

*ACTES SUD*  
& *MAISONS ASSOCIÉES*

Literature  
Essays

---

August-November 2023



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### LITERATURE “RENTRÉE” ACTES SUD “DOMAINE FRANÇAIS”

Clara Arnaud,

*Et vous passerez comme des vents fous* (publication on August 23).....page 5

Clément Camar-Mercier,

*Le Roman de Jeanne et Nathan* (publication on August 23).....page 6

Yasmine Chami, *Casablanca Circus* (publication on August 23).....page 7

Sylvain Coher, *Étraves* (publication on August 23).....page 8

Mathias Enard, *Désserter* (publication on August 23).....page 9

Loïc Merle, *Provinces de la nuit* (publication on August 23).....page 10

Lyonel Trouillot, *Veilleuse du Calvaire* (publication on August 23).....page 11

### LITERATURE ACTES SUD

Collectif, *Femme, Rêve, Liberté* (publication on October 4).....page 12

### LITERATURE “RENTRÉE” GAÏA

Mouloud Akkouché, *Jardin des oubliés* (publication on August 23).....page 13

### LITERATURE “RENTRÉE” INCULTE

Daniel Fohr, *La vague qui vient* (publication on August 23).....page 14

### LITERATURE INCULTE

Jérémie Lefebvre, *Léa V.* (publication on October 4).....page 15

### LITERATURE “RENTRÉE” ROUERGE “LA BRUNE”

Georgia Doll, *Petit monde* (publication on August 23).....page 16

### NOIR FICTION “ROUERQUE NOIR”

Olivier Ciechelski, *Feux dans la plaine* (publication on September 6).....page 17

François Weerts, *Les morts de Beauraing* (publication on October 4).....page 18

### LITERARY ESSAY

Régine Detambel, *Lire pour relier* (publication on September 6).....page 19

### LITERARY ESSAY “UN ENDROIT OÙ ALLER”

Jean-Michel Ribes,

*Dictionnaire de mes amis recommandables* (publication on September 6).....page 19

### JOURNAL “SOLIN/ACTES SUD”

Olga et Sasha Kurovska avec Élisabeth Mignot,

*Le Journal d’Olga et Sasha* (publication on September 6).....page 20

### ESSAY “QUESTIONS DE SOCIÉTÉ”

Ali Laïdi, *La Chine*

*ou le réveil du guerrier économique* (publication on September 13).....page 21

### ESSAY “LE SOUFFLE DE L’ESPRIT”

Myriam Ackermann Sommer et Michaël de Saint Cheron,

*Revenir* (publication on October 18).....page 22

### DRAMA “ACTES SUD-PAPIERS”

Dominique Blanc, *Chantiers, je* (publication on August 16).....page 23

Vincenzo Mazza, *Jacques Copeau* (publication on September 6).....page 23

Simon Abkarian, *Hélène après la chute* (publication on November 1).....page 24

Laurent Gaudé, *Même si le monde meurt* (publication on November 15).....page 24

Kery James, *À huis clos* (publication on October 4).....page 25

Patrice Chéreau, *Journal de travail, tome 5* (publication on October 4).....page 26





Clara Arnaud

## Et vous passerez comme des vents fous

And You'll Blow Like Wild Winds

Novel (publication on August 23)

Gaspard is a Pyrenean shepherd who is preparing to take his flock up to the mountain pastures for the summer, but he is still haunted by an accident that occurred a year previously.

Meanwhile, the brown bear expert Alma has just joined the National Biodiversity Centre after stints in Spain and Alaska. She now has to carve herself out a place in a team of men who have little respect for her domain of expertise or her ethologist's methods.

From the spring to the autumn, the two thirtysomethings cross paths every now and then in the uplands. But when alone in his cabin, Gaspard has to contend with his demons and spectral presences that haunt the mountain pastures: the late shepherdess Ilia and the female bear that may have been responsible for her tragic death. Alma, convinced that man and bear can happily co-exist, doggedly tries to track down the bear, but it constantly eludes her.

Tensions soon crystallise around a large female bear, whose repeated attacks revive old debates, illustrating the crisis in which pastoralism finds itself and highlighting conflicting visions of the mountains. The animal becomes the enemy to be killed.

In this valley where the eternal struggle between man and nature is being played out once again, snapshots of the life of a young bear handler who left with his charge to make his fortune in New York at the dawn of the twentieth century resonate powerfully with the present.

Exploring our relationship with untamed nature and the ways in which we inhabit the world, *Et vous passerez comme des vents fous* affords a striking and meticulously researched immersion in modern pastoral life – its moments of exaltation and communion, as well as the challenges posed by climate change and predation. Clara Arnaud has produced a sensual, immersive and earthy novel that celebrates the beauty of the mountains while acknowledging their violence, establishing herself in the process as one of the major new voices of French nature writing.

11,5 × 21,7 / 384 pages / 22,50 €

*Clara Arnaud was born in 1986 and has lived in China, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Honduras. She is the author of several travel essays and novels. Following on from La Verticale du fleuve (2021), Et vous passerez comme des vents fous is her second novel to be published by Actes Sud.*

LISTED FOR THE 2023 PRIX DU ROMAN FNAC

RIGHTS SOLD IN GERMAN (ANTJE KUNSTMANN)





## Clément Camar-Mercier

### Le Roman de Jeanne et Nathan

The Novel of Jeanne and Nathan

Novel (*publication on August 23*)

DEBUT  
NOVEL

Jeanne is well aware that hundreds of thousands of porn video addicts are getting off on seeing her have rough sex and apparently enjoying it – a pleasure that she resolutely fakes during the hateful filming of the videos. She takes a professional attitude to everything that is demanded of her as an actress and performs of her own volition, though it could be that the cocaine is shielding her from feeling debased by it all.

