

●●● ADULT NON-FICTION
VOLWASSE VAKLEKTUUR

HATZFELD, Jean

Into the quick of life: the Rwandan genocide - the survivors speak.- Serpent's Tail, 2005.

A time for machetes: the Rwandan genocide - the killers speak.- Serpent's Tail, 2005.

'In 1994, about 50 000 Tutsis, out of a population of around 59 000, were massacred by machete, from Monday, 11th April at 11:00am to Saturday 14th May at 14:00pm, and thereafter every day of the week from 9:30am to 14:00pm, by Hutu militia and neighbours in the hills of the town land of Nyamata, in Rwanda.'

That is the opening sentence of **Into the quick**, the first book about the Rwandan genocide written by Madagascan-born, French novelist and journalist, Jean Hatzfeld. In it, fourteen survivors speak of their horrific experiences: the murder of their families and friends, their own flight into the Bugesera marshes, and their attempts to make sense of it all. The accounts are in their own words; for this edition they have been translated into English from their Rwandan French. Three years later he published the second book, **A time for machetes**, this one presenting narratives by ten of the killers, men who had grown up together and stayed together during the genocide. It is an extraordinary book, and even more shocking and horrifying than the first because of the matter-of-fact tone of the men's stories. It is almost incomprehensible how ordinary men like these could have got up every day, had breakfast, and then gone off, armed with their machetes, to kill people - many of whom they knew. They killed people who were their neighbours and, in one case recounted here, a teammate in the local soccer side. Some black and white photographs are included in the first book, but only one, a picture of nine of the killers, in the second.

Susan Sontag wrote in the preface: 'To make an effort to understand what happened in Rwanda is a painful task that we have no right to shirk - it is part of being a moral adult. Everyone should read Hatzfeld's book.'

SCG

KELMAN, Nic

Video game art.- Assouline, 2005.

With qualifications in the areas of technology and art, the author is well placed to write about the culture and art of the video game. This is not strictly speaking a book about the visual component of the video game and written about in the style of an art book, rather it is a very general discussion about video games and their importance as a product of our culture, that is, a form of art. The author writes in an accessible way and makes the point that future generations may see video games as art, just as the cinema is seen as such. In addition to his essays that discuss subjects such as the different types of

protagonists one finds in video games to how the visuals imitate reality, there are masses of colour reproductions of stills from the games themselves. This book really educates the reader, both gamer and non-gamer alike, to the history and significance of video games and the artistic skill involved in their production.

JdeB

LAIDLER, Keith

Female Caligula: Ranavalona, the mad queen of Madagascar.- Wiley, 2005.

A fascinating journey to early nineteenth-century Madagascar, a subject seldom covered and an area we as readers know so little about.

Keith Laidler delivers an interesting history of one of this island's most ruthless rulers, namely Ranavalona, who was queen for thirty-three years following her husband's death. Ranavalona ruled the island effectively albeit ruthlessly according to European standards, earning the nickname 'female Caligula' due to regular oppression of local Christians. This effectively kept colonial expansionist countries at bay. It was only after her death when less violent and more open-minded rulers gave way to foreign imperial pressures, that Madagascar would become a French colony. **Female Caligula** is available from the Central Reference Collection (SN), but more copies will be considered for purchase in a cheaper, paperback edition.

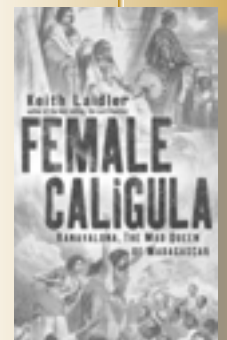
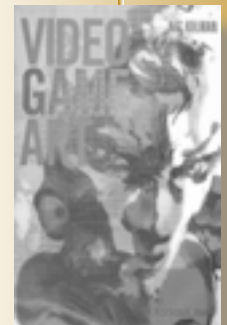
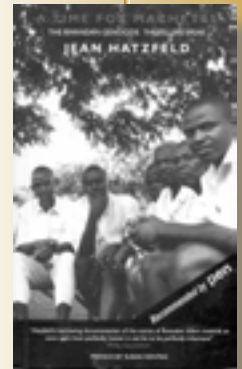
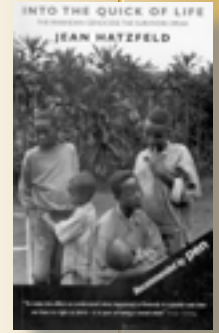
EB

Number four: the making of Constitutional Hill.- Penguin, 2006.

