

**\*\*\* David Luxton shortlisted for Literary Agent of the Year 2018 \*\*\***

FRANKFURT 2018 SAGA AND HEARTWARMING ROMANCE HOTLIST

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**FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR: TABLES 27K AND 28K**

DLA represents the foreign rights for Judith Murdoch Literary Agency, a small and highly selective agency specialising in commercial and saga fiction.

For more information on Judith Murdoch’s agency please visit <http://www.judithmurdoch.co.uk/>.

Here’s a round-up of new titles:

**The Olive Garden Choir by Leah Fleming**

**Contemporary romance set in a Greek paradise – true old-fashioned storytelling at its best.**

**Head of Zeus (Laura Palmer)**

***PRAISE FOR LEAH FLEMING: 'A born storyteller' Kate Atkinson. 'It's a moving and compelling story about a lifetime's journey in search of the truth' Rachel Hore. 'A fabulous story of people, places and pearls from a master storyteller' Lancashire Post. 'Fascinating and unputdownable' Trisha Ashley.***

Set on the beautiful island of Santaniki, near Crete, this is a novel that will appeal to the fans of Deborah Moggach’s “The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel”. When retired bookseller Ariadne Blunt suggests to her neighbours on this heavenly island that they form a choir, there are groans of resistance. After a little persuasion, the group gather in Ariadne's olive garden to rehearse for a seasonal concert, but each member of this choir has their own anxieties and secrets. Ariadne's partner, Hebe, is in failing health. Clive struggles to accept the loss of his wife while Natalie hides her shameful secret in baking for comfort. Della, the Pilates teacher drinks too much and Chloe, Queen Bee of the village society, faces a family dilemma. Then there is Mel, the real songbird amongst them, English wife of a taverna owner who hides her talent until the choir inspires her to raise her voice once more. In this tiny community, the choir brings the residents together like never before in a bittersweet tale of love and loss - and how life can begin again when you let go of the past. Leah Fleming is the author of the international bestseller “The Captain’s Daughter” (Simon & Schuster, 2012) and many other wonderful novels. She lives in Crete.

Publication: January 2019

All rights: David Luxton Associates

**The Boy with the Blue Trousers by Carol Jones**

**Head of Zeus. Historical fiction.**

1856. Exiled from London after a scandalous liaison, English governess, Violet Hartley, lands on the wild shores of Robetown, South Australia, where her reputation does not precede her. As tutor to a grazier’s children, she longs to return to civilized society, and a wealthy husband might be just the ticket. But after being thrown into exile, Violet conceives a plan to seek her fortune on the goldfields of Australia… Meanwhile, in southern China, the rebellious Little Cat is on the run from a dangerous clan seeking vengeance for the murder of their leader. Under a new identity as a boy, Strong Arm, she flees to Australia in search of safety. But her past soon catches up with her.

From the author of *The Concubine’s Child*, *The Boy with the Blue Trousers* is a tale of love, revenge, and tragedy that will keep you guessing at every turn.

Publication: June 2019

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**Wartime Sweethearts by Lola Jaye**

**Ebury (Emily Lau). April 2019. 1940s love story.**

London, 1943 and Rosie has fallen head over heels in love with William, a black GI posted to England. When the war ends and William has to go back to the USA, Rosie is left holding not one but two babies – Iris who is black and Lily who is white. Taking pity on her sister, and with Rosie’s bullying husband on his way home, sister Flora takes baby Iris to her home in the English countryside. Over the course of the next 50 years, the twins’ paths will cross over and again without them ever knowing of each other’s existence until finally they travel to America to see their father, William, perhaps for the first and last time.

Publication: Summer 2019

Primary Agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**Two Lives of Eliza Bloom by Beth Miller**

**Bookouture, March 2019. Contemporary family drama that will appeal to fans of Elinor Lipman and Charlotte Mendolson.**

Eliza Bloom is getting married to a boy who has been chosen for her by her family. There’s nothing wrong with him. It’s just that Eliza isn’t in love with him – but with Alex. And so, she does the unthinkable and runs away on her wedding day to start a life outside the tightly-knit community of her Jewish family. It is only when her beloved grandfather needs her that she finally returns, now a mother, to face the music. Beth Miller is the author of “The Good Neigbour” and “When We Were Sisters” both of which were published by Ebury.