She does yet known Nathan, who lives in an entirely different world, giving classes on American cinema, working on an improbable PhD, and taking drugs day in day out to block out the futility of his existence. When they finally do meet in a peculiar garden, it is a dazzling moment that suddenly makes life emphatically worth living. A state of being that seems destined to last, provided all the violence of their prior lives does not catch up with them... By turns raw, dreamlike, romantic and tragic, *Le Roman de Jeanne et Nathan* depicts the full gamut of addictions through which our age distorts its own reality, saturates itself with its own images, projects itself into them and observes itself, imbibing illusions, perceptions, vibrations and sensations as if no satisfaction or enchantment were possible beyond.

Unless the ecstasy of love – the eternally magic potion of Tristan and Isolde – can enchant for good, until the very final act, the heroes of this audaciously lucid debut novel.

14,5 × 24 / 352 pages / 22,50 €

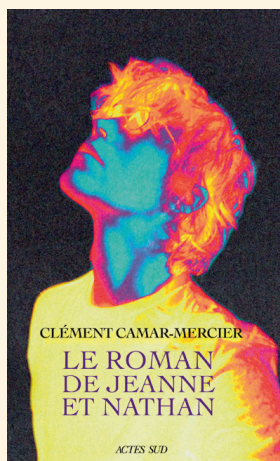
*Clément Camar-Mercier is a 36-year-old playwright and translator. His many projects include a new translation of the complete works of William Shakespeare.*

**AWARDED BEST 2023 DEBUT NOVEL BY  
TRANSFUGE MAGAZINE**

**LISTED FOR THE 2023  
PRIX STANISLAS  
PRIX LE MONDE DES LIVRES  
PRIX MÉDUSE**

**PRIX RÉVÉLATION D'AUTOMNE DE LA SGDL  
PRIX DU CHEVAL BLANC**

**RIGHTS SOLD IN JAPANESE (HAYAKAWA)  
ENGLISH SAMPLE AVAILABLE**





**Yasmine Chami**  
**Casablanca Circus**

Novel (*publication on August 23*)

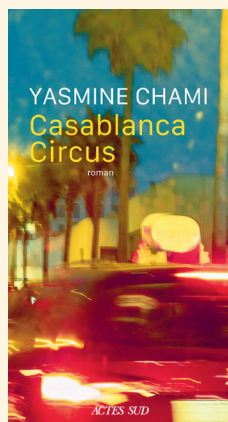
At the heart of this book is the fate of one of the oldest shanty towns of Casablanca. When the powers that be decide to rehouse its inhabitants miles outside the city centre, the future of a well-off couple – he is a young architect and she is a historian – is suddenly placed in doubt. They find themselves in fundamental disagreement over the political and financial implications of this affair, which undermines their passionate convictions and brings starkly home to them the octopus-like nature of urban planning, the violence of globalisation, and the downsides of putting their careers first.

With this city where beauty and poverty are interwoven as her setting, Yasmine Chami paints an unstintingly lucid portrait of masculinity and society's championing of virility, casting a subtle and empathetic light on these themes. At the same time she resolutely brings a critical perspective to bear on her country's ruling authorities.

Yasmine Chami's forceful and rigorous voice, her love for Morocco and affection for France, and her understanding both of how their history has shaped these two countries and of their current realities combine to make her novels unique among contemporary feminist works.

11,5 × 21,7 / 208 pages / 20 €

*Yasmine Chami lives and works in Casablanca.  
This book is his fifth novel, and all her previous  
ones have also been published by Actes Sud.*





## Sylvain Coher

### Étraves

Making Landfall

Novel (publication on August 23)

In the beginning was the Flood. Planet Earth became Planet Water. Only a handful of archipelagos emerged above the surface here and there, fiercely defended by the few remaining land-based people. Everyone else was afloat on the high seas.

Aboard *The Ghost* a community has rebuilt itself, complete with new customs, a new hierarchy and a New Law. The sailors, ravaged by scurvy, hunger and salt, hold out as best they can, and very few of them can remember the ancient times. It is as though life has virtually come to a halt on the boundless ocean and that survival is all that can reasonably be hoped for.

Standing at the prow one evening, Little Ginger confronts the rest of the crew. His mother Cuddle has just died, and in this world of rising waters he quietly gave her his word that he would find a little island where he could bury her with dignity – even if this means betraying his own, taking flight, and disappearing alone into this turbulent expanse.

Leaping from one boat to the next in search of this promised land and contending with the wrath of both the elements and his fellow man, he risks his own life to defend his mother's dead body as he travels to the ends of the ocean and the forbidden garden.

In *Étraves*, Sylvain Coher reinvents the seafaring tale in striking prose that is both precise and playful, as if freshly emerged from the floods. He serves up a timeless odyssey that nevertheless resonates forcefully with certain preoccupations of our current age and above all reacquaints us with the incomparable pleasures of fiction and all the stories that our imaginations are capable of engendering.

11,5 × 21,7 / 256 pages / 21,80 €

*Born in 1971, Sylvain Coher has published with Actes Sud Carénage (2011), Nord-nord-ouest (2015, Prix Ouest-France / Étonnants Voyageurs, Prix des Mémoires de la Mer, Prix Encre Marine, Prix de la Ville d'Asnières) and Vaincre à Rome (2019). A lover of the sea and of boats, he always has one eye on the weather when he writes.*

**LISTED FOR THE 2023 PRIX LANDERNEAU**



**Mathias Enard****Désserter**

Deserting

Novel (*publication on August 23*)RIGHTS SOLD IN  
UK ENGLISH (FITZCARRALDO)

GERMAN (HANSER)

ITALIAN (E/O)

SPANISH (PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE)

From the heart of a familiar yet inscrutable Mediterranean scrubland emerges a dirty and exhausted man. An unknown soldier who has escaped from an unspecified war, he seems to be trying to flee his own violent tendencies and find refuge in solitude, beyond the battlefields in the lands of childhood. He wants to travel north to the border, but an unexpected encounter forces him to alter his plans and reassess the price that he puts on a life.

