Film Rights Catalogue
Spring 2020
Film Rights Catalogue

Spring 2020

Frontlist ................................................................. 3
I. Fiction ........................................................................ 4
   Hubert Achleitner, Fleeting .................................................. 4
   Dominik Barta, From the Countryside ..................................... 5
   Quint Buchholz, A Time for Everything ................................... 6
   Aris Fioretos, Nelly B.s Heart .................................................. 7
   Monika Helfer, The Riff-raff ................................................. 8
   André Heller, Pitifully Beautiful, Laughably Bitter. Stories from Many Years ................................ 9
   Abbas Khider, The Palace of the Wretched ............................... 10
   Ernst Lothar, The Miracle of Survival. Memoir ....................... 11
   Niklas Maak, Technophoria ................................................ 12
   Pascal Mercier, The Weight of Words .................................. 13
   Markus Orths, Picnic in the Dark .......................................... 14

II. Non-Fiction ..................................................................... 15
   Barbara Bleisch / Andrea Büchler, Wanting Children – Thinking about Autonomy and Responsibility ............................................. 15
   Matthias Henke, Beethoven. Chord of the World .................... 16

III. Children’s Books .......................................................... 17
   Jutta Bauer, Tomcat Liam – Observations From a Furry Creature ............................................................. 17
   Micha Friemel / Jacky Gleich, Lulu in the Middle .................... 18
   Christine und Benjamin Knödler, Young Rebels – 25 Young People Who Are Changing The World ...................... 19
Friedbert Stohner, I’m Just The Grandpa Here........................................................................ 20

Backlist.......................................................................................................................... 21

Alex Capus, Léon and Louise .......................................................................................... 22
Lisa Fittko, Escape Through the Pyrenees. ...................................................................... 22
Abbas Khider, A Slap in the Face .................................................................................... 23
Michael Köhlmeier, Two Gentlemen on the Beach ......................................................... 23
René Freund, Love Among Fishes.................................................................................... 24
I. Fiction

Hubert Achleitner, Fleeting

Topic: divorce, new beginning, longing
Setting: Bad Ischl, Salzburg, Saloniki, Amouliani
Time: present
Protagonists: Lisa, Maria und her husband Herwig

304 pages, publication in April 2020 by Zsolnay

Synopsis
Maria has disappeared. Herwig, to whom she has been married for almost thirty years, hasn’t heard from her in months. The fact that she quit her job and took his Volvo at least gives reason to hope that she is still alive. But what happened to their marriage, their love, their life together? Hubert Achleitner sends his protagonists on an adventure that takes them from the Austrian mountains across Europe to Greece. And for both of them it is first and foremost a highly emotional journey into themselves. A wise and very musical novel about love and longing, fate and fleeting happiness.

About the author
Hubert Achleitner, known as Hubert von Goisern, was born in Bad Goisern in 1952. He is regarded as a prominent exponent of New Volksmusik and inventor of Alpine Rock. His interpretation of Alpine music spans many styles and is inspired by other cultures. The “Linz Europa Tour 2007 – 2009” is regarded to this day as one of the largest cross-border music projects of our time. Flüchtig is his first novel.
Dominik Barta, From the Countryside

**Synopsis**

When Theresa, around sixty years old and a farmer’s wife, suddenly feels ill, all certainties crumble. Her grown-up children have to travel from wherever they have ended up in order to finally talk to each other again. Theresa’s husband has to learn to accept help and feelings. And even twelve-year-old Daniel has to confront his stubborn uncle Max in order to protect his only real friend. But Theresa is silent, finds no words, no way out.

Dominik Barta continues a great tradition of Austrian literature. With precision, archaic power and empathy, his debut novel is about ordinary people and circumstances.

**About the author**

Dominik Barta, born 1982 in Upper Austria, studied in Vienna, Bonn and Florence. He won the ZEIT essay competition in 2009 and an Ö1 literature competition in 2017 and also writes for the theatre. **Vom Land** is his first novel.
Quint Buchholz, A Time for Everything

**Synopsis**

The verses in Ecclesiastes are among the most beautiful and famous in the Bible: “Everything has its time. For everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven ...” The lines offer comfort and assurance on all kinds of occasions. Timeless words of wisdom that are deeply rooted in our culture.