Publication: March 2019

Primary Agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**Greyfriars House** **by** **Emma Fraser**

**Sphere, UK & Commonwealth.**

An epic, sweeping drama about a family with secrets and a house shrouded in mystery, ***Greyfriars House*** is perfect for fans of **Rachel Hore**, **Kate Morton**, **Kate Riordan** and **Tracey Rees.**

**Praise for Emma Fraser:**

'A gripping tale . . . romance, adventure and an intriguing underlying mystery' - ***Lancaster Guardian***
'A heartbreaking novel of love and loss' - ***Blackpool Gazette***
'A powerful and at times gritty tale of love and loss . . . a great, insightful read' - **Novelicious**
'An epic tale of one woman's determination to follow her dreams' - ***People's Friend***
'First rate' - **Lovereading**
'Engaging and enjoyable'*-***The Historical Novel Society**

'I was absolutely gripped . . . the atmospheric setting of Greyfriars intertwined with the grim reality of the war camps of Singapore was inspirational.' **Linda Finlay**

'A thought-provoking and atmospheric read.' **Evie Grace**

**On a remote Scottish island sits** **Greyfriars House…**

**1939**
Nine-year-old Olivia Friel is delighted to be spending the summer at Greyfriars House, a place where her parents, their family and friends are always happy. But this year there's an underlying tension that Olivia doesn't understand. Then one night she sees something she's not meant to, and accidentally lets slip a devastating betrayal.

**1984**
Charlotte Friel gets a call from her ailing mother, asking something she's never asked before: for Charlotte to come home. There are things Olivia needs to tell her daughter before it's too late, secrets to be shared about forgotten relatives and a mysterious house.

Left reeling by recent events, Charlotte is unsure what path to follow. But eventually her curiosity, and a desire to escape her own life, lead her to Greyfriars House.

**Will she find the answers she needs to make peace with the past?**

Publication: August 2018 (pb)

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**The Girl I Used to Know by Faith Hogan**

Aria (Head of Zeus). A spell-binding story of two women who find friendship and second chances when they least expect it. Perfect for the fans of Patricia Scanlan.

Amanda King and Tess Cuffe are strangers who share the same Georgian house, but their lives couldn't be more different. Amanda seems to have it all, absolute perfection. Sadly, the reality is a soulless home, an unfaithful husband and a very lonely heart. By comparison, in the basement flat, unwanted tenant Tess has spent a lifetime hiding and shutting her heart to love. It takes a bossy doctor, a handsome gardener, a pushy teenager and an abandoned cat to show these two women that sometimes letting go is the first step to moving forward and new friendships can come from the most unlikely situations.

Publication: December 2017

Primary Agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation Rights: DLA

**Miss Nightingale’s Nurses by Kate Eastham**

**Series fiction, historical for fans of Donna Douglas’ nursing series.**

Kate Eastham’s debut historical saga is set to do very well indeed as the appetite for historical nursing stories continues apace! In this first novel, we meet the young and plucky Liverpool lass Ada Houston as she travels to the Crimea with a group of army wives in search of her brother. There she ends up joining the team of Florence Nightingale’s nurses and has a baptism by fire in Scutari and Balaclava.

Kate Eastham plans to follow *Miss Nightingale’s Nurses* with a series of standalone stories set mainly in Liverpool which track the history of nursing in Britain. Her next novel, *The Liverpool Nurses,* is set amidst the surge of post-Crimean Nightingale nursing and features the first probationer nurses at the Liverpool Royal Infirmary. Kate has over thirty years nursing experience and knows her stuff!

UK and Commonwealth: Michael Joseph

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

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**Miss Mary’s Daughter by Diney Costeloe**

**Head of Zeus. UK & Commonwealth.Mass Market Historical Fiction.**

**DINEY COSTELOE HAS NOW SOLD OVER 2 MILLION COPIES OF HER BOOKS ACROSS ALL FORMATS INCLUDING THE US!**

**READERS LOVE HER! 4,OOO 5\* REVIEWS**

A gritty and heartrending drama set in 19th-century Cornwall. Orphan Sophie and her friend Hannah are welcomed into the Penvarrow family but tensions rise and family secrets are revealed. After her mother's death, twenty-year-old Sophie Ross is left orphaned in London. With no money and little chance of an income, she tries to get work as a governess to avoid destitution. Now alone in the world, she only has the company of her erstwhile nursemaid and faithful friend, Hannah.

But unbeknown to Sophie, her mother instructed Hannah to post a letter to Trescadinnick House in Cornwall upon her death. The letter will be the catalyst that changes Sophie's life forever as she learns of her mother's romance, marriage and then ultimate rejection by her own father and the estranged family she left behind in Cornwall. The Penvarrow family welcome Sophie and Hannah into their fold, but tensions rise and family secrets are revealed as Sophie attempts to rebuild her life and find happiness.