The publishers at Penguin SA have put together a very interesting book about the making of Constitutional Hill in Johannesburg, the site of the new Constitutional Court on the grounds of what used to be the prison known as Number Four. This is mostly a visual record, with many captions and interesting sidebars with information. And it is wonderfully organised, so that the reader can get a real sense of the progress of this site from its early days as a prison built in the days of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) to a prison that is described as Johannesburg's Robben Island. And then most importantly here, from the time that it was decided that the site should be the home of the new court, through all the stages of the design process and the way in which the site was turned into a heritage site. It contains information about the design brief, the architectural plans put forward and the winning bid for the Constitutional Court, the ways in which the people in the area and past prisoners were brought in through workshops to create the historical record that became part of/informed the exhibitions.

Constitution Hill is an important heritage site and people I know who have visited it have raved about the experience of going there. And this is such an interesting book on it, filled with direct quotes from many people who have been involved in some way in creating what it stands for.

JdeB





PINNOCK, Don

Blue ice: travels in Antarctica.- Double Storey, 2005.

Don Pinnock who writes a natural history column for local travel magazine **Getaway** shares with the reader his recent visit to the South African base known as Sansa 4 in Queen Maud Land.

Based on his diaries, Pinnock adds some natural science, history, reminiscing on the experiences of well-known explorers to the area such as Captain Cook, Von Bellinghausen, Roald Amundsen, Edmund Hilary and of course Shackleton.

Armed with thermal underwear, the largest pair of boots imaginable, fleecy tops, as well as other articles of clothing, Pinnock soon realises how necessary these are when first confronted by the area's extreme cold.

There he goes for long walks, meets some rather eccentric people, visits a few local bases of other countries, and even experiences a blizzard.

A braai on ice is something extraordinary, as well as a few nights spent totally alone in the company of an old ice hand in this icy wilderness - all just too incredible to imagine.

Exquisite colour photographs highlight the author's visit, and these have an almost surreal quality capturing the beauty and majesty of this vast untamed wilderness.

EB



VAN DER WATT, Jan en TOLMIE, Francois

Die Apokriewe Ou en Nuwe Testament: verlore boeke uit die Bybelse tyd.- CUM; 2005.

Vir die meeste Christene is die 66 boeke van die Bybel die alfa en omega. Wat sommige egter nie weet nie, is dat daar ook ander geskryfte is wat uit die tyd van die Ou en Nuwe Testament dateer. Hierdie geskryfte, bekend as die Apokriewe, is tot vandag nog steeds deel van die Katolieke Bybel.

In hierdie titel bied skrywers Jan van der Watt en Francois Tolmie 'n insiggewende kykie op die boeke van die Apokriewe. Die teks verskaf diepgaande inligting oor hierdie onderskeie Bybelboeke. Spesifieke inligting word verskaf: die skrywer en tydlyn van elke boek, die inhoud en waarde van die boek asook 'n lys van verwysings in die boek wat ooreenstem met ander boeke in die Bybel. Die teks sluit ook verrykingsblokkies in ter verklarings van die inhoud. Ideaal vir teoloë en diegene wat die Bybel bestudeer.

EMW

●●● **ADULT FICTION**
VOLWASSE VERHALENDE
LEKTUUR

JONCOUR, Serge

UV.- Black Swan, 2005.