On 11 September 2001, aboard a small cruise ship on the Havel on the outskirts of Berlin, a scientific conference is taking place to pay tribute to Paul Heudeber, a prodigiously gifted East German mathematician, committed anti-Fascist and Buchenwald survivor who remained loyal to his side of the Berlin Wall even after the collapse of the Communist utopia. He was just as stubborn but lucid when it came to love, his entire life being lived in the shadow of the absence of Maja Scharnhorst and his memories of the time they spent together – the free-spirited, independent and indomitable Maja who was a symbol and political figure of the Willy Brandt years.

Twenty years later, war having returned to Europe, their daughter Irina recalls the improbable cruise onto which the violence of a new era descended and this great love affair that withstood the 20th century: a story full of trials and tribulations that made her what she is but at the same time eludes her.

In this novel Mathias Enard exploits silences and vibrations to economically achieve a fictional richness that is inversely proportional to the words expended. With war seemingly everywhere at every moment, *Désserter* arms us with the images and conjectures we need to confront it.

11,5 × 21,7 / 256 pages / 21,80 €

*All of Mathias Enard's novels are published by Actes Sud: La Perfection du tir (2004, Prix des Cinq Continents de la francophonie), Remonter l'Orénoque (2012), Zone (2008, Prix Décembre, Prix du Livre Inter), Parle-leur de batailles, de rois et d'éléphants (2010, Prix Goncourt des Lycéens), Rue des Voleurs, (2012), Boussole (2015, Prix Goncourt) and Le Banquet annuel de la confrérie des fossoyeurs (2020).*





Loïc Merle

## Provinces de la nuit

Provinces of the Night

Novel (*publication on August 23*)

This is a novel haunted by a first love and the large-scale violence that drags us into history, by those nights when we lie awake, and the events that knock us sideways.

Ismaël meets the radiant but mysterious Réa at school and she becomes his pole star. He follows her to Paris, a city that both absorbs and reveals them – to each other and to themselves. Time passes and the miracle and the wonder fray, as does youth itself, and their paths diverge. How do you rebuild your life after the foundational bricks have collapsed and along with them the initial illusions?

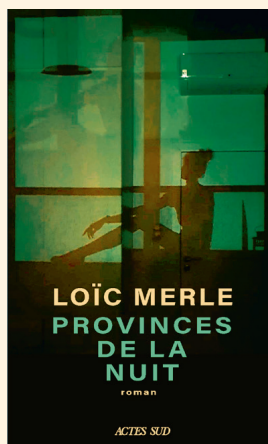
In Réa's absence, Ismaël attempts to reach the various landmarks of a man's life. He becomes a history and geography teacher, gets married, and with a child on the way he embarks on the unmanageable, comical but ruinous project of building a house, which is also a direct confrontation with capitalism. After the terrorist attacks in November 2015, he can no longer block out the world and goes in search of the SEAT used by the terrace gunmen, which takes him to the area where he used to live with Réa.

History and geography peak through the surface of this intimate mapping of an individual's life, just as the novel acts as a palimpsest that reveals some of the most shocking incidents of violence over the centuries through the tarmac of the streets of Paris and the undulations of the countryside.

A roughed-up snapshot of the present age (that furious torrent fed by a past that people are ignorant of), *Provinces de la nuit* is at once the voracious tale of a sentimental and political education, a reluctant post mortem of a first love, a striking refusal to abandon youthful ardour, and a resolute declaration of faith in true freedom and true love.

14,5 × 24 / 336 pages / 22,90 €

*Born in 1978, Loïc Merle has taught history and geography and lived in Germany. He arrived on the literary scene with a bang with L'Esprit de l'ivresse (2013, Actes Sud), which was voted best debut novel of the year by Lire magazine. He is also the author of Seul, vaincu (2015) and La vie aveugle (2017), both published by Actes Sud. He lives in Lyon.*



© Marc Melki



## Lyonel Trouillot

### Veilleuse du Calvaire

The Sentinel of Calvary

Novel (publication on August 23)

The Sentinel of Calvary has reigned over the hill forever. She has been taken for a Madonna, a ghost and a spirit, but she is none of those things. *The Sentinel is a girl who liked the rain. It is always surprising when a voice emerges from a place that was thought to be empty. I am, she says, your duty of remembrance that has chosen the body of a woman to ensure that there are no lies or omissions in the tale. In the present as well as the past, our bodies bear the traces of all the offences and all the rejections. And they are also the path for all the promises.*

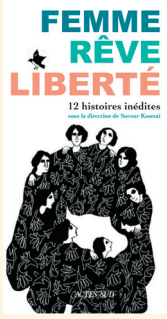
In Lyonel Trouillot's work, female courage is a character in its own right. There is a political dimension to this writer, but poems and novels are his medium of expression. This book is a plaintive cry from the heart from the women of this island (and around the world) who are battling the folly of men and the contempt, lack of respect and hatred of which they are the targets and the victims.

A major novel about the power and resilience of women in which furious voices join in recounting the defence of a hillside where the birds used to sing and the children played. A wild place that a solicitor put up for sale in separate lots one day, as if opening the door to abuses of power and financial malpractice.