Publication: May 2018

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA (option in Netherlands with De Fontein)

**The Little Teashop of Lost and Found by Trisha Ashley**

**Commercial Women’s Fiction**

**Black Swan (Transworld) WEL. (Francesca Best)**

**Sunday Times Top Ten Bestseller in hardcover and paperback**

The latest novel from Sunday Times bestselling author of “Chocolate Shoes and Wedding Blues”. Alice Rose is a foundling, discovered on the Yorkshire moors above Haworth as a tiny baby. Adopted and then later rejected again by a horrid step-mother when her beloved adoptive father dies, Alice spends years trying to find a place where she belongs. Only baking – even the scent of cinnamon and citrus and the feel of butter and flour between her fingers – brings a comforting sense of home.

Publication: March 2017

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Sold: Portugal (Leya)

Translation rights: DLA

**The Concubine’s Child by Carol Jones**

**Head of Zeus.**

In 1930s Malaysia, sixteen-year-old Yu Lan is in love with her best friend, Ming, whose father owns one of the busiest kopi shops in Petaling Street. But Ming's family don't see the apothecary's daughter as a suitable wife – for Yu Lan's father, Lim, spends more time playing mahjong than selling herbal remedies. It's not long before Lim makes a terrible decision that will change Yu Lan's life forever, selling her as a concubine to the wealthy, ageing Towkay Chan who is desperate for a male heir.

The consequences of Lim's betrayal resonate through four generations and into the present day, where Yu Lan's great-grandson, Nick, is searching for his lost family history. His wife, Sarah, begins to be very afraid of what he will find as past and present meld into one.

Publication: June 2018

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Extent: 320pp

**The First Dance by Catherine Law**

**Historical romance. Zaffre/Bonniers. WEL.**

**Perfect for fans of Judith Lennox, Santa Montefiore and Tracy Rees.**

**To find what she has lost**, **she must go back to the beginning . . .**

**1924**
The First World War is over and eleven-year-old Alexa is growing up on the idyllic Cornish coast with her best friend Harvey. But she soon discovers there are secrets at the heart of her family that have been hidden for years.

**1931**
Alexa flees Cornwall for the intoxicating city of Venice. But her new glamorous life is not what she hoped for and, with dark shadows closing in on her, Alexa will question everything she thought she wanted . . .

Publication: March 2018

All rights: DLA

Option held by Weltbild for Germany.

**A House to Mend a Broken Heart by Alison Sherlock**

**Aria. Commercial contemporary humorous women’s fiction.**

A new series set in a crumbling stately home. Perfect for fans of Milly Johnson and Lucy Diamond.

***Everyone* is hiding from something...**

Willow Tree Hall has seen much better days and has been the proud ancestral home of the Earl and Countess of Cranley for centuries.

With no qualifications and escaping her past Annie Rogers takes the job as housekeeper to widowed Arthur, the charming current Earl of Cranley. After a bad fall puts Arthur in hospital, it's up to a reluctant heir apparent Sam Harris, to lend a helping hand and try to find a sustainable future for the Estate. With the house requiring a full renovation Annie suddenly finds herself completely out of her depth with a team of dodgy builders and Sam watching critically from the side-lines. Sam is running from his past and Annie is hiding from hers, so just maybe together they can bring Willow Tree Hall back to life.

The start of a beautiful new series focusing on the lives and loves, trial and tribulations of all those who live and work at Willow Tree Hall.

Publication: July 2017

All rights: DLA

**Daughters of India by Jill McGivering**

**Historical fiction set in 1940s. Allison & Busby. WEL.**

Isabel, born into the British Raj, and Asha, a young Hindu girl, both consider India their home. Through mischance and accident their stories intersect and circumstances will bring them from the bustling city of Delhi to the shores of the Andaman Islands, from glittering colonial parties to the squalor and desperation of a notorious prison; and into the lives of men on opposing sides of the fight for self-government.

As the shadow of the Second World War falls across India, Isabel, caught up in growing political violence, has to make impossible choices – fighting for her love for India, for the man she yearns for, and for her childhood Indian friend, in the face of loyalty to her own country.

M/s available

Publication: June 2017

Primary Agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**Secrets We Keep by Faith Hogan**

NOW SOLD OVER 30,000 COPIES IN THE UK!

