robert Habeck, Andrea Paluch

# The Day I Met My Dead Husband

- First published in 2005, adapted for film in 2008



June 2024 · 160 pages

**Andrea Paluch**, born in 1970, lives and works as a writer in Flensburg.

**Robert Habeck**, born in 1969, was a writer before becoming a politician. He is currently Germany's Vice-Chancellor. His political writing was translated into French.

Rights to their novel *Haike Hauen's Death* were sold to Denmark (Superlux).

**How well do we know those we love? A great, moving novel about the images we have of each other and the paths we choose in life.**

Everyone believes that Robert, who has been missing since a shipwreck, is dead, even though his body has never been found. His wife Helene, who has stayed behind with their two children, is the only one who continues to believe that he will return.

One evening, when she is persuaded by her old friend Matthias to go to a concert, she suddenly finds herself face to face with her husband during the interval. But he claims not to know her. Is it really Robert? Convinced that he is only pretending to be someone else, Helene begins a journey through the night between truth and delusion.

Maxim Leo

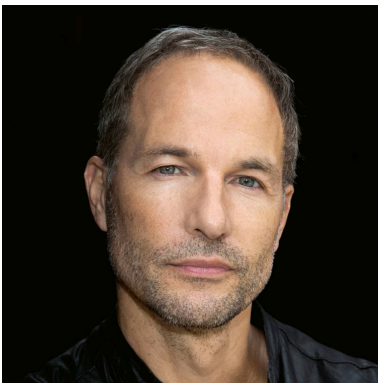
## Forever Young

- Imagine a drug that can stop the aging process...
- SPIEGEL–bestselling author Maxim Leo’s sophisticated and extremely entertaining new novel takes actual scientific advances as an imaginative jumping-off point
- English sample translation by Jamie Bulloch available



March 2024 · 304 pages

© Sven Görlich



**Maxim Leo**, born in East Berlin in 1970, is a trained chemistry lab technician, studied political science, and became a journalist. In 2006, he won the Theodor Wolff Prize. In 2011, he received the European Book Prize for his autobiographical book *Red Love. The Story of an East German Family*. His bestselling novel *The Hero of Friedrichstrasse Station* was published in 2022. **His works have been translated into several languages.**

**What will become of our lives when age can no longer get the better of us? Clever, brilliantly researched and hugely entertaining, *Forever Young* follows four people whose lives are turned upside down by a new drug.**

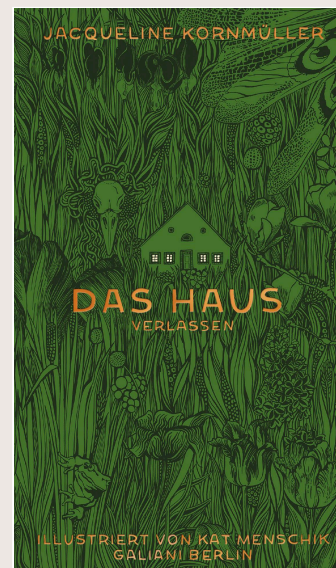
They are study participants in a clinical trial at the Charité hospital in Berlin, the “side effects” of which have unexpected consequences: a biological rejuvenation of several years. Jakob has just met his first love and suddenly reverts back to prepuberty. Jenny has wanted a baby for years and suddenly gets pregnant. Wenger, a seriously ill real-estate patriarch, throws a lavish party to say goodbye to the world, only to bounce back to health again shortly afterwards – to his heirs’ annoyance. And Verena, a two-time Olympic champion in the 100-meter freestyle who already retired a while ago, unexpectedly sets new records at an exhibition swim meet for former star athletes. When the public learns of her rejuvenation, things begin to happen thick and fast.

An incredibly astute novel that follows its protagonists through the craziest year of their lives with warmth and humor – while also, almost as an aside, asking the major ethical and social questions that come up when human beings triumph over aging.

Kat Menschik, Jacqueline Kornmüller

## Leaving the House

- When houses have minds of their own
- Beautifully illustrated by Kat Menschik



February 2024 · 96 pages

**Jacqueline Kornmüller** is a director. Most recently, she staged *The Uncanny Library* by Haruki Murakami at the Odeon Theater in Vienna, inspired by Kat Menschik's illustrations, among other things.

**Kat Menschik** is a freelance illustrator. Since 2016, she has been designing her own series of books, which includes Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (2016), Kafka's *A Country Doctor* (2016), Volker Kutscher's *Moabit* (2017) and E. A. Poe's *Uncanny Stories*.

**A poetic, beautifully-illustrated story full of gentle humor about an old fieldstone house that refuses to part with its owner ...**

There are people who not only live in a house, but are magically attracted by its peculiarities. They want to know the house's history. They want to find out when it was built and who lived in it before. For them, a house is a mysterious being that does not open up to everyone.