11,5 × 21,7 / 176 pages / 19,90 €

*A poet, novelist, short story writer, leader writer, playwright and scriptwriter, Lyonel Trouillot lives in Haiti. He is a teacher and co-director of the review Cahiers du Vendredi, as well as being the co-founder and director of the Atelier du Jeudi Soir. He has published twelve novels with Actes Sud.*





## Collective

### Femme, Rêve, Liberté

Woman. Dream. Freedom

12 short stories - under the direction of Sorour Kasmaï

(publication on October 4)

On 16 September 2022, the 22-year-old student Mahsa Amini was beaten to death in Tehran by the morality police.

She instantly became a symbol, and her murder prompted outrage throughout the land. Three words were on everyone's lips – Woman, Life, Freedom – and women and men marched in Iran. As a homage to these extraordinary acts of courage, twelve female Iranian writers have taken up Sorour Kasmaï's invitation to contribute to this collection of twelve specially written stories. A dozen female voices echoing the cry of the many brave women and men who refuse to give in.

10 × 19 / 192 pages / approx. 16 €

*Contributors: Sahar Delijani, Fahimeh Farsaie, Zahra Khanloo, Sorour Kasmaï, Azar Mahloujian, Nasim Marashi, Aida Moradi Ahani, Bahiyyih Nakhjavani, Asieh Nezam Shahidi, Parisa Reza, Rana Soleimani & Fariba Vafi.*



## Mouloud Akkouché

### Jardins des oubliés

Garden of the Forgotten

Novel (publication on August 23)

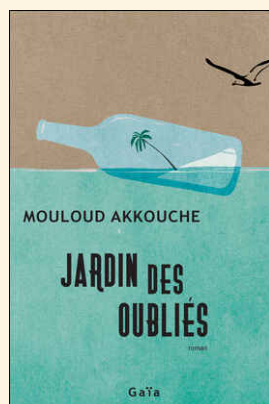
Every morning, an old man ensures the upkeep of an island of which he is the last inhabitant. It is nearly a decade since he last had news from those who used to live there or the rest of humankind. The bodies that occasionally wash up on the beaches do not augur well, but he continues about his business, plugging holes, repainting and patching things up. Until the day when he spots a figure shipwrecked on the shore. It turns out to be a woman who is still alive. Who is she and where has she come from?

There's no way of knowing because she has lost her memory and the use of her voice. And so begins a strange experiment in living together and inventing a world for two. The story of a solitary guardian who has forgotten how to communicate with living people and a woman without memories.

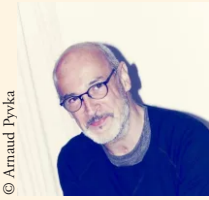
Mouloud Akkouché serves up an elliptical and bewitching tale that intrigues the reader without giving up all its secrets. Bucking the trend for apocalyptic visions, he confers on the end of the world the gentleness of a dream imbued with his poetic imagination, and tells a story that lingers long in the mind.

12,5 × 19 / 192 pages / 19,90 €

*Mouloud Akkouché is the author of short stories, novels, poetry, screenplays and radio plays, and has even written a bogus tourist guide. Having tried his hand at various professions, he now devotes most of his time to filling blank pages. Jardin des oubliés is his first book to be published by Gaïa.*



## LITERATURE "RENTRÉE" INCULTE



© Arnaud Pyka

**Daniel Fohr**

### **La vague qui vient**

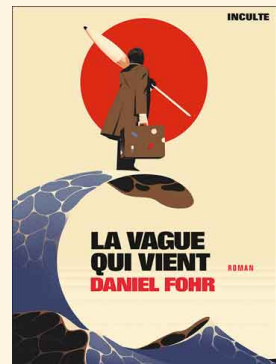
The Coming Wave

Novel (publication on August 23)

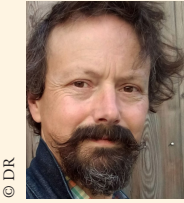
Duly demoralised and penniless after a series of professional setbacks, a cartoonist moves to a small French island to take stock of his life and career. As the seasons pass, he gets to know a whole new community of insular but versatile and colourful people into which he becomes integrated almost despite himself. He is soon asked by the mayor to paint a huge fresco in the village hall that does justice to life on the island and its inhabitants. To carry out the commission to the best of his ability without forgetting or offending anyone, he closely observes and mixes with the islanders around him, from the vain to the ambitious, the inevitable village idiot, the shaman and the forever unreachable gas fitter. There is also the story of the legendary pirate whose lost treasure everyone is hoping to find, and the mysterious recluse – the New Wave actress – who lives in a manor house at the far end of the island and is the keeper of a terrible secret... In *La vague qui vient*, Daniel Fohr creates a delightful microcosm where the customs and manias of a population cut off from the world result in endless misunderstandings and comical situations. Through the prism of his anti-hero, who is expected to become the Michelangelo of the village hall, he proceeds to mercilessly lay bare the foibles of a community marked by its isolation. But behind this hilarious human comedy lurks an ancient tragedy that will force the narrator to turn his fresco into something more than a simple painting.

