

Foreign Rights Catalogue

Highlights for the London Book Fair 2023

NON-FICTION

- **Une poupée en chocolat**
Amandine Gay
- **Le bouclier de Marie**
Marie Rebour
- **La mujer que escribió Frankenstein**
Esther Cross
- **Cinq mains coupées**
Sophie Divry

Une poupée en chocolat

Amandine Gay



Amandine
Gay
Une poupée
en chocolat

La Découverte

RANKED IN *LIBÉ'S* TOP-12 BEST ESSAYS OF 2021

An autobiographical essay and striking plea to politicize adoption and rethink the concepts of family, filiation and identity.

Amandine Gay was born to an unknown mother and owns nothing of her past: no medical record, no family tree, no family memories. For her story not to be a sum of silences, traumas and dispossessions, she needs to write it. This book is a trace, an archive, a piece of the puzzle she tries to complete thanks to the political analysis of what happened to her.

If families are formed through adoption, it is because more precarious families have been destroyed. Whether it is a question of class relations, global inequalities or the colonial continuum, in the Western context, adoption is inscribed in a history of violence. It is this history that adoptees inherit.

Une poupée en chocolat text navigates between a poignant life story and affiliations with critical theories of race, cultural studies, feminist studies, decolonial studies and queer theories. Amandine Gay responds to the urgency for adoptees - and others - to open a field of reflection, based on their experiences and expertise, analyzing the power dynamics exercised in adoption, and questioning the conventional structures of parenthood.

About the author

Amandine Gay divides her time between research, creation and activism. She directed the documentaries *Ouvrir la voix* and *Une histoire à soi* (2021) which also deals with the topic of adoption by following the journeys of five adoptees. *Une poupée en chocolat* is her first book. She is currently working on her next book on how white supremacy shaped different aspects of her life.

« **The strength of the text is enhanced by its autobiographical aspect [...] . Amandine Gay's story captivates us, often revolts us, and touches us deeply, especially in the last pages, which are poignant.** »

Erwan Cario, Libération

« **A poignant and relentless intimate story.** », Julie Hainaut, ELLE

« **Amandine Gay's first essay is a *tour de force* as much for testimonial literature as for the debate of ideas, in which it intervenes with radicality.** » Khalil Khalsi, Lettres Québécoises

« **Speaking for herself, but also for all adoptees, Amandine Gay raises vital issues and does so with the authority of one who speaks from personal experience.** »

Catriona Seth, En attendant Nadeau

- **Publishers:** La Découverte (France); Remue-ménage (Québec)
- **Material available:** Full text in French - 368 pages, chapter translated into English



Le bouclier de Marie

Marie Rebour

FRENCH PUBLISHER: PHILIPPE REY

DEBUT-NOVELIST

An unprecedented autopsy of traumatic amnesia and the long way towards healing.

Marie Rebour's first book tells a long-hidden and repressed story. Between 5 and 8 years old, the narrator was victim of sexual assault from her cousin, 10 years her senior. To move past this childhood trauma, despite the wound, her body and mind will establish survival mechanisms that she designates as her shield.

When the memories come back, the brain rejects them. As for the body, it develops a formidable defense: rejecting any physical contact. Affected by amnesia, the narrator ignores the reason for her aversion while the reader, aware of her past experiences, keeps on discovering her story.

Le bouclier de Marie advances chronologically and follows the narrator from early childhood to adulthood, through adolescence, years in university, her first job... Devoid of pathos or embellishments, it depicts the effects of trauma in every aspect of her life. Revisiting the past, the book is also turned to the future as it tells a story of a slow reconstruction. The final chapter, inspired by nature writing, focuses on Marie's stay in a sled dog farm in Lapponia, an experience close to nature that has been instrumental to her reconstruction.

About the author

Marie Rebour was born in 1982 in the suburbs of Lyon. She grew up in the countryside, in the South of France. A hydrogeologist by training, she practiced her profession for several years in Limoges and now lives on a farm in Haute-Savoie. Her first book, *Le bouclier de Marie* was published by Editions Philippe Rey in January 2023.