**Two distant relatives, drawn together in companionship are forced to confront their pasts and learn that some people are good at keeping secrets and some secrets are never meant to be kept.

A bittersweet story of love, loss and life. Perfect for the fans of Patricia Scanlan and Adele Parks.**

The beautiful old Bath House in Ballytokeep has lain empty and abandoned for decades. For devoted pensioners Archie and Iris, it holds too many conflicting memories of their adolescent dalliances and tragic consequences – sometimes it's better to leave the past where it belongs.

For high-flying, top London divorce lawyer Kate Hunt, it's a fresh start – maybe even her future. On a winter visit to see her estranged Aunt Iris she falls in love with the Bath House. Inspired, she moves to Ballytokeep leaving her past heartache 600 miles away – but can you ever escape your past or your destiny?

**What people are saying about *SECRETS WE KEEP***:

'**This is a beautifully written story** of second chances, starting afresh and reconciling with the past'

'This book is something really different, **one to escape into and an author I'm loving more and more with every book**'

'**Heartwarming, hopeful, amazing**'

'**Full of interest, complexity and intrigue**'

PB Publication: February 2017

All rights: DLA

**Also by Faith Hogan:**

My Husband’s Wives – NOW SOLD OVER 52,000 COPIES IN THE UK!

**The Glovemaker’s Daughter by Leah Fleming**

**Simon & Schuster**

**FROM THE ACCLAIMED AUTHOR OF *THE OLIVE GARDEN* CHOIR, THE *LAST PEARL* AND *DANCING AT THE VICTORY CAFE*, this is a beautiful novel about dark family secrets, betrayal, love and redemption.**

**1666.** A child is born in the farmhouse at Windebank, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Named Rejoice (Joy) by her dying father, Joy grows up witness to the persecution of the farming community for following a banned faith. Defying the authority of the local priest, she joins a group of Yorkshire pioneers travelling to the New World to form a colony close to Philadelphia - a passionate, rebellious and courageous woman fighting against the constraints of the time. Will she find peace and love?

**2014.** A leather-bound book is found buried in the walls of the Meeting House in Good Hope, Pennsylvania. Its details trace the owner back to a Yorkshire farm in the Dales.  And so a correspondence begins between Rachel Moorside and the man who found the journal, Sam Storer, as Rachel uncovers the tumultuous secrets of her family’s history.

Publication: November 2016 (pb)

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**Lizzie’s War by Rosie Clarke**

**Historical Romance**

 **Hundreds of 5\*Amazon reviews**

**Aria Fiction. UK & Commonwealth.**

**Rosie Clarke now has combined sales of over 75,000 copies in ebook!**

*The heart-warming sequel to Rosie Clarke’s bestselling drama,* ***Lizzie’s Secret****.*

Against the devastating Blitz of London, normal life must continue for Lizzie Larch. With Sebastian returning to War, Lizzie, must, alone make a success of her business in order to survive and care for herself and her young child.

Silently, from the shadows, her secret enemy watches and waits, threatening to ruin Lizzie and everything she holds close.

Battling against shortages her hats become more popular, but what of the man she loves? Will he ever return? What Lizzie knows now is that success can mean nothing without love.

Publication: September 2016

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**The Mistress of Windfell Manor by Diane Allen**

**Macmillan. UK & Commonwealth**

**5\*Amazon reviews**

<http://www.diane-allen.co.uk/>

“If you are a lover of historical sagas and the sweep of the northern hills and their romance, then this novel is definitely for you” (*Historical Novel Society*)

“A cosy read that feels perfect for the winter months. Set in the Yorkshire Dales, this story is atmospheric and even a little heart-breaking” (*The Bookbag*)

*“The one you marry isn’t always the one you should trust…”*

Charlotte Booth loves her father and the home they share, which is set high up in the limestone escarpments of Crummockdale. But when a new businessman in the form of Joseph Dawson enters their lives, both Charlotte and her father decide he's the man for her and, within six months, Charlotte marries the dashing mill owner from Accrington.

Then a young mill worker is found dead in the swollen River Ribble. With Joseph's business nearly bankrupt, it becomes apparent that all is not as it seems and Joseph is not the man he pretends to be. Heavily pregnant, penniless and heartbroken, Charlotte is forced to face the reality that life may never be the same again . . .

Publication: August 2016

Translation rights: DLA

**Nobody’s Child by Elizabeth Gill**

**Quercus. UK & Commonwealth**

**5\*Amazon reviews**

**A moving tearjearker for fans of Maggie Hope and Dilly Court.**

*'A wonderful book, full of passion, pain, sweetness, twists and turns'*

**Sheila Newberry.**

From the bestselling author of *Miss Appleby's Academy* and *Far From My Father's House*comes a heartwarming tale of family and overcoming adversity.