14 × 19 / 336 pages / 22,50 €

*A teacher, journalist, editor and creative director, Daniel Fohr was born in Algeria and has lived in Vietnam, Italy and Venezuela. He currently lives in Paris and in recent years has devoted himself full-time to writing. His previous works include Un mort par page (Laffont, 2010), L'Éclair silencieux du Catatumbo (Laffont, 2014) and Retour à Buenos Aires (Slatkine & Cie, 2018).*



## LITTÉRAIRE INCULTE



© DR

### Jérémie Lefebvre Léa V.

Novel (publication on October 4)

One rainy day, a man finds himself at a bus shelter staring at an advert for a well-known upmarket high-street fashion brand featuring an equally well-known actress sitting on a bench in museum. Intrigued by this glossy yet alienating image, he wonders what made her do it. Was it for the money? A daft bet? To humiliate the average Joe with her stunning beauty? Or perhaps to incite him to social rebellion? A whole host of other questions, ever more naive and crazy, swirl through his mind as the narrator tries to pierce the deepest secrets of this ad. Eventually, he turns his attention to other matters but some time later is once more stopped in his tracks at the sight of the same actress posing in a similar way for the same brand. Yet again, rather absurdly, he descends down the rabbit hole of intricate and pressing speculations, but this time he decides to write to the actress to express how much this recurring image is troubling him. He further decides that he would like to make this letter publish and so takes it to a publisher, whereupon he takes a perverse pleasure in explaining to him why he shouldn't publish it...

14 × 19 / 96 pages / 13,90 €

*Born in Rouen in 1972, Jérémie Lefebvre is a writer, translator and songwriter based in Paris. He is the author of La Société de consolation (Sens & Tonka, 2000), Danse avec Jésus - une histoire de famille (Lunatique, 2011), Le Collège de Buchy (Lunatique, 2015), Avril (Bouchet-Chastel, 2016) et L'Italienne qui ne voulait pas fêter Noël (Bouchet-Chastel, 2019; J'ai Lu, 2020). On the music front, he works mainly with the singer Pascale Borel. Léa V. is his sixth novel.*





© DR

## Georgia Doll Petit monde

DEBUT  
NOVEL

Small World

Novel (publication on August 23)

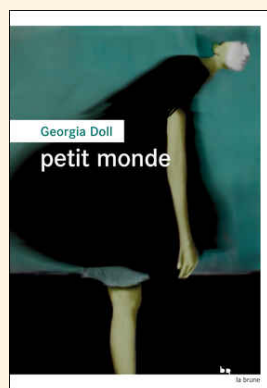
*Fortuna* is the vast property inhabited by the recruits to the *Kommune*, a 1980s community dominated by the figure of Kong, a primary school teacher turned guru. In this virtual fortress separated from the Austrian countryside by high walls, an alternative lifestyle is preached that involves overthrowing capitalism and the nuclear family, and promoting freedom through art. But the reality of this cut-off world is that Kong reigns supreme through a blend of charisma and punishment, subjecting his disciples to an arbitrary hierarchy in which one's status can change in the blink of an eye. In this place which is basically all she has ever known, the young Loly plays out her life with all the earnestness of children, her own position in the system reflecting that of her mother Ariane, one of Kong's original disciples who has nevertheless found herself gradually demoted and separated from her daughter.

With great finesse, Georgia Doll paints the portrait of a child slowly becoming aware of the power games around her as her mother flounders in a never-ending conflict of loyalties. It is also the story of the bond between a little girl and a little boy who are struggling together to remain themselves.

A debut novel that resists an aesthetic of violence but nevertheless explores why people consent to tyranny, how sects exert their influence, and the inner resources that some individuals are able to draw on to throw off the yoke.

14 × 20,5 / 208 pages / 20 €

*A playwright born in Vienna in 1980, Georgia Doll has written many plays in both German and French. Though her mother tongue is German, she now considers herself to be a French author too, and French is the language in which she has chosen to write her first novel.*



## NOIR FICTION "ROUERGUE NOIR"



© DR

**Olivier Ciechelski**

### Feux dans la plaine

The Lights On the Plain

Novel (publication on September 6)

DEBUT  
NOVEL

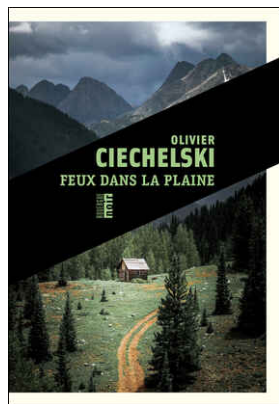
Stanislas Kosinski is an ex-soldier who served in Mali, where he lost his beloved wife. After leaving the army, he bought a chalet and sixty hectares of scrubland and ravines – a place where no one would come and disturb his need for silence – and he now divides his time between house repairs, tending to his vegetable garden, and observing the plants and animals that populate this mountain. But one day Stan discovers that someone has opened up a track across his land. At the same time, a shepherdess called Mathilde installs herself in a caravan nearby with her flock. A low-intensity conflict ensues with local hunters who encroach on his space, until one evening he sees a group of armed men descending on his property.

In this intense debut novel that contains echoes both of the French nature writer Jean Giono and the cinema hero Rambo, Olivier Ciechelski takes us into a land where mere survival is a constant struggle. Through his battered hero, who is sensitive to the beauty and fragility of the world but does not hesitate to kill, we are taken on an adventure across the mountains as Stan gradually severs his links with his fellow man, far from the lights on the plain.

14 × 20,5 / 208 pages / 20 €

*The scriptwriter Olivier Ciechelski was born in 1973 and lives in the Paris area. He has written and directed several short films and documentaries. He is also a script doctor and scriptwriting teacher, and has made several radio documentaries for France Culture. Feux dans la plaine is his first novel.*

LISTED FOR THE 2023  
PRIX ENVOYÉ PAR  
LA POSTE



## NOIR FICTION "ROUERGUE NOIR"



© DR

**François Weerts**

### Les morts de Beauraing

The Dead of Beauraing

Novel (publication on October 4)

A terrible terrorist attack has torn apart the Catholic community, and everything seems to point to young Belgian men who have returned from the land of jihad. Still in shock, the two partners of a modest press agency try to piece together the facts. Yves Demeulemeester activates his contacts in the Islamist milieu, while Léopold Verbist interviews the father of one of the victims. But the plot thickens when Ingrid Mertens, a serving reserve soldier and adoptive mother of a child soldier from the Congo, alerts them to the disappearance of her son, a delinquent on the periphery of urban gangs. The last she heard of him, Jérémie had started frequenting Catholic fundamentalists with a crusader mindset.