« A pure, moving, beautiful book about traumatic amnesia, the scenes where the memory comes back, where the narrator fights to tell the truth and regain possession of her life are amongst the most beautiful written on the subject. »

Sophie Divry, writer

« This book is deeply moving. It is sober, told with the right distance. Perfectly narrated. » Titiou Lecoq, writer

« The story of a reconstruction, a construction and above all the emergence of a great writer. » Frédérique Pingault, bookseller

- **Publisher:** Philippe Rey (France)
- **Material available:** Full text in French - 192 pages; short excerpt in English



La mujer que escribió Frankenstein

Esther Cross

A moving portrayal of Mary Shelley and a fascinating immersion in the 19th-century England, its literature, its doctors and its dead.

Esther Cross follows Mary Shelley's footsteps with the help of different surprising materials. She accompanies her to the cemetery where the writer, as a child, used to settle to read; she studies her letters, her diary, observes her as she grieves her dead and travels with her husband, Percy Shelley, across Europe.

This non-fiction also delves into Mary Shelley's environment: the 19th-century London marked by the progresses of medicine through corpses' dissection, the unstoppable development of the city, its economic disparities and criminal activities.

First published in Argentina in 2013, this non-fiction acutely depicts the British writer's relationship with her own time and how she shaped it as much it shaped her and her body of work.

In the words of Mariana Enriquez, *The Woman Who Wrote Frankenstein* is "a book about Mary Shelley, about her time and her work, about the characters of clandestine medicine and dark London, about some romantic writers and some famous surgeons - all in a compact and absorbing parade, like a cabinet of literary curiosities - but, above all, it is a book about the body. In its pages, with a sober and sharp style, flesh is cut as on a dissection table, living flesh and dead flesh."

About the author

Esther Cross is a translator and prolific Argentinian writer, author of novellas, collections of short stories and novels such as *El banquete de la araña* (1999), *Kavanagh* (2004) and *Tres hermanos* (2016). Her work received the Fortabat, First, Siglo XXI, Regional and Municipal awards, among others, and she was a recipient of the Fulbright and Civitella Ranieri scholarships. All of her career has been dedicated to fiction, until she began to read about Mary Shelley.

« A beautiful and extravagant book, highly original. »

Mariana Enriquez, writer

« The book is a non-fiction, but it can be read as fiction, not because the facts are altered, but because of its pace and the excitement felt while reading it. »

Andrea Yepes Cuartas, El Tiempo

- **Publishers:** Emecé (Argentina); Minúscula (Spain)
- **Material available:** Full text in Spanish - 184 pages; short excerpt in English



Cinq mains coupées

Sophie Divry

A shattering and innovative piece of testimonial literature on the lives of five demonstrators mutilated during the Yellow Vest Movement.

In this book, not one sentence is by Sophie Divry. All are from interviews she conducted between September 2019 and February 2020 with five protesters who lost their hands during the Yellow Vests movement.

They were all right-handed, they all lost their right hand. He worked in the factory, he moored boats, they were plumber, student or boiler apprentice. One Saturday during a demonstration, their hand was torn off by a grenade filled with TNT, and their life was never the same again.

Cinq mains coupées is not the mere transcript of these testimonies. Sophie Divry intertwines their words, turning the five individual stories into a powerful choir without forgetting melodious solos that highlight one's unique experience.

Cinq mains coupées is a daring and successful attempt to honor the voices and lives of those who are always silenced, as well as a powerful reflexion on universal topic topics such as masculinity, impaired body, powerlessness and state violence.

About the author

Sophie Divry worked as a journalist for several years before dedicating herself entirely to writing fiction. Her first book, *La Cote 400* (2010) was published by Les Allusifs, followed by the publication of five other novels, such as *La Condition Pavillonnaire* (Notabilia, 2015), special mention of the Prix Wepler, an essay and a collection of testimonies. Her work has been translated into several languages and unanimously acclaimed by critics.

« *Cinq mains coupées* is a literary success doubled with a political act and a journalistic lesson. »
Gladys Marivat, Le Monde

« Beautiful in form, fluid, pugnacious, perfectly mastered. Terrible in the substance, the surprise, the pain, the amputation, the life that changes overnight [...]. »
Luc Le Chatelier, Télérama

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- **Publishers:** Le Seuil (France); J'ai Lu (France), Luca Sossella Editore (Italy)
 - **Material available:** Full text in French - 128 pages
 - **Adaptations :** Ongoing theatrical adaptation by La Quincaillerie moderne

Titles from the backlist:

- *Trois fois la fin du monde*, a Robinson Crusoe of modern times forced to survive in a post-nuclear catastrophe world.
- *Curiosity*, the humorous and metaphysical monologue of a NASA exploring Mars.

