

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



Born 1973 in Bielefeld, Germany, Nina George is a prize-winning and international bestselling author (“Das Lavendelzimmer” – “The Little Paris Bookshop”) and freelance journalist since 1992, who has published 28 books (novels, mysteries and non-fiction) as well as over hundred short stories and more than 600 columns. Nina George has worked as a reporter and columnist for a wide range of publications, including Hamburger Abendblatt, Die Welt, Die Zeit or Standard. Georges writes also under three pen-names, for example “Jean Bagnol”, a double-andronym for provence-based mystery novels.

In 2012 and 2013 she won the DeLiA and the Glauser-Prize. In 2013 she had her first bestselling book “Das Lavendelzimmer”, translated into 37

languages and sold more than 1,5 million copies.

In 2011, Nina George established the “JA zum Urheberrecht” (YES on Author’s Rights) initiative. 14 writers’ associations and 27 publishing partners have since joined the Initiative. In August 2014 George initiated the Amazon-protest in Germany www.fairer-buchmarkt.de, where overs 2000 germanspeaking authors – Nobelprizewinnig Elfriede Jelinek or Bestsellingauthor Nele Neuhaus – sign an open letter to Jeff Bezos and Amazon, protesting against the banned-book-methods of the giant retailer in the Hachette/Bonnier-dispute. In 2015 George founded the Initiative Fairer Buchmarkt e.V., 2016 she initiated the Netzwerk Autorenrechte (Network Authorsrights), representing today 10.000 writers and translators of 14 member-associations. Nina George is the deputy of the President of the Three Seas Writers’ and Translators’ Council (TSWTC). From 2015-2019 she served on the board of German PEN, from 2017-2019 also in the board of the German Writers’ Union VS. George sits also on the administrative board of Collecting Society VG Wort and is chair of the working group E-Book.

In June 2019 Nina George was elected as President of the European Writers’ Council.

Nina George is Member to PEN Germany and the PEN International Writers’ Circle, Das Syndikat, the Writers’ Union of Germany (VS), the Hamburg Authors’ Association (HAV), BücherFrauen (Women in Publishing), the IACW/AIEP (International Association of Crime Writers) and the GEDOK (Association of female artists in Germany).

She lives in Berlin and the Bretagne.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. “Memories are like wolves. You can’t lock them away and hope they leave you alone.” *The Little Paris Bookshop* begins when Monsieur Perdu opens the room he’s kept sealed off for two decades. What are your first impressions of Perdu, and do you think he’s justified in shutting out the past?
2. “Perdu reflected that it was a common misconception that booksellers looked after books. They looked after people.” Monsieur Perdu helps countless people find books that heal them. In your life, have you ever felt that a book restored you to yourself? If there was a Literary Apothecary where you lived, would you visit?
3. In Chapter 3, Perdu refuses to sell a copy of Max Jordan’s *Night* to a customer, because he feels it would upset her. How would you react if this happened to you? Is there such thing as a dangerous book?
4. On their journey South, Perdu forges a powerful friendship with both Max and Cuneo. What do the three characters teach each other?
5. The death of the deer is an emotionally charged scene that serves to ignite something within Perdu. What do you think it represented for the three men?
6. We come to know Manon through Perdu’s account of her, and her travel diary. What did you think of her as a character? Do you believe it is possible to love more than one person at once, as she does?
7. In Chapter 32, Samy says there are three kinds of love: sexual love, logical love, and a love that “comes from your chest or your solar plexus, or somewhere in between.” What do you think she means by this, and do you agree?
8. The time to mourn, or “hurting time,” becomes important for nearly every character in *The Little Paris Bookshop*. Do you believe a period of grieving is necessary when a loved one is lost? Does it depend on the circumstances in which they left your life?
9. Perdu finally arrives in Bonnieux, where he asks Manon’s husband Luc for forgiveness. Does Luc provide Perdu with the sense of closure he lacks? Does Perdu offer anything to Luc?
10. The text that is perhaps most vital to Perdu’s emotional journey is Sanary’s *Southern Lights*. Were you surprised to discover the author’s true identity? Why or why not?
11. The novel includes pages from Manon’s journal, letters between Perdu and Catherine, recipes, and a reading list. Did these artifacts make your reading experience a richer one?
12. Love and friendship, the power of stories to heal—of these, what do you think this novel is most about?