With his illustrations, Quint Buchholz sets the familiar lines in surprising contexts: for “there is a time to weep” he depicts a lonely boy on a strangely distorted house. Beside “a time to laugh” is a man doing a somersault in his motorboat. A masterful artist invites us to see this ancient text with new eyes. A lesson in serenity.

**About the author**

Quint Buchholz, born in 1957 in Stolberg, studied art history and later painting and graphics at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. Today he lives in Ottobrunn. With his picture book *Schlaf gut, kleiner Bär* he achieved his first international success in 1993. For Hanser he has illustrated books by Elke Heidenreich, Jostein Gaarder and Amos Oz as well as numerous texts of his own. 1997 saw the publication of *Der Sammler der Augenblicke*, which was awarded many national and international prizes. Most recently Hanser published *Im Land der Bücher* (2013) and the songbook *Sonne, Mond und Abendstern* by Dorothée Kreusch-Jacob (2017), which he illustrated.
Aris Fioretos, Nelly B.s Heart

**Synopsis**

Flying is indispensable, life isn’t – in his new novel, Aris Fioretos tells the fascinating story of a female aviation pioneer in Berlin.

A captivating novel about an aviation pioneer in Berlin in the Roaring Twenties: When the doctor tells Nelly B. that she is no longer allowed to fly because of a heart disease, her whole world is collapsing about her. She was the first woman in Germany to obtain a pilot’s license and ran a flying school with her husband. She leaves Paul, finds a job at BMW where she sells motorcycles, takes up quarters with a housekeeper in Berlin and meets the much younger Irma, with whom she falls deeply in love. Aris Fioretos tell the story of a modern, emancipated woman and a great, tragic love. An exciting life becomes great literature.

**About the author**

Aris Fioretos, born 1960 in Gothenburg, is a Swedish writer of Greek-Austrian Origin. His latest publications at Hanser were Das Maß eines Fußes (essays, 2008), Der letzte Griech (novel, 2011), Die halbe Sonne (prose, 2013), Mary (novel, 2016) and Wasser, Gänsehaut (essay, 2017). In 2010, Fioretos published the first annotated edition of Nelly Sachs’ complete works as well as a biography about the author. He received numerous awards for his writings as well as his translations of Paul Auster, Vladimir Nabokov and Jan Wagner into Swedish, such as The Kellgren-Prize of the Swedish Academy in 2011 and Grand Prize of Samfundet de Nio in 2013. Aris Fioretos lives in Berlin and Stockholm.
Monika Helfer, The Riff-raff

Synopsis
This novel is a powerful and poignant portrait of a woman and mother at the beginning of the twentieth century. Monika Helfer tells the story of her own origins, of a family that is only ever referred to by everyone as the “riff-raff”.

Josef and Maria Moosbrugger live with their children on the outer edges of a mountain village, far away from the other inhabitants. They are outsiders, marginalised, poverty-stricken – the riff-raff. It is the time of the First World War, when Josef is drafted into the army. It is the time when Maria and her children are left behind and become dependent on the protection of the mayor. It is the time when Georg from Hanover comes to the area, a man who is not only beautiful and speaks High German, but who one day also knocks on Maria’s door. And it is the time when Maria gets pregnant with Grete, the baby of the family, with whom Josef will never speak a word: the mother of Monika Helfer.

About the author
Monika Helfer, born in 1947 in Au/Bregenzerwald, lives as a writer with her family in Vorarlberg. She has written numerous novels, stories and children’s books. Her last novel Schau mich an, wenn ich mit dir rede (2017) was nominated for the German Book Prize.