Strongly reminiscent of Patricia Highsmith's 1950 novel **The talented Mr. Ripley**, this translated French novel manages to evoke a similar, unsettling atmosphere of brooding menace.

The story opens with a wealthy French family on holiday at their summer home in Brittany, eagerly awaiting the arrival of their son Philip, who has been in America for eighteen months.

As their anticipation heightens, Boris, a handsome blond stranger arrives claiming to be an old school friend of Philip.

With immeasurable charm, Boris soon becomes part of the family, indirectly taking Philip's place. The parents soon dote on him and their daughters fall for his smouldering good looks. Only André-Pierre, Philip's brother-in-law, remains impervious to the stranger's charms. He suspects Boris to be a malignant menace to the family but cannot quite prove it.

UV has a dark nightmare-like quality that subtly and slowly lures the reader into its mystery. Winner of the Prix Roman France Television Award, this chilling European crime noir novel is sure to appeal to readers of the genre.

EB

RICE, Anne

Christ the Lord: out of Egypt.- Chatto, 2005.

Anne Rice, author of the best-selling *The Vampire Chronicles* series ventures into a new domain, and here chronicles the young life of Jesus Christ.

Based on the Gospels and her research into the period, the author delivers a gripping and human story of the young Jesus who, unaware of his destiny, is yet aware of being somewhat different.

The narrator is Jesus and we share in his confusion and eventual enlightenment as the story progresses.

The story opens at the time that the family and other Jewish refugees live in Alexandria where the seven-year-old Jesus receives a good education and is a promising scholar.

After an incident where Jesus is responsible for the death of a bullying sibling and then for restoring his life, the family decides to return to their homeland. The hated ruler of Judea, Herod, has recently died and so begins the journey of the whole family to an unstable Judea.

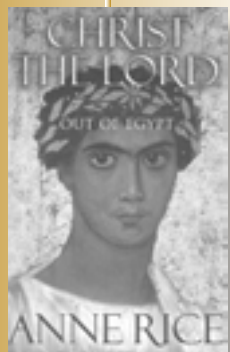
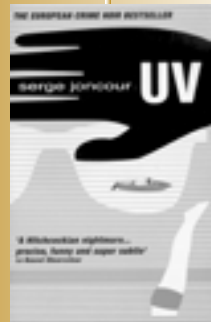
This daring departure from her usual field is made alive by the author's superb story-telling and this has received encouraging published reviews.

EB

SCHMITT, Eric-Emmanuel

Oscar and the lady in pink.- Atlantic, 2005.

Oscar and the lady in pink, written by a French playwright and novelist, was a surprise bestseller overseas. Packaged almost as a gift book, this small hardback novella is a quick, easy read. It is an inspirational book about love and loss and suffering. It is set in the hospital ward where 10-year-old Oscar, a terminal cancer patient, lives. He is befriended by an elderly hospital volunteer, the 'lady in pink' of the title. She suggests a way of dealing with the short time left to him: that he pretends each day is a decade long and at the end of each day he writes a letter to God telling him about his life. Although not quite sure about this, he decides to give it a try, and it really does help him.



I know this sounds incredibly sentimental and the story certainly is a tear-jerker; but Oscar, the dying child, is such a charming narrator and he writes with such humour and irreverence, and he learns so much in the 12 days left to him, that the result is a most appealing book. It is funny, sad and moving, and can be read by all ages - I was captivated.

SCG

SHAW, Catherine

The three body problem: a Cambridge mystery.- Allison and Busby, 2004.

The setting is Cambridge in 1888. Three prominent mathematicians are murdered one after the other. It seems their deaths are somehow linked to their attempts to solve a complex mathematical problem for a prestigious international competition sponsored by the King of Sweden. Young schoolmistress Vanessa Duncan becomes involved when she supports her friend Arthur Weatherburn, a Fellow at the University. Vanessa and Arthur have been growing fond of each other. Vanessa believes in his innocence and is determined to prove it, little realising what heroic efforts this will require. The story is told through Vanessa's letters to her sister. The background and period setting are authentic and evocative and the solution to the mystery is ingenious. This first novel will appeal to more discerning historical crime fiction fans.