In a Brussels that will shortly be ravaged by violent riots, leading to the imposition of martial law, Léo and his associates keep coming across the same enigmatic characters. What are Canon Dillens, the spiritual leader of the 'crusaders', and Officer Athlan, who is exercising ever tighter control over the city's forces of law and order, hiding? In the heavy atmosphere of this fear-ridden capital, François Weerts serves up a masterful and thrilling novel that is as much the portrait of a city as a political intrigue.

14 × 20,5 / 320 pages / 22 €

*Born in Addis Ababa in 1960, François Weerts is a Belgian journalist based in Waterloo. He has published several noir novels, including Les Sirènes d'Alexandrie (Actes Sud, 2008) and Le Chagrin des cordes (Delpierre, 2015).*



## LITERARY ESSAY



Régine Detambel

**Lire pour relier** La bibliothérapie à pleine voix

Practising Bibliotherapy Out Loud

Essay (publication on September 6)

Reading for oneself, and reading for others. In 2020 during the first lockdown, Régine Detambel set up a collective of volunteers to read books out loud. Working in particular with old peoples' homes where people could no longer read themselves due to physical constraints or cognitive difficulties, the Lire & Relier collective used its voices by telephone to attenuate the enforced solitude of the residents. This is the remarkable adventure that Régine Detambel recounts in *Lire pour relier*, revealing some of her theoretical inspirations and describing the broad outlines of her creative bibliotherapy.

10 × 19 / 208 pages / 19,50 €

*A bibliotherapist and teacher of creative bibliotherapy, Régine Detambel has been officially recognised for her contribution to French literature and is a winner of the Prix Anna de Noailles awarded by the Académie française. With Actes Sud, she is the author of the popular essay Les livres prennent soin de nous (2015) and of six novels, the most recent of which, Sarah quand même (March 2023), explores the final years of the divine Sarah Bernhardt on the centenary of her death.*

un endroit où aller  
ACTES SUD

© Giovanni Citradini Cesi



Jean-Michel Ribes

**Dictionnaire de mes amis recommandables**

A Dictionary of My Reputable Friends

(publication on September 6)

Jean-Michel Ribes serves up tender and impertinent portraits of his friends, some better known than others: Roland Topor, his neighbour Philippe, Gérard Garouste, Tonie Marshall, François Hollande, Jean-Pierre Bacri, Fabienne Pascaud and all those he has forgotten but who are there between the lines. An incongruous mosaic of offbeat vignettes celebrating his joyful friendships.

10 × 19 / 224 pages / 19,80 €

*A playwright, director and filmmaker, Jean-Michel Ribes is known for imaginative and subversive fantasy that treads a free creative path between genres. He was in charge of the Théâtre du Rond-Point from 2002 until 2020 and is a champion of contemporary drama. He has published some twenty plays and four illustrated books with Actes Sud.*

# JOURNAL



## Olga and Sasha Kurovska with Élisa Mignot

### Le Journal d'Olga et Sasha

Olga and Sasha's Journal

Solin/Actes Sud (*publication on September 6*)

The French journalist Élisa Mignot met Olga Kurovska a few years ago in Ukraine when the young woman acted as her interpreter. When the Russians invaded on 24 February 2022, she immediately contacted Olga to find out how she and her family were doing. She soon suggested that Olga keep a journal to record what she and her sister Sasha were going through.

Sasha in Kyiv, hiding in an underground car park; Olga in Paris, anxiously awaiting news of her family. Together they recounted the war that has descended on their country, where everything changed from one day to the next and anything could happen. For nearly a year, Élisa Mignot assisted the two sisters with the writing of their war journal, which was published weekly in *Le Monde's M* magazine.

Day in day out the three women devoted themselves to capturing the daily reality of war and, by confiding in Élisa, Olga and Sasha were able to educate a wide French readership about their country and what is happening there. For the journalist, this journal was from the outset an alternative way of reporting on the conflict, embracing a very personal, subjective perspective to convey the private tragedy of a war.

14,5 × 24 / 288 pages / 23 €

*Olga Kurovska is a 35-year-old Ukrainian who grew up in Kyiv and moved to France in 2015. She has worked as an interpreter and French teacher, and these days is a wine merchant, having studied for a diploma in oenology upon her arrival in France. In 2015, she met the journalist Élisa Mignot in Ukraine and translated interviews for her in a report about the Maidan Uprising and then two years later in war-torn Donbass.*

*Her sister Sasha Kurovska is 34 and is a philologist and French teacher by training. For many years she worked in marketing and communications, and since the war she has started teaching French again and working as an interpreter.*

*Élisa Mignot is 38 and is a freelance journalist as well as a reporter and deputy editor in chief at the magazine Polka. She also produces podcasts.*



## "QUESTIONS DE SOCIÉTÉ"

Ali Laïdi

### La Chine

### ou le réveil du guerrier économique

China's Economic War Machine

Essay (publication on September 3)

This essay draws on interviews with some one hundred experts, academics, diplomats, entrepreneurs and ex-members of the security services, as well as various confidential reports, to reveal the existence of a formidable Chinese economic war machine.

It describes the Chinese protagonists and entities who are conducting this war as well as the weapons and techniques being used: forced technology transfers, industrial espionage, disregard of intellectual property rights, PR operations, infiltration, and the more recent use of the extraterritoriality of Chinese law (following in this respect the example of the Americans).

Infiltration extends to Western companies, university laboratories and lecture halls around the world.