- <http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/241309/the-little-paris-bookshop-by-nina-george/9780553418798/readers-guide/>

BOOK REVIEWS

Booklist

Although an accomplished author in her native Germany, George is just now seeing her first novel translated to English. From his floating bookstore along the Seine, the Literary Apothecary, Jean Perdu intuits the perfect book to heal whatever heartbreak afflicts his customer-patients. Yet it is his own that he cannot heal as he lives a Miss Havisham–like existence, blocking off rooms in his apartment and even avoiding thinking the name of a former love. However, an encounter with a new tenant forces him to read an unopened letter, and the devastating contents compel him to finally leave Paris and sail south so that he may finally move past his heartbreak. While the pacing lags occasionally, George’s writing is strongest when describing the wonderfully provincial towns off the Seine River, highlighting a France often forgotten behind the noise of Paris. Books triumph as instruments of healing but also as beacons, connecting strangers at the most fundamental level. Through its well-drawn characters, this novel carefully explores these relationships between lovers, friends, and family, and the painful sacrifices made selflessly for them. -- Bertz, Monica (Reviewed 05-01-2015) (Booklist, vol 111, number 17, p76)

Publishers Weekly

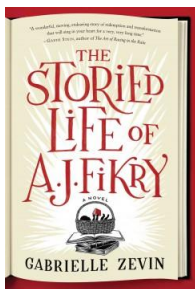
A bookseller embarks on a quest for his own happy ending in George’s novel. Jean Perdu’s Literary Apothecary is unique among Paris bookshops, and not just because it’s a barge moored on the Seine. Perdu has the uncanny ability to prescribe the perfect book to cure any spiritual malady: heartbreak, loneliness, ennui. But for 21 years—ever since the woman he loved walked out of his life—Perdu has lived an ascetic, routine-filled existence, and he’s never opened the farewell letter she left for him. When he’s finally compelled to read it, the unexpected contents spur him to hoist his anchor and take the bookstore barge on a trip upriver to Avignon, in search of closure and forgiveness. Max Jordan, an eccentric young author paralyzed by writer’s block, hitches a ride as the boat is pulling out of port. Along the way the pair encounters a host of other quirky characters, who feed Perdu incredible cuisine, help unravel a long-unsolved literary mystery, and teach him to feel joy again. Though George’s prose is sometimes a bit overwrought and the “physician, heal thyself” plot device has been done to death, her cast of engaging characters keeps the story moving. Her sumptuous descriptions of both food and literature will leave readers unsure whether to run to the nearest library or the nearest bistro. Agent: Cecile Barendsma, Janklow & Nesbit Associates. (June) --Staff (Reviewed April 27, 2015) (Publishers Weekly, vol 262, issue 17, p)

Kirkus Reviews

This newly translated German bestseller is a warmhearted, occasionally sentimental account of letting go of the old loves to make room for new. Parisian bookseller Jean Perdu has lived in a time capsule of his own grief. Twenty-one years ago, his lover, Manon, left, leaving behind only a letter to explain herself—which Jean never opened. Ever since, Jean has devoted his life to his floating bookstore, the Literary Apothecary, a barge docked on the Seine. He can diagnose a shopper’s ills (ennui, disappointment, a range of fears) and select the correct literary remedy. When heartbroken Catherine moves into his building, Jean brings her an old table and a stack of books to cure her crying. In the table Catherine finds Manon’s unopened letter and demands Jean read it, or she will.

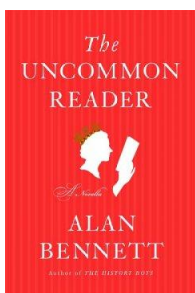
The two fall into kissing, and Jean, buoyed by Catherine, finally reads Manon's letter, but the truth is heartbreaking. Manon returned to her home in Provence to succumb to the cancer she had been hiding. Her last request was for Jean to visit before she died. Jean, overwhelmed by news of her death, his tragic error, his wasted life pining for a dead woman, lifts the Literary Apothecary's anchor to finally make the journey to Manon. Stowed away is his neighbor Max, a young novelist running away from his fame. The two navigate the canals of France selling books for food, engaging in adventures small and large, all against the backdrop of quaint villages and bittersweet memories. They take on some passengers: a roguish Italian who has been searching the waterways for his long-lost sweetheart; and a renowned novelist. As Jean makes his way to Manon's home (all the while writing love letters to Catherine), he prepares to ask for forgiveness from the memory of Manon, from her husband, and from himself. A charming novel that believes in the healing properties of fiction, romance, and a summer in the south of France. (Kirkus Reviews, April 15, 2015)

READALIKES



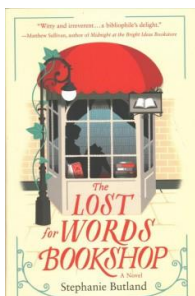
***The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin**

When his most prized possession, a rare collection of Poe poems, is stolen, bookstore owner A. J. Fikry begins isolating himself from his friends, family and associates before receiving a mysterious package that compels him to remake his life.



***The Uncommon Reader* by Alan Bennett**

Obliged to borrow a book when her corgis stray into a mobile library, the Queen discovers a passion for reading, setting the palace upon its head and causing the royal head of Great Britain to question her role in the monarchy.



***The Lost Words Bookshop* by Stephanie Butland**

A secretly heartbroken woman who prefers books to people finds her world upended by the arrivals of a poet, a lover and three suspicious deliveries that reveal that someone has found out about her mysterious past.