FICTION

- **Otra novelita rusa**
Gonzalo Maier
- **Sand-catcher**
Omar Khalifah
- **Malacarne**
Giosuè Calaciura
- **Le souffle de l'Harmattan**
Sylvain Trudel
- **Sous le ciel vide**
Raphaël Nizan
- **Rise and Fall of Parkinson disease**
Svetislav Basara



Otra novelita rusa

Gonzalo Maier

The journey of a Chilean retiree who travels to Moscow with a delirious plan: defeat Russia's greatest chess players.

In the early 1990s, a Chilean retiree lands in Moscow with a plan that is equal parts heroic and crazy: to defeat the best Russian chess players. In the comings and goings from his hotel room to the old park where the most reckless amateurs usually meet, Emanuel Moraga's journey will reveal itself as a sort of dreamlike walk, with touches of comedy, through the rickety post-Cold War landscape.

Otra novelita rusa is a delirious tale about the frustrations of the province and the strange forms that 20th century history adopts to sneak into even the most unsuspected corners.

Perfectly plotted, in a tone full of tender irony, it grabs the reader's attention from the first pages and take him by the hand until its unexpected finale that flies high and far above the earth.

About the author

Gonzalo Maier is a Chilean writer, born in 1981. He has published eight books - essays and short novels - published by Random house in Chile and Minuscula in Spain. He also regularly writes opinion columns in various media. He holds a PhD in Arts and is a university professor.

« [Otra novelita rusa] is a delicate artifact, a little book that slips away from every simplistic and realistic rhetoric. In Maier's literature there is a freedom that resists any idea of representation, any idea of doing one's homework, of writing the books that his generation seems destined to write.»

Diego Zúñiga, writer

« Gonzalo Meier's literature is the best kept secret of recent Chilean literature. »

Mauro Libertella, Qué pasa

- **Publisher:** Minúscula (Spain); Dublinense (Brasil)
- **Material available:** full text in Spanish - 93 pages

MONTE-

CHARGE

CULTUREL

Sand-catcher

Omar Khalifah

FRENCH RIGHTS SOLD TO LIANA LEVI

DEBUT-NOVELIST

A dark-humored fable on Palestinian identity, exile and collective memory.

Four Palestinian journalists employed at a Jordanian newspaper are tasked with producing a report for the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the Nakba, the "ataclysm that upended Palestine in 1948. They are initially confident in the outcome of their assignment to interview an elderly Palestinian who is the last surviving member of his family to have witnessed the catastrophe known as the *Nakba*. Very soon, however, they are rudely confronted by his seemingly perverse refusal to speak to them - or to anyone - about his background. After the journalists' feet are held to the fire by their editor-in-chief, they grow increasingly desperate to wrest the old man's story from him.

Omar Khalifah's first novel is a breath of fresh air in the Arabic literary landscape. With a well-conducted plot and a sarcastic tone, fairly uncommon in Arabic literature, the writer reflects on the Palestinian identity, in all its nuanced diversity, exile and collective memory, topics that are also at the heart of his academic research.

About the author

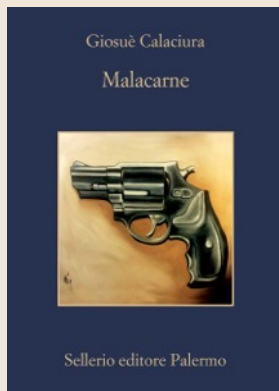
Of Palestinian background, Omar Khalifah grew up in Jordan. He holds a PhD from Columbia University and currently teaches Arabic literature and culture at Georgetown University's Qatar campus. His previous publications include *Nasser in the Egyptian Imaginary* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017) and a short story collection, *Ka'annani Ana (As if I Were Myself)*, published in 2010. *Sand-catcher* is his first novel.

« Omar Khalifah surprises his readers with tightly-wrought prose, succinct and dense. » Katia Tawil, The Independent

- **Publisher:** Dar al-Ahlia (Jordan), Liana Levi (France)
- **Material available:** full text in Arabic and in English - 206 pages

Titles from the backlist:

- *As if I were me*, a collection of short stories



Malacarne

Giosuè Calaciura

A mafia story told as an unstoppable lava flow, a confession fueled by the urge to unveil what has been silenced for too long.