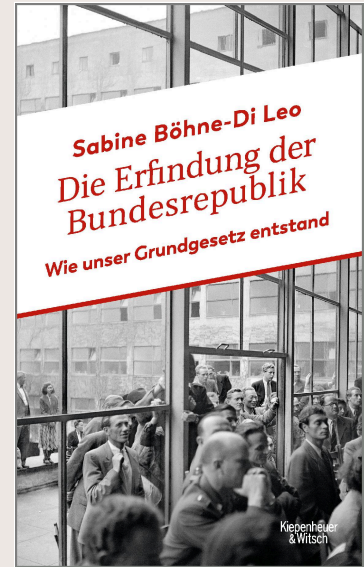
The narrator of this story feels the same way when she moves into a lonely little fieldstone house in the countryside. While the gruff village community ridicules her for her ramshackle hovel, she starts bringing the 140-year-old house back to life - from the attic to the vaulted cellar, from the overgrown vegetable garden to the ancient fruit trees.

But now and then there comes a time when you want to set off for new shores: After ten years, the narrator decides to sell her house. However, she is forced to realize that ending a relationship with a home is not so easy. When prospective buyers come to view it, the house starts behaving in an unexpectedly unruly and strange way...

Sabine Böhne-Di Leo

# The Invention of the German Federal Republic. How the German Constitution Was Formed

- 75th anniversary of the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in May 2024
- The dramatic history of the reinvention of a country, captivatingly told



March 2024 · 224 pages

© Caroline Potthoff



**Sabine Böhne-Di Leo** has worked as a reporter and author for magazines such as *Stern* and *Geo*. Since 2009, she has been professor of journalism and politics.

**In the summer of 1948, major decisions need to be made in Germany. The Western Allies commission 65 men and women to draw up a constitution. Months of passionate discussions begin, teeming with arguments, deceptions, and dreams. This new country: what should it be like?**

Shortly after a new currency is introduced in the three Western zones in the early summer of 1948, the Soviet Union seals off West Berlin: the city is blockaded. The US decides to provide for two million people from the air and sends out "raisin bombers" to feed the besieged population.

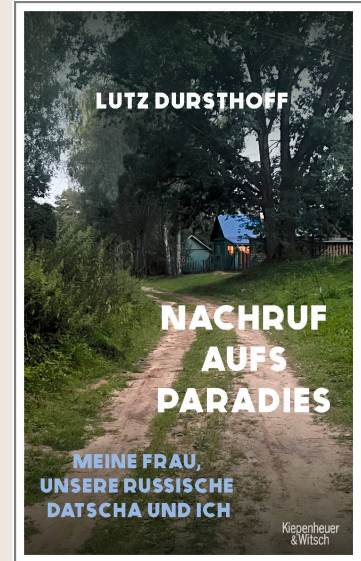
While everything is hanging in the balance in Berlin, the Parliamentary Council meets in Bonn: 61 men and 4 women are tasked with writing a constitution - and everything is at stake: How can there be a constitution without the Eastern zone? Where should the capital be? And what lessons can be learned from the Nazi past?

Sabine Böhne-Di Leo takes us on a fascinating journey back in time to 1948/49, vividly describing everyday life between the rubble and potato fields, analyzing the interests of the world powers, and recounting how the right to freedom of expression and asylum found their way into the German Constitution – and why equal rights for men and women were only incorporated at the last minute.

Lutz Dursthoff

# Obituary for Paradise. My Wife, Our Russian Dacha and Me

- “This was actually supposed to be a cheerful book about life on our Russian dacha”
- A book about the search for small-scale happiness in the midst of large-scale adversity. A book about love for a country that is on an appalling wrong track.



April 2024 · 256 pages

© Melanie Grande



**Lutz Dursthoff**, born in 1953, worked for publishing houses in Frankfurt am Main and Düsseldorf before joining Kiepenheuer & Witsch in Cologne, where he worked as chief nonfiction editor.

**The dream was to find a second home in a small village deep in provincial Russia. Then came the attack on Ukraine. With a light touch and humor, Lutz Dursthoff writes about the adventures and absurdities of rural life in Russia – and records with sadness and anger the many things that this war has destroyed.**

“For years, whenever I told friends about my wife’s and my adventurous trips to our dacha despite the borders being closed due to the pandemic, or about what the wolves had done again during the winter, they had been telling me to write it down.” At long last, Lutz Dursthoff, long-time nonfiction editor at Kiepenheuer & Witsch, had begun to write. But then came the rupture: the atrocity of a brutal war of aggression, waged by the country that had become so familiar to him over the years. How could he continue to tell his tale? The end result is a touching swan song, a nostalgic story of a lost, idyllic world that his Russian-born wife and he had conquered and worked for in rural seclusion – quite literally in the fields, plots, and greenhouses of their dacha. And a subjective testament to the time when war came back to Europe.