Topic: origin, family history, outsider
Setting: Austrian village
Time: during the 1st World War
Protagonists: Josef and Maria Moosbrugger and their family

160 pages, publication in February 2020 by Hanser
André Heller, Pitifully Beautiful, Laughably Bitter. Stories from Many Years

Topic: autobiography, Austria, distance, past
Setting: various
Time: various
Protagonists: various

256 pages, publication in February 2020 by Zsolnay with an afterword by Franz Schuh

Synopsis
A world championship in hand folding, Shlomo Herzmansky’s miraculous survival thanks to Himmler, and the nightly tumult of Lipizzan horses in the middle of Vienna. Anything is possible, even the abolition of death is unsurprising when you immerse yourself in the narrative world of André Heller.

Like in his bestseller Das Buch von Süden, André Heller mixes the anecdotal with the autobiographical, creating images and portraits of his world that brings the past into the present and the far-away near.

About the author
André Heller was born in 1947 in Vienna. He divides his time between Vienna, Marrakech and travelling. In 2016, his novel Das Buch vom Süden was published by Zsolnay and sold over 75,000 copies. In 2017 Zsolnay published Uhren gibt es nicht mehr. Gespräche mit meiner Mutter in ihrem 102. Lebensjahr.
Abbas Khider, The Palace of the Wretched

**Synopsis**

This is the story of a boy from the slums of Baghdad – up to the moment when his life falls apart forever. A personal, vivid novel filled with unforgettable characters. Both existential and immediate, as only Abbas Khider is able to spin a yarn.

Shams Hussein is an ordinary boy with ordinary dreams. Hoping for a more peaceful life, his parents move with him and his sister from the south of the country to Baghdad. Soon they are living in the “Tin Quarter” next to a huge garbage mountain. These are the years of the economic embargo against the country under Saddam Hussein. The quest for a better future quickly turns into a life of existential struggle. Shams has no time to grow up: he works as a plastic-bag seller at the bazaar, as a bus driver’s assistant, as a carrier. And he loves books. But at a time when one wrong word can mean death, he enters a world whose dangers he does not see coming.

**About the author**

Abbas Khider was born in Baghdad in 1973. At the age of 19 he was arrested for his political activities. After his release, he fled Iraq in 1996 and stayed as an “illegal” refugee in various countries. He has lived in Germany since 2000 and studied literature and philosophy in Munich and Potsdam. Abbas Khider lives in Berlin. His novel *Ohrfeige* (2016) and most recently *Deutsch für alle – Das endgültige Lehrbuch* (2019) were published by Hanser Verlag.
Ernst Lothar, The Miracle of Survival. Memoir

Synopsis

“The day the Austro-Hungarian Empire fell broke my heart ... something irreplaceable died.” Ernst Lothar was a child of the Habsburg Empire and remained so until his death. In the First Austrian Republic he made a name for himself as a theatre critic and until his emigration to the USA he co-directed the Theater in der Josefstadt with Max Reinhardt. After the war ended he returned as a Denazification officer and despite hostilities, took on leading positions at the Burgtheater and the Salzburg Festival, which he co-founded. “It is difficult not to lose your heart to the ingenuity and child-like exuberance of these people, he ingenuity and child-like exuberance of these people,” writes Daniel Kehlmann in his epilogue to Das Wunder des Überlebens.

About the author

Ernst Lothar, whose real name was Ernst Lothar Müller, was born in Brno in 1890 and died in 1974 in Vienna. He was a trained lawyer and worked as a state prosecutor, among other jobs, before becoming a theatre critic, director, and finally, the manager of the Theater in der Josefstadt in 1925. In 1938 he emigrated to the United States, then returned to Vienna after the war. From 1948 he was a theatre director at the Burgtheater and member of the board of directors of the Salzburg Festival. In 2016, Zsolnay published the new edition of his novel Der Engel mit dem Posaune (The Angel with the Trumpet) and in 2018 Die Rückkehr.
Niklas Maak, Technophoria

Synopsis

Technophoria is about the familiar world as we know it, and about a hardly imaginable future that is already determining our present: a road novel that takes us around the globe: a world populated by gorillas, robots and ordinary people who are as unable to handle life as they are love.