The essay also relates China's first efforts at business intelligence in France and how they were welcomed there with open arms, and pays tribute to the early whistleblowers to whom no one listened. It highlights the naivety of the Americans and Europeans and the greed of certain companies, which disregarded the strategic interests of their countries and thought only of their own profits.

It is only recently that the US and EU have finally woken up: Washington has opted to reignite the trade war with Beijing, but Brussels is still dithering.

Both an investigation and a gripping story, this essay analyses the official and behind-the-scenes mechanisms that are driving the Chinese dragon forward in its conquest of the world.

13,5 × 21,5 / 368 pages / 24 €

*A doctor of political science, Ali Laïdi presents the business intelligence news on France 24 television and is a researcher at the École de Pensée sur la Guerre Économique (EPGE). He also lectures regularly at the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale (IHDEN). He is the author of several books, including Les Secrets de la guerre économique (Seuil, 2004), Histoire mondiale de la guerre économique (Perrin, 2016), Le Droit, nouvelle arme de guerre économique. Comment les États-Unis déstabilisent les entreprises européennes (Actes Sud, 2019) and Histoire mondiale du protectionnisme (Passés/Composés, 2022), which won the Prix du Livre d'Économie 2022 and Prix Colbert 2023.*

## ESSAY

### *“le souffle de l’esprit”*



D. R.

Myriam Ackermann Sommer

Michaël de Saint Cheron

Revenir. Dialogues sur les figures du Retour dans la tradition juive

Coming Back. Dialogues on the Theme of Return in Jewish Tradition

(publication on October 18)

A graduate of the École Normale Supérieure and qualified teacher of English, Myriam Ackermann Sommer became at the age of 26 the first Orthodox woman rabbi in France. A philosopher of religions, Michaël de Saint Cheron rediscovered Judaism some forty years ago, guided in his journey by Emmanuel Levinas and Elie Wiesel. In the course of their dialogue, they analyse their return to the Jewish faith after a childhood completely lacking in the trappings of the religion they later embraced, tracing the thought processes that led them back to a tradition that they had been entirely ignorant of. In the process, they also address other essential questions relating to the rediscovery of faith, conversion, and the place of women in religion. The picture of returning to religion that emerges is of something beyond themselves which brings them to see the world from a radically new perspective.

11,5 × 17 / 272 pages / approx. 17 €



## DOMINIQUE BLANC Chantiers, je

The Acting Workshop

Interviews conducted by Laurent Dignonnet, Dominik Manns and Alexandra von Bomhard

"Le Temps du théâtre" series (*publication on August 16*)

In 2023 for the first time at a secondary school, the final-year drama course looked at what being an actor actually involves, with a focus on the career of the Comédie-Française actress Dominique Blanc and three of her best-known roles: Suzanne in *Le Mariage de Figaro* by Beaumarchais, directed by Jean-Pierre Vincent; the lead role in *Phèdre* by Racine, staged by Patrice Chéreau; and the six characters she played in *Angels in America* by Tony Kushner, brought to the Comédie-Française by Arnaud Desplechin.

11,5 × 21,7 / 160 pages / cahier photos de 16 pages / 19,80 €

*Dominique Blanc initially studied architecture but switched to theatre and trained at the prestigious Le Cours Florent drama school in 1980. She has worked on stage under the direction of Jean-Pierre Vincent, Antoine Vitez, Luc Bondy and Patrice Chéreau while pursuing a parallel career in cinema with the likes of Claude Chabrol, Claude Sautet and Louis Malle. She joined the Comédie-Française in 2016 and has won four Césars for her film work and four Molières for her stage performances.*



## VINCENZO MAZZA Jacques Copeau

Introduction and text selection by Vincenzo Mazza

Preface by Béatrice Picon-Vallin

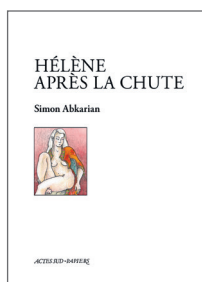
"Mettre en scène" series (*publication on September 6*)

Vincenzo Mazza revisits the extraordinary artistic career of Jacques Copeau, who inspired a whole generation of contemporary artists from Jean-Louis Barrault and Jean Vilar to Jacques Lecoq and Ariane Mnouchkine. This collection of texts affords Copeau the recognition he deserves as a theatre director and cultural entrepreneur, aspects of his life that have sometimes been underrated. The short, compact format and thematic structure are designed to make the essential notions as accessible as possible.

10 × 19 / 144 pages / 15 €

*A lecturer at the Université Paul-Valéry – Montpellier 3, Vincenzo Mazza has been working on the Renaud-Barrault and Copeau archives held at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. His research focuses on the relationship between theatre directors and playwrights in France in the first half of the twentieth century.*

## ACTES SUD-PAPIERS



SIMON ABKARIAN

### Hélène après la chute

Helen After the Fall

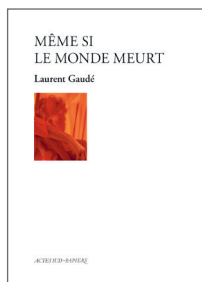
Play (publication on November 1)

Following from *Électre des bas-fonds*, Simon Abkarian takes as his subject another ancient myth – the love story of Menelaus and Helen – and retains its epic and tragic dimension while setting it in an uncompromisingly modern context in order to explore the critical perspectives of contemporary women. Far from being the lascivious but passive character portrayed by Homer, Helen confronts Menelaus over his abusive behaviour and forces him to acknowledge the damage caused by his peers.