Julia Knörnschild

# Maternity Fatigue

- A relieving and helpful book about mental health and motherhood



February 2024 · 240 pages

© Eyecandy Berlin



**Julia Knörnschild is a mother of two young children, successful entrepreneur, influencer and author. In the summer of 2022, however, nothing works anymore. Knörnschild admits herself to a day hospital with symptoms of exhaustion and depression. She is diagnosed with burnout, ADHD and an anxiety disorder. And she realizes: it cannot go on like before.**

In her second book, Julia Knörnschild explains mental illness in a touching and, despite all its tragedy, funny way. She provides insights into her therapy sessions, group meetings and her everyday life as a mother who is not 'functioning'.

Rarely have mental illness and mental health been discussed so personally, especially in the context of motherhood. This taboo needs to finally be broken so that mothers everywhere get the visibility they deserve.

**Julia Knörnschild** is a podcaster, gag machine, book author and professional amateur singer. But above all, she's a mother of two - probably the hardest job of all, which she sometimes manages better, sometimes worse. And that's exactly what she talks about every day with an incredible amount of humor and authenticity.

Marcel Lewandowsky

## What Populists Want. How They Challenge Society – And How to Respond

- The book for the year of elections 2024 (e.g. European elections and US presidential elections)
- The author gives talks on the subject internationally



May 2024 · 336 pages

© privat



**Marcel Lewandowsky**, born in 1982, holds a doctorate and habilitation in political science and has been researching populism, democracy and political parties for over 15 years. He has worked at the Bundeswehr University Hamburg, the University of Greifswald and the University of Florida, among others.

**Giorgia Meloni in Italy, Donald Trump in the USA, the FPÖ in Austria and the AfD in Germany: the rise of populism seems unstoppable - and previous counter-strategies have failed. So what can be done?**

The number of people voting for populists has been increasing for years, but politicians and civil society have so far reacted helplessly. Political scientist Marcel Lewandowsky shows that one key aspect has so far received little attention: The reason many voters are so difficult to win over is not because they reject democracy, but because they consider themselves to be the true democrats - and all others to be enemies of democracy.

The author explains this conflict with the ideology and methods of right-wing populism. Populists elevate their supporters to a "silent majority", castigate the elites and paint a picture of a democracy in permanent crisis. They promise their voters "real" democracy: where they govern, the people shall rule unhindered.

Based on this analysis, the book outlines counter-strategies that work on several levels. Clear, descriptive and with many examples from Germany and abroad, *What Populists Want* shows how to face the great populist wave.

Melanie Möller

# The Incapacitated Reader. For the Freedom of Literature – A Polemic

- Clear words, open statements: unconditional passion for art and literature



April 2024 · 240 pages



**Melanie Möller** is Professor of Latin Studies at the Free University of Berlin and writes regularly for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. In 2016, she published her book *Ovid. 100 Pages*, and in 2017 she organized the event series *Bimillennium 2017: Ovid and Europe*.

**Literature must be free, wild, allowed to be angry and to hurt - otherwise it loses its appeal, says Melanie Möller. It must remain a free space for unguarded thoughts and sharp words. The author delivers a wild ride through several centuries of literary history in the fight for the freedom of the word.**

Banning the bible from schools in Utah and classics from curricula and textbooks, smoothing out translations, censoring classics, politically correct guidelines for literature, sensitivity reading, trigger warnings, banning 'difficult' vocabulary: a disaster, says Melanie Möller, and warns against underestimating the reader. There must be no compromises when it comes to art. If you water it down, you incapacitate the reader - and the reader is smarter than you think.

*"What is lacking is a passionate fight for the autonomy of literature that protects it like an endangered minority - without compromise" - Melanie Möller*

Eric Pfeil

# Ciao, Amore, Ciao

- Discover Italy through its music Part II



May 2024 · 368 pages



© Alfred Jansen

**Eric Pfeil** was born in 1969. At the turn of the millennium, he was the producer of the legendary music show *Fast Forward* and has been a sought-after TV author ever since. He writes about film, literature and pop music for *FAZ* and *Rolling Stone*, among others. His first "travel guide without sights," *Azzurro*, was celebrated by critics and the public alike in 2022 and was on the SPIEGEL bestseller list for weeks.