In Toronto, Turek is supposed to be getting a Smart City off the ground and is having a tough time with the locals, who are using every means at their disposal to sabotage the project. The situation is even worse in Japan, where the man from whom he wanted to order an army of helpful robots has disappeared. The trail leads Turek to Africa, where gorillas are sitting on top of the hills containing the raw materials for chips and batteries. In the end, he finds himself a broken man on an American server farm that stores all messages and thoughts from our time. Turek experiences what digitalisation does to our senses and perceptions, how it changes our relationship to nature, and the price we have to pay for its promises.

About the author

Niklas Maak, born in 1972, studied art history, philosophy and architecture in Hamburg and Paris and lives in Berlin. Since 2001 he has been an art and architecture editor for the features section of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and has also taught as a visiting professor of architectural history in Frankfurt am Main and Harvard. He received the George F. Kennan Prize for his work, the Henri Nannen Prize in 2012, the COR Prize in 2014, the BDA Prize for Architectural Criticism in 2015 and the HBS Critics’ Prize in 2017.

Pascal Mercier, The Weight of Words

Topic: love of literature and language, stroke of fate, goals in life
Setting: London, Triest
Time: present
Protagonist: translator Simon Leyland

576 pages, publication in January 2020 by Hanser
Translated into Dutch and Finnish

Synopsis
After an interval of several years, Pascal Mercier has once again written a great novel. *The Weight of Words* is about the freedom that literature gives us and explores the question of how free we are in the choices we make in our lives.

Since his childhood, Simon Leyland has been fascinated by languages. In defiance of his parents, he becomes a translator and single-mindedly pursues his goal of learning all the languages spoken around the Mediterranean. From London he follows his wife Livia to Triest, where she has inherited a publishing house. In this city of important literary figures he believes he has found the ideal place for his work – until a medical error throws him off course. However, this apparent catastrophe turns out to be a turning point and an opportunity to once again completely reinvent his life. Yet again, Pascal Mercier has succeeded in writing a philosophical novel as haunting as *The Night Train to Lisbon*.

About the author
Pascal Mercier was born in Bern in 1944 and lives in Berlin. After *Perlmanns Schweigen* (1995) and *Der Klavierstimmer* (1998), his novel *Nachtzug nach Lisbon* (2004) became one of the biggest bestsellers of recent years and was translated into many languages. It was followed by the novella *Lea* in 2007. *Das Handwerk der Freiheit* (2001) and *Eine Art zu leben* (2013) were also published by Hanser under his real name Peter Bieri.

Pascal Mercier was awarded the Marie Luise Kaschnitz Prize in 2006 and the Premio Grinzane Cavour for best foreign novel in Italy in 2007. In 2007 he received the Lichtenberg Medal of the Göttingen Academy for Sciences and Humanities.
Markus Orths, Picnic in the Dark

Synopsis
An improbable and extraordinary encounter that spans more than seven hundred years of world history: Stan Laurel and Thomas Aquinas. Picnic in the Dark is a dramatic philosophical journey, an uproariously funny and deadly serious story about the big questions of life.

The novel is set in the dark: two men in complete and utter darkness make their way along endlessly long corridors. Staying put is not an option. They urgently want to reach the light. They grope their way forward, have bizarre conversations and share memories of their spectacularly different lives. These two men are Stan Laurel and Thomas Aquinas. The talented comedian meets the great philosopher of the Middle Ages. Why here? Why now? Why the two of them, in particular? That’s exactly what they have to find out in order to finally reach the light.
Markus Orths draws us into an adventure of ideas, into a fantasy about meaning and nonsense, about dying and laughing.

About the author
Markus Orths was born in Viersen in 1969, studied philosophy, Romance studies and English in Freiburg and now lives in Karlsruhe. His novels have been translated into sixteen languages. His most recent novel to be published was Max (2017). He is also the author of radio plays and children’s books.
II. Non-Fiction

Barbara Bleisch / Andrea Büchler, Wanting Children – Thinking about Autonomy and Responsibility

Topic: philosophy, feminism, responsibility

224 pages, publication in April 2020 by Hanser

Synopsis

Why do we even want to have our own children? Should we be able to decide which children to have and which ones not to have? Is it too late at some point to have children at all? Which technologies is it acceptable to use in order to have a child, and at what point are does it become ethically questionable? The philosopher Barbara Bleisch and the professor of law Andrea Büchler explore the intimate as well as socially fundamental subject of having children. Whether we have children, when we have children and which children we have: in the past these decisions were made by fate. Today they are increasingly controllable. Taking into account a range of perspectives and arguments, and in an accessible style, this book examines the extent of our autonomy in reproduction and what responsibilities this new-found freedom entails – for future mothers and fathers, for our children and for us as a society.