'Kath walked for so long that she wanted to lie down in the snow and sleep but she thought of her sister and knew she must go on. Soon the snow was so deep that she couldn't move. She could feel her shoes disintegrating and her feet were numb. The sky cleared and a great big moon came out and there were so many stars. She remembered what her mother had said before she died, that each star was one of her people. She musn't give up now . . .'

When their mother dies and their father, in his grief, burns down their wagon and runs away, Kath and Ella - gypsy sisters - suddenly become orphans. With no one to turn to for help, they face hardship and hunger at every turn. Will their special sisters' bond be strong enough to see them to safety?

PB publication: November 2016

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

**Mothers and Daughters by Minna Howard**

**Heartwarming romantic women’s fiction.**

**Aria. UK & Commonwealth**

A wonderfully warm novel to curl up with about family loss, hidden secrets and new beginnings. Perfect for fans of Trisha Ashley. Alice finds herself suddenly widowed in her early forties, leaving her with an empty house and a lonely heart. Laura and Evie, her twenty-something daughters announce their separate and unexpected news, which ploughs Alice straight out of grieving and into the prospect planning a wedding and becoming a reluctant – yet glamorous – granny, to not one, but three grandchildren. Frank, an old family friend returns to give his godchild Laura away at her wedding. A whole host of secrets unfold that rock the family's foundations and set Alice free to finally begin a new, exciting chapter of her life with no regrets.

Minna Howard is the pen name of Mary de Lazlo, an established author and fashion journalist. It has sold nearly 50,000 copies in ebook for Aria since it was published a year ago! She is also the author of A WINTER AFFAIR (<http://headofzeus.com/book/winter-affair>) – the story of Eloise, recently divorced, who finds herself whisked off to Verbier to help run her godfather’s chalet in the famous ski resort…

Publication: May 2016

Primary agent: Judith Murdoch

Translation rights: DLA

Other saga authors represented by Judith Murdoch include…

**Mary Wood:**

Born the thirteenth child of fifteen to a middle-class mother and an East End barrow boy, Mary Wood’s childhood was a mixture of love and poverty. This encouraged her to develop a natural empathy with the less fortunate and a fascination with social history.

An avid reader, she first put pen to paper in 1989 whilst nursing her mother through her last months, but didn’t become successful until she began self-publishing her novels in 2011. A top 10 Kindle bestselling ebook author, she is published by Macmillan.

[www.marywood.com](http://mary-wood18.blogspot.co.uk/) / [@MaryWood](https://twitter.com/Authormary) / [facebook.com/MaryWood](https://www.facebook.com/HistoricalNovels)

**Sheila Jeffries:**

Sheila Jeffries made a considerable contribution to children’s literature when she was very young. She wrote four full-length children’s novels, which were published before she left school and continued to sell worldwide until the eighties.  She began to write full time in 1982 under the name SHEILA HAIGH, and had eight more children’s books published by Methuen, Blackie and Scholastic.

Now living in Somerset, Sheila is writing some new books for children, an adult saga, and two non-fiction Mind Body Spirit books. *Solomon’s Tale*was inspired by two real cats. It is published by Avon HarperCollins and went straight into the Sunday Times Top Twenty bestseller list. She also writes sagas, and*The Boy with No Boots* was a Sunday Times bestseller.

[www.sheilajeffries.com](http://www.sheilajeffries.com/) / [@sheliajeffries](https://twitter.com/sheilajeffries1)

**Carol Rivers:**

Carol Rivers writes gritty, heartwarming East End sagas. Set on the Isle of Dogs, she draws inspiration from her large East End family who were evacuated from Docklands during the Blitz.

[www.carolrivers.com](http://www.carolrivers.com/) / [@carol\_rivers](https://twitter.com/carol_rivers)

**Anne Bennett:**

Anne Bennett was born in the Horsefair district of Birmingham. The daughter of Roman Catholic Irish immigrants, she grew up on a tight-knit community. For many years she taught in schools to the north of Birmingham, before an accident put paid to that career. This gave her the chance to write full-time. She has four children and five grandchildren. After sixteen years in a wheelchair, Anne was able to walk again. Her bestselling sagas are published by HarperCollins.

[www.annebennett.co.uk](http://www.annebennett.co.uk/)

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