**Music is a constant presence in Italy. Accordingly, more than any other art, music is able to explain the country and to answer all the questions that have been asked thousands of times.**

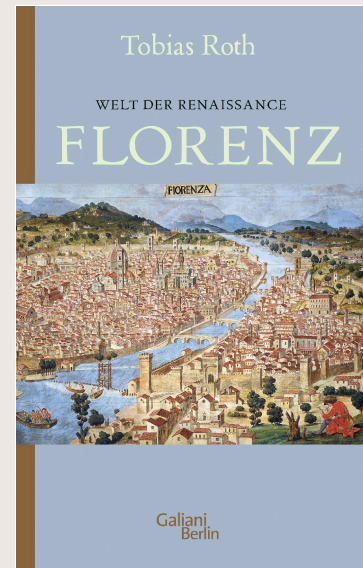
In a country where operatic arias are whistled, monuments to famous singers stand everywhere and the ratings of a five-day song competition outshine any sports broadcast, there is simply no getting around music.

Through heart-wrenching canzoni and irresistible catchy tunes, Eric Pfeil tells the story of a country torn between dolce vita and impenetrable bureaucracy, of Silvio Berlusconi's legacy, of the Mafia and social upheaval, the success story of Italy's uncoolest band and, again and again, of love.

Tobias Roth

## World of the Renaissance: Florence

- An exciting travel companion to Florence
- Many great and surprising texts and numerous illustrations from the magnificent book art of the time



March 2024 · 208 pages



© Axel Gundermann/YEARROUND/MUNICH

**Tobias Roth**, born in 1985, is a freelance author, co-founder of the publishing house *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis*, poet and translator. Roth received his doctorate with a study on the poetry and philosophy of the Italian Renaissance. His remarkable tome *World of the Renaissance* was published in 2020. This was followed in 2023 by *World of the Renaissance: Naples*, the first volume in the subsequent city series.

**No city is more closely associated with the heyday of the Renaissance than Florence: the Medici, dramatic power struggles, astonishing art, seemingly dangerous educational programs open to women, grandiose literature and essential philosophy. Tobias Roth gives their representatives a voice in this anthology and portrays a city full of grandeur and violence, chaos and beauty.**

Florence has become fabulously rich through textile trade and credit transactions. The city on the Arno is home to magnificent libraries and it is characterized by famous artists and seemingly exotic literary circles. Even the rulers wrote poetry, art and science flourished and the highest state office in Florence was occupied almost continuously by excellent literary figures from 1375 to 1458. Michelangelo, Botticelli, Ficino, Poggio, Bracciolini, Leonardo da Vinci, Pico della Mirandola, Donatello, Alberti, Machiavelli - they were all part of this microcosm of an entire high culture.

Tobias Roth provides a highly knowledgeable and humorous guide through the period and its enormous turbulences. The diary of spice merchant Luca Landucci, a unique live report from the street, offers insights into everyday life in the city. There are riots, murder plots and commotions - but above all there are poems of timeless beauty, ideas that changed the world, art to amaze, grandiose architecture, brazen acts of shocking directness, the human-all-too-human in abundance, in short: a flowering of (intellectual) life that is second to none.

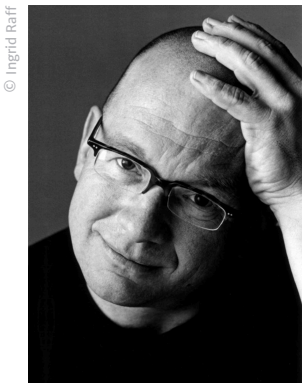
Marco Wehr

## Complex New World and How to Come to Terms with It

- Marco Wehr – a physicist and philosopher – delivers an intelligent analysis of our time and provides the impetus for an overdue social conversation



April 2024 · 400 pages



© Ingrid Raiff

**Marco Wehr**, born in 1961, is a physicist and holds a PhD in philosophy. An award-winning author and speaker, he examines questions of predictability, complexity, and the relationship between the brain and computers. He writes for the *FAZ*, among other outlets, and has published much-discussed books on topics such as chaos theory and the significance of the hand for human thought.

**Why has everything become so complicated? Or have you ever managed to cancel something as mundane as your phone contract without running into any problems? Marco Wehr shows us where complexity is unavoidable and where humanity is maneuvering itself into chaos.**

What is it about complexity traps, about the impenetrable chaos of information that besieges us, overwhelming our brains and even high-performance computers? An astonishing number of them exist. Just take the inscrutable global economic system or the European Union's convoluted verbiage, which often even the experts can't understand.

When such manmade complexity then intersects with natural complexity – when, for example, a mutated virus appears in a strained, fragile society – the result can be the emergence of complexity monsters like the coronavirus pandemic. In these cases, the world becomes more than we can handle and we are forced to confront the urgent question of what we can do to avoid such situations.

Marco Wehr picks apart the tangles of complexity and shows us which threads we need to pull on to find our way back to a more contented and self-determined life.