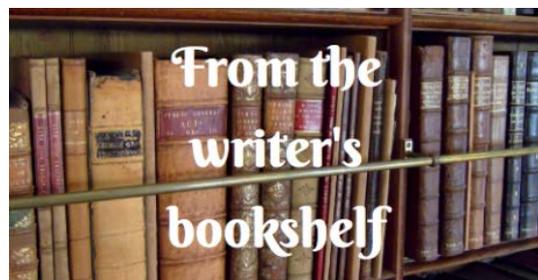




February 2022

The February issue of *The HistWriter* comes to you from Wexford in Ireland. Spring is starting, the days lengthening, and birds chirruping in the trees. For Valentine's Day I have a little pastiche of a Regency romance for you - '*A Month at Bath*' - a look forward to the release of '*The Corset Maker*' by Annette Libeskind Berkovits, and a '*Black Drop*' of 18th Century Noir from Leonora Natrass.

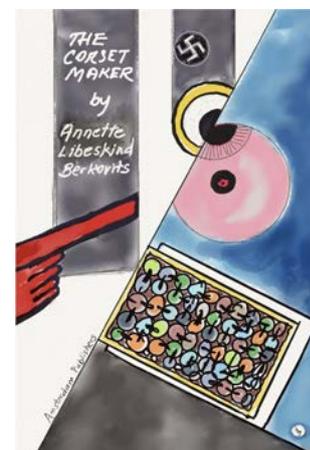


Amsterdam Publishers, 2022

The Corset Maker - Annette Libeskind Berkovits

This powerful work of 20th century historical fiction comes out on International Women's Day, March 8th, 2022.

I've been fortunate to witness the development of this stunning novel written by Annette Libeskind Berkovits, a writer based in New York.



[Find it on Amazon.co.uk \(UK\)](#)

[Find it on Amazon.com \(US\)](#)

Annette's life as an environmental educator is described in her memoir

'Confessions of An Accidental Zoo Curator' while 'In The Unlikeliest of Places' describes her father's astonishing story of escape from the Nazis during World War 2 and survival in the gulags. Annette's poetry chapbook *'Erythra Thalassa: Brain Disrupted'* is a mother's moving lament for a life-changing illness that befell her son.

'*The Corset Maker*', Annette's first work of fiction, is a vivid narrative based on the true life experiences of her mother and her mother's contemporaries. It transports the reader effortlessly to a past era, while posing a universal question about how to survive as a woman while balancing personal responsibility, solidarity and pacifism.

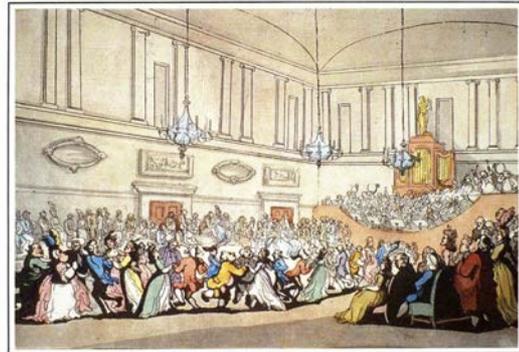
We first meet the Corset Maker of the title as she rebels against her Orthodox Jewish upbringing in inter-war Warsaw, striking out for independence with her friend to open a corsetiere's shop. The departure of her elder sister to join Jewish settlers in Palestine and the arrival of Nazism in Poland combine to send her on an odyssey through Israel and Europe during the cataclysms of the mid 20th century. As she encounters danger, suffering and the anguish of an impossible love she is plunged into political and personal conflict. She is constantly forced by circumstances to question and challenge her own deeply held principles, yet her resilience and commitment to the welfare of others continually shine through the darkest moments.

The ambitious historical sweep of this saga, populated with fascinating and original characters offers a rarely seen perspective on the 20th century. It's complemented by a cover designed by Annette's brother, the internationally renowned architect Daniel Libeskind.

A short story for Valentine's Day: 'A Month at Bath'

A tongue-in-cheek Regency romance pastiche

[Read for free on HistWriter.com](#)

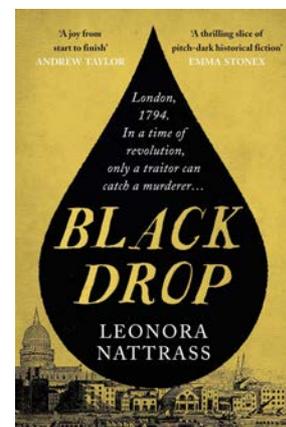


Viper, 2021

Black Drop - Leonora Natrass

Leonora Natrass's '*Black Drop*' follows books like Laura Shepherd Robinson's '*Blood and Sugar*' and Niklas Natt och Dag's '*1793: The Wolf and the Watchman*' in the increasingly popular genre of 18th Century Noir. That world, ruled by a corrupt elite presiding autocratically over exploited and destitute masses, seems - can't think why - to resonate with today's reader.

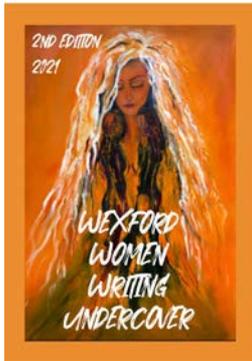
[Find it on Amazon.co.uk](#)



This stylishly written political crime thriller has a pitch-perfect voice, skilfully embedding the argot of the day. Vivid scenes and characters bring Georgian London to life with its stenchy criminality, riotous crowd scenes, pub brawls, shows and spectacles. Politicians and civil servants jostle for self-benefit in the hierarchy.

While weedy bespectacled clerk Laurence Jago tries to untangle a web of murderous intrigues and secrets surrounding a treason trial, he also struggles with his drug habit. If the story has a weakness it is that while the 'Black Drop' adds to his problems it also reduces his agency and adds confusing dream sequences as we head into the bowels of the plot.

Relief is at hand from the Falstaffian character Philpott, a rumbustious journalist, who carries the whole proceedings and is the engine for the plot's resolution. Here Leonie Natrass has created the potential for an Inspector Morse - Sergeant Lewis style pairing to populate her sequels.



Next time: Wexford Women Writing Undercover

A periodical of women's writing and art from Wexford's thriving creative community

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