

Paris love story for Pan Mac



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*Pan Macmillan signs debut **A Jewish Girl in Paris** by Melanie Levensohn, a 'powerful, heartfelt' dual narrative World War Two novel inspired by a true story*

Gillian Green, publishing director at Pan Macmillan, has bought World Rights to *A Jewish Girl in Paris*, excluding Germany, Italy and France, from Jacklyn Saferstein-Hansen at Renaissance Literary & Talent in an exclusive submission. The novel will be translated into English from German by Jamie Lee Searle.

According to the acquisition statement: 'Originally published in Germany as *Zwischen uns ein ganzes Leben*, the novel is centred around a love story between a Jewish girl and a Christian boy, the son of a Nazi sympathiser, in 1940s Paris and will appeal to readers of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*.

'It is inspired by the true story of the cousin of the author's husband. Melanie Levensohn is the second woman of that name in her family - the first Melanie Levensohn lived in Paris during the war but no one knows for sure if she survived. The author has used family documents as the starting point for her novel and it is written with the full support of her family including Jacobina, the first Melanie's younger sister who is still alive and living in Montreal.

'Paris, 1940: The City of Lights under German occupation. Christian, son of a bank director, falls in love with a Jewish girl Judith. The young couple secretly plan to flee, but suddenly Judith disappears. Christian begins a frantic search.

'Montreal, 1982: Shortly before his death, Lica Grunberg confesses to his daughter, Jacobina, that she has an older half-sister, Judith. Lica escaped the Nazis but lost all contact with his first-born daughter. Jacobina must promise her father to find the sister she never knew. But the search languishes for 25 years, until Jacobina is spurred on by

her much younger friend Béatrice, a French diplomat experiencing a painful midlife crisis. At the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, they meet Grégoire. Not only does he make Béatrice's head turn, he also finds clues to Judith's whereabouts. Soon the two women discover a dark family secret, stretching over two continents and six decades. It will change their lives forever.'

Pan Macmillan will publish *A Jewish Girl in Paris* next summer in hardback.

Green said: "Working in commercial fiction, it's rare for me to acquire books in translation – I've done it only a handful of times in my career, most recently with Antonio Iturbe and his forthcoming *The Prince of the Skies* as well as his *The Librarian of Auschwitz*. However, even reading the few pages I had in English for Melanie's novel it was clearly a remarkable story - and the real life drama behind it is just as compelling. I'm honoured that we will be publishing this powerful, heartfelt novel here at Pan Macmillan."

Levensohn (*pictured*) said: "I'm thrilled that Pan Macmillan acquired the World Rights to my debut novel and look forward to working on it with Gillian. It makes me truly happy to know that the literary memory I created for my namesake will soon be available to a wider English-speaking audience."