About the authors

Barbara Bleisch, born in 1973, lives with her family in Zurich and is a member of the Ethics Center of the University of Zurich. Since 2010 she has hosted the programme Sternstunde Philosophie on Swiss radio and the TV channel SRF. From 2017–2019 she was an academic guest at the Collegium Helveticum. Her book Warum wir unseren Eltern nichts schulden was published by Hanser in 2018.

Andrea Büchler, born in 1968, also lives with her family in Zurich and is a professor in the Faculty of Law of the University of Zurich. She researches and teaches family and medical law and is president of the Swiss National Advisory Commission on Biomedical Ethics in the field of human medicine.

Synopsis

Hero, revolutionary, national idol: in the past, Ludwig van Beethoven had to serve idealistic notions that had nothing to do with his music. On the composer’s 250th birthday, Matthias Henke’s biography shines a light on a person who didn’t make things easy for anyone – particularly not for himself. But his music still touches us today as if he were our contemporary.

It is music from a period in history when the world changed radically; music that liberated itself from the constraints of classical music and found new forms of expression. Matthias Henke portrays Beethoven between Bonn and Vienna caught up in these tensions, but also explains how his music was used for political purposes and how it would even become the epitome of “classical music”: an updated biography for our times.

About the author

Matthias Henke, born in 1953, was Professor of Historical Music at the University of Siegen from 2008 to 2019. Since 2019 he has been a research professor at the Danube Private University in Krems. His most recently published books are Arnold Schönberg (dtv, 2001), Joseph Haydn (dtv, 2009), Die Sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze von Joseph Haydn (Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2017). And as an editor: Arnold Schönberg: Die Prinzessin (Hanser Children’s Book, 2006).
III. Children’s Books

Jutta Bauer, Tomcat Liam – Observations From a Furry Creature

**Synopsis**

I am a tomcat – a big, beautiful red tabby. For many years now I’ve been observing humans and their habits. And let’s face it – they’re rather strange! They give you food that tastes of bird or fish instead of mouse or rat. And they let that horrible wet water run straight down over their heads! Another mystery to cats is why they hold a piece of paper in front of their face instead of scratching it. Or why dark sofas aren’t considered a good place for tomcats like me to lie on. Really, it’s no wonder that humans think computers and glass tablets are great inventions, but mice and balls of wool aren’t. They simply don’t understand enough about life!

**About the author**

Jutta Bauer was born in 1955 in Hamburg, where she lives and works as an illustrator, author, cartoonist and animation artist. She has won numerous prizes, incl. the German Children’s Literature Award in 2009 for her complete works, and in 2010 the Hans Christian Andersen Award. Also published by Hanser are *Weißt du noch* (text: Zoran Drvenkar, 2015) and five children’s books about the Bärbeiß, most recently *Der Bärbeiß. Ich bin doch nicht verliebt!* (text: Annette Pehnt).
Micha Friemel / Jacky Gleich, Lulu in the Middle

**Synopsis**

Lulu is the middle child. Lulu’s big brother Kaspar builds helicopters and milking machines. He’s a great inventor and is sure to win the Nobel Prize says Grandma. And everyone is always charmed by little Leo, no matter what she does. As soon as she cries, Mummy picks her up and consoles her. And Lulu? She wants to lay the table, but Papa’s done it already. She wants to help with the cooking, but then the food is already on the table. Lulu’s had enough: she’s not small, but also not big. So what is she? The golden middle of the family – obviously!