Malacarne, “bad flesh” in Sicilian, means petty mobster. The novel, in the shape of a long monologue of Malacarne addressed to a judge, offers a deep dive in the rise and fall of a mafioso.

Like a lava flow, the Sicilian mafia mobster unveils his life to a judge, from his poor childhood to his first petty offences, the years spent in prison, the thriving business of drug-trafficking, the constant rivalry with other gangs....As we get into the head of this violent character, we also go through the history of Southern Italy from the 60s to the 90s and major political events such as the maxi-trial of Palermo.

The confession is remorseless, and death, always violent and inevitable, is described crudely, stripped of any emotions. The narrator does not spare any realistic details about his crimes. Yet, the story constantly flirts with an imaginary world full of hyperboles and grotesqueries.

About the author

Giosuè Calaciura, born in Palermo in 1960, is a prolific writer. He has published 13 books since his debut novel *Malacarne* (Sellerio, 1998). With a background in journalism, he draws inspiration from the reality of his homeland, Sicily. In 2017, his novel *Borgo Vecchio* was awarded the prestigious Volponi Prize. His work is translated in French, German and Spanish.

« **Calaciura is an important name of the Sicilian literature, and beyond. There is no doubt about it. He is, with some other writers, our only wealth.** » Andrea Camilleri

« **This novel has been and remains a very important book for me.** » Jérôme Ferrari, French writer and winner of the Goncourt Prize

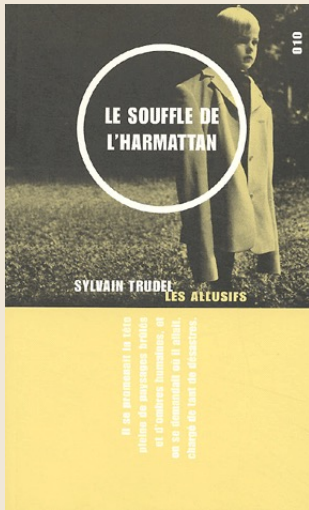
« **Baroque, burlesque, prophetic, epic, apocalyptic, Nietzschean, the language of Calaciura sweeps everything away.** » Vigousse, Stéphane Babey

« **Readers of *Malacarne* still remember, somewhere in their flesh if not in their memory, the incipit of this book, as they necessarily keep the memory of its scorched and burning language.** » Claro, Le Monde

- **Publishers:** Sellerio (Italy); Les Allusifs (Québec); Aufbau (Germany); Notabilia (France)
- **Material available:** Full text in Italian and in French - 216 pages; English excerpt;

Titles from the backlist:

- *Io sono Gesù*, the interior monologue of the infamous prophet
- *Borgo Vecchio*, a melodramatic fable and heartfelt portrait of Southern Italy.
- *Sgobbo*, a deep dive into the daily life of an African prostitute in Sicily.
- *Pantelleria*, an intimate and magical discovery of the Italian island at the crossroad of cultures.



Le souffle de l'harmattan

Sylvain Trudel

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RANKED IN THE TOP-10
BEST QUEBEC BOOK OF THE DECADE

Between childhood illusions and the end of innocence, two friends from different cultural backgrounds dream of exile and new beginnings.

Le souffle de l'harmattan is the story of a chosen brotherhood, not imposed by blood, a new brotherhood shaped by shared dreams and wounds.

Habéké Axoum, a young African survivor of "a war of men added to the drought of God", finds himself in Canada after having seen his family die, but the well-being of his new material life cannot make him forget the past or silence his aspiration to find ltyopya, his mythical homeland.

In his mad quest, Habéké meets Hugues Francoeur, an orphan raised in a foster family and the narrator. Together, they will try by all means to escape from the vulgarity, stupidity, violence and latent racism that surround them. A moving and disturbing story told with the voice of kid reminiscent of Roman Gary's *La vie devant soi* and Rejan Ducharme hallucinatory prose.

About the author

Sylvain Trudel was born in Montréal in 1963. He is the author of multiple children's books, collections of short stories and novels, among them *Du mercure sous la langue* (Les Allusifs, 2001) and *Le Souffle de l'Harmattan* (Les Allusifs, 2002). Awarded many times for his pieces, he received the Prix des libraires du Québec for *Du mercure sous la langue*. Though he has retired from the literary scene more than a decade ago, his artistic legacy keeps on inspiring numerous artists.