MJI

WRIGHT, Edward

Red sky lament.- Orion, 2006.

Set in Los Angeles in the 1940s, this is the third title (following **Clea's moon** and **The silver face**) to feature John Ray Horn, former B-movie cowboy, as reluctant sleuth. Horn has little interest in politics but is dragged into the controversy surrounding the witch-hunt for so-called Communists and fellow travellers, who are to be rooted out of Hollywood. Scriptwriter Owen Bruder has been anonymously accused of having been a Communist Party member - which he denies. To help an old friend, who confides that Bruder is her biological father, Horn agrees to try to discover the informant. But before he can do so, Bruder is brutally murdered almost before his eyes. After that, things get even more complicated and dangerous. This gritty and intelligently-written crime novel, with its authentic and wonderfully atmospheric background details, makes an absorbing read.

MJI

●●● JUVENILE FICTION JEUGLEKTUUR

GRIMSDELL, Jeremy

Bushbaby night.- Jacana, 2005.

We do not often get South African picture books that fall into the 'nature study' genre and so this picture book about the nocturnal activities of the Greater Bushbaby that lives in the north-eastern

part of our country is most welcome.

We see what a young bushbaby and his siblings get up to one night in the forest where they live. They run up and down the tree branches, eat figs, groom themselves, follow the scent trail that the family members leave and finally fall asleep in a heap together. At the back of the book are four pages with more notes and information on these creatures. The text reads very well and the illustrations in pencil and watercolour are life like and sensitively done.

Also available in Afrikaans as **Nagapies is nagdiertjies** and in isiZulu as **Ubusuku besinkwe**.

JdeB

KADOHATA, Cynthia

Kira-kira.- Simon, 2005.

Katie Takeshima's first word is 'kira-kira', the Japanese for 'glittering'. It is taught to her by her older sister Lynn who also teaches her to look for the hopeful and beautiful, the kira-kira, in the world around her. Katie worships and adores Lynn, her teacher and protector. This story of sisterly love and devotion is set in 1950s Georgia in the small town that the Takeshimas move to from Iowa where their Oriental food store has failed. Katie's parents are determined to build up a future for their family, despite the discrimination they have to contend with as one of only a few Japanese-American families in town. Both her parents work extremely long hours at the poultry farm in order to save up for a home of their own.

When Katie turns ten, she finds that her older sister has begun to change. Her world no longer seems to revolve around Katie - she is more interested in boys and spending time with her best friend Amber. And Lynn is changing in other ways too - she suffers from anaemia and spends a lot of time resting in bed. With their parents away at work so much, working to pay off the house that they have bought as well as the medical bills, it falls to Katie to be the one to care for her sister and younger brother Sammy.

Kadohata describes the impact of the long process of Lynn's disease, lymphoma, and her eventual death on the family and most especially on Katie and her father. This is not just a sad story about death and dying, it is about this honourable and dignified family who love and support one another; about the unfair labour practices at the hatchery and the attempts to unionise the workers, it is about friendship and owning up when you have done something wrong. Much of what Katie observes she cannot understand for it is part of a separate adult world.

Moving and beautifully written in a very plain style, this is one of the best novels I read in 2004 and a worthy winner of the Newbery Award. I could not agree more with comments of the reviewer for the **Booklist**, 'The real story is in the small details, never self-consciously poetic but tense with family drama. In her first novel for young people, Kadohata stays true to the child's viewpoint in plain, beautiful prose that can barely contain the passionate feelings, just as heart-wrenching as the sisters' story is what Katie



knows of her father's struggle, whether it is his back-breaking work in the factory or his love for his family. The quiet words will speak to readers who have lost someone they love - or fear that they could.'

JdeB

MAARTENS, Wendy
Lena's bottle tree / illustrated by Anna-Carien Goosen.- Lapa, 2005.