**About the author**

Micha Friemel, born in 1981, studied history and German literature in Basel before completing a course in literary writing at the Swiss Literature Institute in Biel. She lives with her husband and four children in Santa Maria Val Müstair. On the side, she also runs a small guesthouse for creative retreats (www.chasa-parli.ch).
Christine und Benjamin Knödler, Young Rebels — 25 Young People Who Are Changing The World

Topic: biography, youth activists, environmental protection, equal rights
Setting: various
Time: present
Protagonists: 25 teenagers

160 pages, publication in April 2020 by Hanser
Illustrated by Felicitas Horstschäfer
From age 10

Synopsis
They are fighting for the environment, minorities and equality, and are actively involved against the gun lobby, discrimination and corruption. 25 young people fighting for a better world.

Greta Thunberg is just sixteen when she sparks off the global climate protests with her school strike. Fourteen-year-old Netiwit Chotiphatphaisal founds a newspaper to campaign for democracy, freedom of speech and educational reform in Thailand. Malala Yousafzai writes a blog about the oppression of women in Pakistan when she is eleven years old. And in the fourth grade at school, Felix Finkbeiner comes up with the idea that children in every country on Earth should plant a million trees. Young people all over the world are demonstrating their social commitment and bringing about fundamental change. Their pioneering spirit is an inspiration to us all.

About the authors

Benjamin Knödler, born in 1991, studied philosophy and social sciences at Humboldt University in Berlin. He works as a freelance journalist and is the online and community editor for the weekly newspaper Der Freitag.
Friedbert Stohner, I’m Just The Grandpa Here

Topic: grandparents and grandchildren, trip, adventure
Setting: amusement park
Time: present
Protagonists: Grandpa and his four grandchildren

128 pages, publication in March 2020 by Hanser
Illustrated by Hildegard Müller

Synopsis
Now it’s Grandpa’s turn to have a say! Because there are so many stories to tell about life as an energetic pensioner and devoted grandparent. Looking after his four grandchildren? A piece of cake!

Grandpa decides to take the children to the amusement park for a Sunday family outing. He can manage that, no problem! But on the drive there, he gets an inkling that it might not be as fun as he imagined – at least not for him. No sooner are they stuck in traffic than the children start jumping about wildly in the back of the car. But Grandpa has nerves of steel and quickly sorts them back into their seats. When they are standing in the queue for the amusement park, however, he loses his composure for the first time when he notices that his youngest grandchild has disappeared …

About the author
Friedbert Stohner, born in 1951 in Altlüßheim am Rhein, worked for many years in publishing. Together with his wife Anu he also worked as a translator out of English and Finnish. And he writes children’s books, not only for his own four grandchildren. The following in the same series have been published by Hanser: *Ich bin bloß der Hamster* (2014), *Ich bin hier bloß das Pony* (2015) and *Ich bin hier bloß das Schaf* (2018).
Backlist
Alex Capus, Léon and Louise

**Topic:** love, hope, war  
**Setting:** France  
**Time:** First World War until 1986  
**Protagonists:** young couple

320 pages, published in February 2011 by Hanser

**Translated into more than 20 languages**

**Synopsis**

Two young people fall in love, but the war tears them apart. It begins with their first encounter, on the Atlantic coast during the First World War, shortly after which they are forcefully torn apart by an air raid. Each assumes the other has been killed. Léon goes on to marry but Louise, passionate in nature and driven by her fierce desire for independence, goes her own way - until 1928, when they encounter one another again quite by chance on the Paris Métro. With delightful deftness of touch and great intensity, Alex Capus tells a love story played out during a century of war. He tells of two people who pit themselves against the passage of time, in often magical ways; who hold on tightly to their love, flying in the face of all convention; who lead a wayward, often unbelievably comical double life. Léon and Louise are an unforgettable couple in the realm of contemporary literature.

Lisa Fittko, Escape Through the Pyrenees.