« Put this book on your rereading or reading list, along with *L'éducation sentimentale* de Flaubert. » Pierre Yergeau, writer

« A fresh little novel, teeming with life, of uncommon strength, to be situated somewhere between Émile Ajar and Réjean Ducharme. » Gilles Marcotte, L'actualité

« What a beautiful story! And what a fervor... This first novel is a beautiful bouquet of emotions, sometimes serious and sometimes cheerful, composed with constant care. »
Réginald Martel, La Presse

- **Publishers:** Les Allusifs (Québec); 10/18 (France); Archipelago (USA)
- **Award:** Prix Canada-Suisse; Prix de l'Académie des Lettres du Québec
- **Material available:** Full text in french - 168 pages; English excerpt

Titles from the backlist:

- *Du mercure sous la langue*, the monologue of a dying 17-year-old who spins out hallucinatory thoughts, nihilist poetry and metaphysical reflections

MONTE-

CHARGE

CULTUREL

Sous le ciel vide

Raphaël Nizan

AN ANONYMOUS NOVEL PUBLISHED
BY THE MYTHICAL
EDITIONS MAURICE NADEAU

The passionate love and downward spiral of two teenagers left to themselves in the Paris of the late 1980s.

Notre-Dame's fire in 2019 brutally plunges the narrator into the memory of a burning episode of his youth. Thirty years earlier, he was 18 years old and standing at the top of the cathedral's towers with the beautiful Ayla, one year his junior.

They live a love affair fueled by their adolescent rage and immense solitude. Wandering around Paris, they go from squats to nightclubs, from cafés to seedy hotels. Ayla occasionally prostitutes herself while the narrator, from a bourgeois family and rejected by his abusive mother, hustles. Together, they dance for several months on the edge of the abyss before Ayla leaves Paris for good.

Sous le ciel vide is the story of a passionate love affair, carried by a hypnotic language. It is also the portrait of an era that left a whole generation torn between the end of ideologies and the illusion of an endless party, and a powerful evocation of a Paris that no longer exists, both gloomy and grandiose.

About the author :

Nothing is known about Raphaël Nizan except that he was born in Paris in the second half of the seventies. From an early age, he was at odds with his family and their social model, and as a child he became a truant, preferring books to lessons and the experiences that life could offer him to the promise of diplomas and secure careers.

« If the sky is indeed empty, this book is full of literature, so much so that one feels that the writer is also an immense reader. And the world, in this writing, becomes beautiful and desirable again. »

Gabrielle Napoli, En attendant Nadeau

« Nizan navigates us through a sinuous and ample language. It gives his story all its density, this disenchanted tone, magnificently exhausted, which recalls the great romantic texts of the early 19th century. » Stéphane Koechlin, Marianne

« This is a very powerful story, carried by meandering, eminently poetic sentences, as if the images that clash in the descriptions, whether of places or of people, were tearing themselves away from the page to engulf the reader in the heart of the story. » Arnaud Laporte, France Culture

« This novel is a masterpiece like few others, its breathtaking writing tells a story of venomous beauty and boundless teenage passion. » Patrick Cargnelutti, Quatre sans quatre

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- **Publisher :** Editions Maurice Nadeau (France)
 - **Material available:** full text in French -120 pages

Rise and Fall of Parkinson disease

Svetislav Basara

MONTE-

CHARGE

CULTUREL

AWARDED WITH NIN PRIZE

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DALKEY ARCHIVE

An unblinking and unforgettable deconstruction of the Soviet psyche, exploring sanity and insanity, truth and untruth.

Told as an eclectic collection of appropriated testimonies, treatises, missives, and police files, *The Rise and Fall of Parkinson's Disease* follows the progression of the contagion's patient zero, a Soviet citizen (sometimes) named Demyan Lavrentyevich Parkinson, as he ascends from hellish health to the sacred illness.

Hailed as one of Serbia's most influential living writers, Svetislav Basara's scathing, irreverent critiques of authoritarianism have twice won him Serbia's prestigious NIN Award. In *The Rise and Fall of Parkinson's Disease*, Basara lives up to this reputation with a book as formally ambitious as it is intellectually sophisticated. His blend of grotesque absurdism and wry humor evokes the paranoid, vexing worlds of Franz Kafka's novels and the meta-textual assemblages of Paul Auster. Told from a colorful range of perspectives, the novel is a multifaceted, crystalline account of truth, lies, and history, a sprawling case study of humans in an inhuman society.