15 × 20,5 / 56 pages / approx. 9 €

• **The play, directed by the playwright himself, will be performed for the first time at the Théâtre de l'Athénée in Paris on 7 November 2023.**

*Born in France in 1962, Simon Abkarian, who has Armenian roots, spent his childhood in Lebanon and returned to France in 1977. He learnt his trade as an actor under Gérard Papazian and then Ariane Mnouchkine, and made his cinema debut in 1989, acting in several Cédric Klapisch films and going on to work with various directors. In 1998, he founded the Tera theatre company. All of his plays, which have won numerous awards, have been published by Actes Sud-Papiers.*



LAURENT GAUDÉ

### Même si le monde meurt

Even If the World Should Die

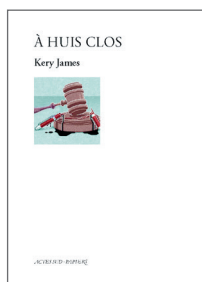
Play (publication on November 15)

The precise hour of the end of the world is predicted. The news provokes a variety of reactions in society: extreme anxiety in some, a sense of freedom in others. Among them is a young woman who hastens the birth of her child so that he can experience, if only for a few hours, what life is like. But ultimately the end of the world doesn't come to pass.

15 × 20,5 / 64 pages / approx. 15 €

*Laurent Gaudé is a novelist and playwright who is a key figure on the 21st-century French literary landscape. In 2004, he won the Prix Goncourt for his novel *Le Soleil des Scorta*, having previously won the Prix des Libraires and the Prix Goncourt des Lycéens for *La Mort du roi Tsongor* (2002). *Chien 51* is his latest novel (2022). His entire oeuvre is published by Actes Sud.*

## ACTES SUD-PAPIERS



### KERY JAMES À huis clos

Retrial Behind Closed Doors

Play (*publication on October 4*)

Following on from *À vif*, Kery James returns with her talismanic character Soulaymaan and plunges him into a France bedevilled by the shortcomings of its judicial

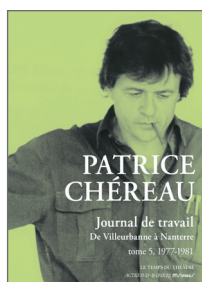
system. After his brother is killed by the police, the young lawyer decides to face off against the judge who found his killer not guilty.

15 × 20,5 / 56 pages / approx. 13 €

• **Directed by Marc Lainé, the show will open on 19 September at the public theatre of Mulhouse and then be performed in Paris at the Théâtre National de la Danse-Chaillot in October and the Théâtre du Rond-Point in November. It will be toured in 2024.**

*Kery James's many talents were first spotted when he was just eleven. An author, actor and director, these days he is a major figure in the rap world with three gold-selling records to his name. In 2012, he published his first book, 92.2012 : 20 ans d'écriture, with Silène. His first play, À vif (Actes Sud-Papiers, 2017), in which he played the role of Soulaymaan Traoré, was a huge success.*

## ACTES SUD-PAPIERS



### PATRICE CHÉREAU

Journal de travail. De Villeurbanne à Nanterre. Tome 5, 1977-1981

A Working Diary. From Villeurbanne to Nanterre. Volume 5, 1977-1981

Text established, presented and annotated by Julien Centrès  
(publication on October 4)

This book is the fifth of six volumes of the working diary of Patrice Chéreau, which contains his notes on directing films and plays.

The films *Judith Therpauve* and *The Wounded Man*, and the staging of *Peer Gynt* and several Koltès plays, among them *Black Battles with Dogs*, *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields* and *West Pier*, form the core of this latest volume. The notes offer a fascinating insight into the mindset of Patrice Chéreau and his working methods: how he conceived of his films, his meticulous preparation, his personal interpretation of other artists' works, and the literary references (Genet, Beckett, Claudel), philosophical influences (Foucault, Freud, Lacan) and inspirations from the visual arts (Brassaï, Hopper, Michaux) that informed his highly impressive body of modern dramatic art.

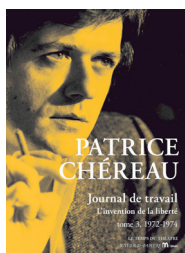
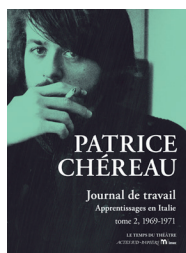
Appointed to run the Théâtre des Amandiers by culture minister Jack Lang in 1981, Patrice Chéreau sought to turn the theatre into a genuine community space for the inhabitants of Nanterre on the outskirts of Paris.  
15 x 20,5 / 496 pages / 29 €

• A decade on from his death in 2013, commemorations are planned as of the autumn at venues including the Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers and the Comédie-Française.

An actor, film director, scriptwriter and theatre and opera director, Patrice Chéreau (1944-2013) was a major figure on the European artistic and cultural scene for over forty years.

Julien Centrès is a doctor of history. Supervised by Myriam Tsikounas, his thesis was entitled *The Writing of History in the Work of Patrice Chéreau*. He also worked on the 'Patrice Chéreau, un musée imaginaire' exhibition at the Collection Lambert in Avignon in 2015 and on the events organised for the 'Patrice Chéreau en son temps' celebration of his work in 2016, as well as overseeing the publication of the first four volumes of the *Journal de travail*.

### IN THE SAME SERIES





*ACTES SUD*  
*& MAISONS ASSOCIÉES*

## Foreign Rights

**Nathalie Alliel**  
tél. : +33 4 90 49 33 75  
[nathalie.alliel@actes-sud.fr](mailto:nathalie.alliel@actes-sud.fr)

**Fabien Meffre**  
tél. : +33 4 90 49 33 70  
[f.meffre@actes-sud.fr](mailto:f.meffre@actes-sud.fr)

<https://actes-sud-foreign-film-tv-rights.fr/>