**Topic:** exile, period of National Socialism, memoir  
**Setting:** the French-Spanish Pyrenees  
**Time:** 1940/1941

288 pages, published in January 1985 by Hanser

**Translated into Croatian, English, French, Italian, Japanese and Spanish**

**Synopsis**

Though it reads like a suspense novel, this memoir is Lisa Fittko’s extraordinary story of life as an “enemy alien” in France before and after the German invasion of 1940. Escaping a French prison, Fittko and her husband found their way to the Pyrenees and, while awaiting permission to enter Spain, helped hundreds of refugees, including Walter Benjamin, escape deportation, torture, and death at the hands of the Nazis.
Abbas Khider, A Slap in the Face

Topic: a refugee’s life, integration
Setting: Germany
Time: present

224 pages, published in February 2016 by Hanser

Translated into Bosnian, Dutch, English, Hungarian and Latvian

Synopsis

A refugee walks into the alien registration officeto speak to the clerk in charge of his case for the last time. He is furious and has only one desire: that someone actually listens to him for once. When Karim Mensey jumps to freedom from the loading ramp of a transporter van, he thinks he’s in France. That’s where the illegal journey he’d paid for was meant to take him. Actually he’s ended up somewhere in the depths of the Bavarian provinces. Karim has to re-invent his life-story, struggle his way through all sorts of documents and countless refugee centres. Then one day his temporary citizenship status is revoked. Abbas Khider has written a novel at once disturbing and heart-warming, a novel that poses one of the central issues of our times: what does it mean for someone if he can neither live at home nor abroad?

Michael Köhlmeier, Two Gentlemen on the Beach

Topic: Churchill, Chaplin
Setting: USA, England
Time: 20th century

256 pages, published in August 2018 by Hanser

Translated into Arabic, Czech, Dutch, English, French, Serbian and Slovenian

Synopsis

Two solitary gentlemen walk the beach, deep in discussion. Charlie Chaplin and Winston Churchill – two leviathans of world history – were as different as chalk and cheese, yet the impoverished tramp and the great statesman became close friends. One became the greatest comedian in history, the other lead his country through the war against Adolf Hitler. With the unerring eye of the first class imaginative raconteur, Michael Köhlmeier recognized what this incredible couple represents: nothing less than the complete history of the 20th century, spanning art and politics, comedy and tragedy.
**René Freund, Love Among Fishes**

**Topic:** love, behavioral research  
**Setting:** Austria and Germany  
**Time:** 21st century  

208 pages, published in January 2013 by Deuticke  

**Translated into Italian, Georgian, Russian and Spanish**  

**Synopsis**

Fred Firneis, a sensationally successful and widely-read poet, is burnt out after too many alcohol-saturated years on the frontline of literature. His publisher, Susanne Beckmann, runs her cash-cow to earth in his Berlin-Kreuzberg apartment and dispatches him to a wooden shack deep in the Austrian Alps. In Grünbach-am-See there is neither electricity nor mobile reception and Firneis gradually begins to regain his strength. But then this rural paradise is disrupted by the arrival of Mara, a Slovakian biologist who is writing her doctoral thesis on the minnow, a fascinating and sociable little fish, and before long Fred finds himself taking great interest in all the nuances of the creature’s biology, behaviour and psychology – but most of all in Mara herself. An offbeat alpine comedy with a dramatic climax in Berlin; fast-paced, surprising and highly entertaining.

---

**René Freund, To the Sea**

**Topic:** road trip, carpe diem, love, friendship  
**Setting:** Austria, Italy  
**Time:** present  
**Protagonists:** various, young and elderly  

144 pages, published in May 2018 by Zsolnay  

**Synopsis**

Anton, a bus driver who ferries schoolchildren and other passengers from the villages to the city year in, year out, is having a pretty bad day. He has recently fallen in love with his neighbour Doris. But the previous night he heard a man coughing on her balcony. On top of this, Carla, a passenger suffering from cancer, boards the bus saying that she wants to see the sea for the last time – right now. It’s hot, and thoughts race through Anton’s head. Courage is not one of his virtues, but didn’t Doris said she likes a man who take risks? Shortly afterwards, he makes an announcement over the tannoy: “We’re heading for the sea.” A heart-warming story about the light and heavy aspects of life, and how you sometimes have to stake everything on one roll of the dice.