Francesca Kay

Writer - Fiction

Francesca Kay grew up in Southeast Asia and India, and has subsequently lived in Jamaica, the United States, Germany and now lives in Oxford. Her first novel, AN EQUAL STILLNESS, was published in 2009 and was read on Radio 4's 'Book at Bedtime'.

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Publications

Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
The Long Room 2016 Faber & Faber	What happens to a man who has his ear pressed to the lives of others but not much life of his own? When Stephen Donaldson joins the Institute, he anticipates excitement, romance and new status. Instead he gets the tape-recorded conversations of ancient communists and ineffectual revolutionaries, until the day he is assigned a new case: the ultra-secret PHOENIX. Is PHOENIX really working for a foreign power? Stephen hardly cares; it is the voice of the target's wife that mesmerises him. This is December 1981. Bombs are exploding, a cold war is being waged, another war is just over the horizon and the nation is transfixed by weekly instalments of Brideshead Revisited. Dangerously in love, and lonely, Stephen sets himself up for a vertiginous fall that will forever change his life.

Publication Details	Notes
THE TRANSLATION OF THE BONES 2011 UK: Weidenfeld & Nicolson; US: Scribner; Chinese (complex): Epoch Hunter Culture; French: Plon; Italian: Bollati	Reality or delusion? Fantasy or fact? When word gets out that Mary-Margaret O'Reilly, a slow-witted but apparently harmless young woman, may have been witness to a miracle, religious mania descends on the Church of the Sacred Heart in Battersea. The consequences will be profound, not only for Mary-Margaret but for others too - Father Diamond, the parish priest, who is in the midst of his own crisis of faith, and Stella Morrison, adrift in her marriage and pining for her ten-year old son, away at boarding school. In the same parish Alice Armitage counts the days until her soldier son comes home from Afghanistan, and Mary-Margaret's mother, Fidelma, imprisoned in a tower block, stares out over London with nothing but her thoughts for company. Remembering her early childhood by the sea in Ireland, the bleak institution she was sent to and the boy she loved, she hungers for consoling touch. In the meantime Mary-Margaret's quest grows increasingly desperate. But no one is prepared for the shocking outcome that ensues. The Translation of the Bones is a searingly powerful novel about passion and isolation, about the nature of belief, about love and motherhood and a search for truth.
AN EQUAL STILLNESS 2009 UK: Weidenfeld & Nicolson; French: Plon; German: Dumont; Italian: Bollati Boringhieri	AN EQUAL STILLNESS is a novel posing as a biography of a painter, Jennet Mallow. Born in 1924, Jennet grows up in Yorkshire. In the drab post-war years she forges an early career as a painter, both inspired and constrained by her marriage to another artist, David Feaver. The competing claims of marriage and family on the one hand, and art on the other, provide one of the principal themes of this novel. After a vivid period in southern Spain, Jennet and David return to England. In the 1960s Jennet's career blossoms, and she becomes a sought-after painter, despite personal complications and indeed tragedies. With her children grown up, and David Feaver dead of alcoholism, she retires to her beloved Yorkshire for her final, yet brilliantly productive, years. Francesca Kay is a wordsmith, and her depictions of landscape and paintings, as well as feelings, are often exhilarating. She has imagined a life in the round.