Lena lives with her grandparents who work on a wine farm in the Boland. She is a girl in need of comfort and love for her mother has passed away. Next to their house is a fig tree and it is this tree that sustains her - it is a place for her to play and a place that offers comfort when grief overwhelms her.

The time before Christmas is especially difficult for her; but when she sees a Christmas tree in a shop, it inspires her to turn the fig tree into something that celebrates her mother's love for her. Her mother had played musical bottles with her; when bottles are filled with varying amounts of water and then played with spoons to create music. She ties all those bottles to the tree and each one of them holds a special memory. There is the small blue jar that held the ointment that her mother used to rub on her chest when she coughed at night and the flat bottle that contained her grandfather's foul-smelling medicine. On Christmas Day Lena's grandmother gives her another bottle to add to the tree - the empty perfume bottle that had belonged to her mother and that still contains her scent.

Very real, very moving, this beautiful picture book will touch anyone who has lost a loved one. It is also available in an Afrikaans edition as **Lena se bottelboom**.

JdeB

MORPURGO, Michael
I believe in unicorns / illustrated by Gary Blythe.- Walker Bks., 2005.

Award-winning children's novelist, Michael Morpurgo has written a moving novella that pays tribute to the power of stories, libraries and literature. Tomas lives in a small village in the mountains in an Eastern European country. He does not like going to school and if he had his way he would spend all his time outdoors. One day his mother forces him to go to the library to listen to the stories told by the new librarian who has quite a reputation as a story-teller.

And what a story-teller the Unicorn Lady is as she sits on the carved wooden very lifelike unicorn in the children's section and tells the children gathered there stories from books, from legend and from her own life. She tells them how unicorns are indeed real - they were unable to be saved when Noah's Ark set sail and were transformed into the narwhal whale. She tells them how her father saved a copy of Andersen's **The little matchgirl** from the book burning Nazis. And it is this book that she gives to Tomas to read from, for each story-telling session ends with the children telling their own stories.

Despite himself the boy who had loathed reading and stories and books, discovers that he too has been magically transformed by the power of the written and spoken word.

Then the war comes to this mountain village - most of the villagers hide in the forest while their village is bombed and invaded by soldiers. When the coast is clear they return and one of the most important jobs they do, is to rescue the books from the burning library, led and spurred on by the Unicorn Lady.

A beautiful story to treasure - to read aloud and to share, so that all may be reminded of the importance and pleasure that books and stories bring. Gary Blythe's sensitive and evocative illustrations add to the joy that this book will give both young and old.

JdeB

WORMELL, Chris
The wild girl.- Cape, 2005.

Set in the prehistoric era, a young girl and her dog live all by themselves in a mountainous region. No other animals are to be seen anywhere as they go about their daily business of surviving. One winter's day she sees bear tracks in the snow and discovers that they lead towards the cave where she lives. But there are footprints leading out of the cave too and so she enters the cave and falls asleep there as usual.

That night she is awakened by a huge bear that comes lumbering in, but the girl defends her territory and sends it away. It is only later that she discovers a young bear cub in the cave and realises that the bear had come back for her baby. So the girl, her dog and the cub set out into the dark snowy night to find the mother bear. They are eventually reunited and the last illustration shows them all curled up, sleeping together.

The uncluttered soft paintings emphasise the vastness of the wilderness area that is the girl's environment and so her loneliness is something we feel, even though it is not mentioned. That, together with the size of the bear and her all encompassing warmth, give one a wonderful feeling that this girl has come home to someone who is bigger than her who can envelope her and protect her. This picture book operates on an emotional level, and, its satisfying conclusion, offers a rewarding experience.

JdeB

Note: At the time of going to press, some of these titles were still on order.

EB	Erich Buchhaus
JdeB	Johanna de Beer
SCG	Sabrina Gosling
MJI	Margaret Iskandar
EMW	Ethney Waters