About the author:

Svetislav Basara is a writer, editor and former diplomat. He is the author of over thirty novels, short story collections, and essays translated into 10 languages. His writing has been praised for its caustic humor, its intellectual irreverence, and its impressive depiction of the absurd.

« Basara is an author capable of making fun of absolutely anything. »
Enrique Vila-Matas

« Basara is to literature what Kusturica is to cinema: a madman, a genius, a libertarian, an entertainer, a brazen, a sentimental. » Martine Laval, Téléràma

« Basara goes on a mission, lays mines, shakes certainties, sabotages reality through the absurd. »
Xavier Lapeyroux, Le Monde

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- **Publishers:** Derera (Serbia), Dalkey Archive (USA)
 - **Award:** NIN award
 - **Material available:** Full text in English - 276 pages

Selected titles from the backlist:

- *Mongolian travel guide*
- *The Angel of the Attack*
- *Winter solstice*

GRAPHIC NOVEL

- **Total Kar**
Zsuzsanna Szkurka



TOTAL KÁR

Zsuzsanna Szkurka

GRAPHIC NOVEL

An experimental graphic novel built from the collision of two different worlds: the author's conversations with taxi drivers in Mexico City and memories of her childhood in sovietic and post-sovietic Hungary.

Totál Kár is a long ride across time and geography. Behind the wheel are chatty cab drivers from Mexico City sharing horrific, deeply moving or cruel personal stories. On the passenger seat is a silent Hungarian passenger lost in his childhood memories, both intimate and political, of sovietic and post-sovietic Hungary.

Each chapter is built on the collision of a Mexican anecdote - all genuine stories that Zsuzsanna collected during the 20 years she spent in Mexico City - and a Hungarian memory - all from Zsuzanna's own childhood. Though years and miles apart, this two universes strangely echo one another.

Totál Kár's stories - which in Hungarian means "total disaster by shock" - are full of black humor. They are about everyday events, absurd and dark, but they are also a record of transitions: from childhood to adulthood, from communism to the neoliberalism, from Eastern Europe to Latin America. *Totál Kár* transitions are violent, unexpected and sordid, like car accidents themselves.

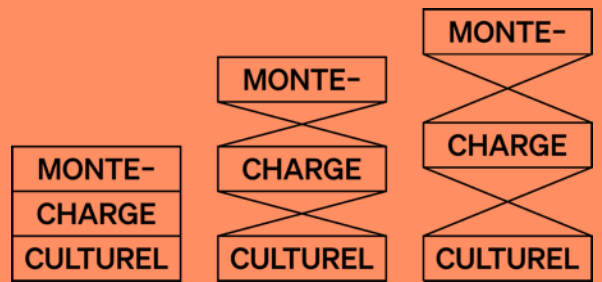
The drawing and text use tools such as black humor, caricature and the tragicomedy to balance the dark aspects of these two worlds.

- **Material available:** Full text in Spanish and in French - 188 pages; chapters translated into English

About the author

Zsuzsanna Szkurka was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1979 and has lived in Mexico City for over 20 years. A psychiatrist and illustrator, she has collaborated with writer Mario Bellatin on several editorial projects, worked with visual artist Francis Alÿs and illustrated dozens of books and magazines published by Alfaguara (Spain), Sexto Piso (Mexico), Phoneme Media (USA) and Ludion (Belgium). In 2022, she was selected for a six-month residency at Maison des auteurs de la Cité internationale de la BD d'Angoulême to work on her first graphic novel *Totál Kár*.

CONTACT



Sarah Barracco

sarah@montechargeculturel.com

+1 438 527 94 80 / +33 6 62 27 94 80

Brigitte Bouchard

brigitte@montechargeculturel.com

+1 514 704 03 80 / +33 6 99 12 73 57

Sub-agents:

So Far So Good Agency

Scandinavia, Iceland, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Slovakia

Magalie Delobelle

magalie@sfsgagency.com

Elsa Misson

elsa@sfsgagency.com

Agence Deborah Druba

Netherlands and Israel

Deborah Druba

agencedeborahdruba@gmail.com

Gray Hawk Agency

China and Taiwan

Nicolas Wu

nicolas@grayhawk-agency.com

<https://montechargeculturel.com/>