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*"Promoting original
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within Wales and beyond."*

New Welsh Review

CATALOGUE 2009

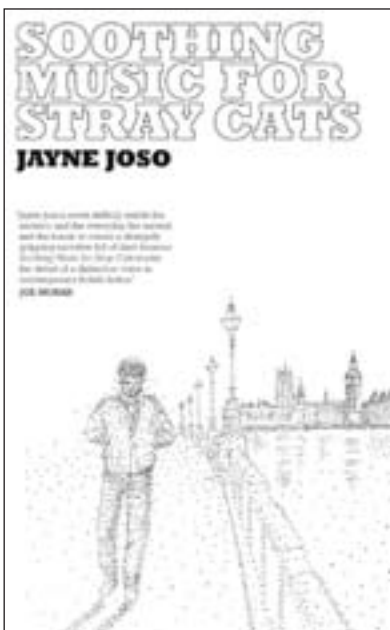
Cover detail from
*The Banquet of
Esther Rosenbaum*
by Penny Simpson

Cover design:
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SOOTHING MUSIC FOR STRAY CATS

Jayne Joso



This warm London-set novel looks at friendship between men, altruism, songwriting and Samurai philosophy.

pb, £9.99, ISBN: 9780955527258

Literary Agent: The Marsh Agency

Worldwide Rights Available

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www.soothingmusicforstraycats.com

www.jaynejosojapan.com

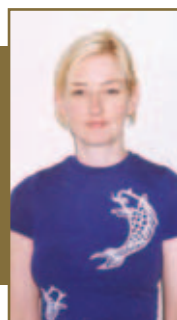
Jayne Joso's novel skilfully melds the esoteric and the everyday, the surreal and the banal, to create a strangely gripping narrative full of dark humour. Soothing Music for Stray Cats marks the debut of a distinctive voice in contemporary British fiction.

Joe Moran

An unexpected and moving story about the redemption of misfits and the consolation of strangers.

Natalie Haynes

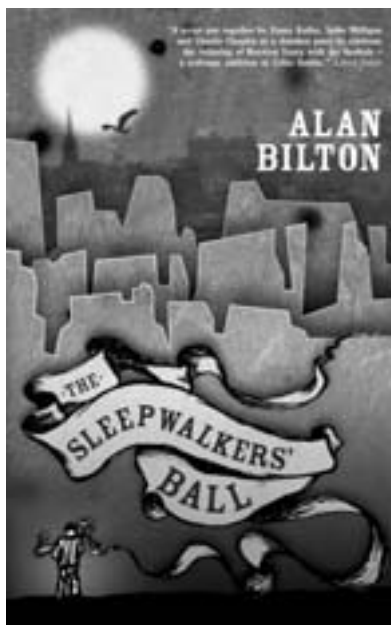
Jayne Joso, having lived and worked in Japan and China, now lives in the UK. She has written extensively on architecture including writing for the UK's *Architecture Today* magazine, and is also highly regarded for her writing on Japanese arts & culture. Her first children's book was recently published by Benesse in Japan; & her first play, *China's Smile*, commissioned in celebration of China's Children's Day, enjoyed a long theatre run and was later televised. This is her first novel.



**Surreal Scottish-set novel
with a strong Music Hall voice
wraps silent film slapstick
around poignant romance.**

pb, £9.99, ISBN: 9780955527265

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THE SLEEPWALKERS' BALL
Alan Bilton

A script put together by Franz Kafka, Spike Milligan and Charlie Chaplin at a drunken party to celebrate the twinning of [The League of Gentlemen's] Royston Vasey with the Gorbals. A welcome addition to Celtic Gothic.

Lloyd Jones

Alan Bilton's artfully-interwoven narratives, part zany city guide, part silent film, create an imaginative whole which is poetic, inventive, surprising and pulsating with life.

DM Thomas, author of *The White Hotel*

Alan Bilton teaches American Studies at Swansea University. His nonfiction titles are *An Introduction to Contemporary American Fiction* (New York/Edinburgh University Press) and the three-volume (co-authored) *America in the 1920s* (Helm). He is currently writing a book on silent film comedians for NY University Press.



FAITH, HOPE, LOVE
Llwyd Owen

FAITH HOPE LOVE

Alun Brady was a bit of a Mummy's Boy, stuck at home in the suburbs. When grandfather Paddy makes his deathbed in their spare room, he makes Al face the hardest decision of his life. Later, just out of prison, Al's world is an emptier one. Drawn into Cardiff's underbelly, events darken as he discovers he cannot break free of his blood family.

pb, £9.99, ISBN: 9780955527272

Llwyd Owen

Welsh Book of the Year winner

Worldwide rights available,
excepting Welsh

www.llywdowen.co.uk

An unrivalled plotmaster, a messenger from the underworld whose narrative leads us through the mist.

Fflur Dafydd

Second only to the storytellers of the Mabinogi.

Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas

Llwyd Owen is the author of three highly acclaimed and controversial Welsh language novels. His second novel, *Ffydd Gobaith Cariad*, won the 2007 Welsh Language Book of the Year Award. He is also a published photographer and poet who lives in Cardiff with his wife and daughter.



THE JEWELLER

Mair's life is shared with Mo at the market, threatened with closure, where she runs her own jewellery stall. She also helps Mo's house clearances, where Mair steals mementoes from others' lives, seeking the mother who gave her up for adoption. But it is mostly a very lonely existence at her cliff-top cottage, Mair's solitude broken only by the company of pet monkey Nanw.

Explores themes of social change and life on the breadline, loneliness, belonging, family, childlessness and envy.

*Praise for Gwen Davies' adaptation of Caryl Lewis' prize-winning second Welsh-language novel, translated as *Martha, Jack and Shanco**

Harsh, lyrical, devastating. **Boyd Tonkin, The Independent**

2007's pick in *The Big Issue (Star Read), Radio Wales and Western Mail*

The talent for expression is at times superb, rising way above the challenge of translating. Gwen Davies' translation succeeds wholly in persuading you to read the book. The language chosen is warm, keeping the novel's truth... you can be confident that those who can't read the original will not miss out. **Cynan Jones in Golwg and on www.amazon.co.uk**

pb £9.99

Caryl Lewis
Welsh Book of the Year winner
Translated by Gwen Davies

Worldwide rights available,
excepting Welsh

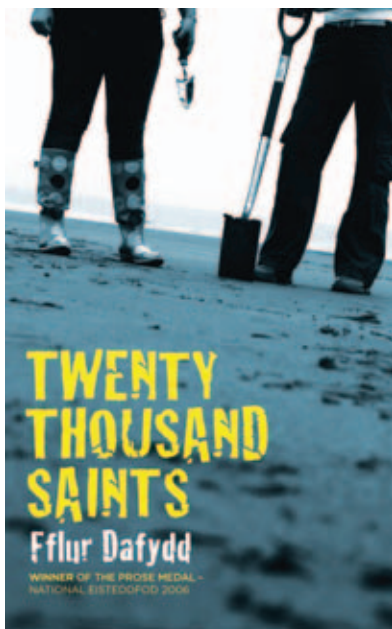
http://cy.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caryl_Lewis

Caryl Lewis came to prominence as an author with **Martha, Jac a Sianco** (Y Lolfa), which won the Wales Book of the Year award in 2005. She has written widely for television, the stage, and for children.

Gwen Davies is co-translator, with the author, of Robin Llywelyn's **Seren Wyn ar Gefndir Gwyn** (White Star, Parthian). She works as a fiction and creative editor, and has published on Welsh writing in English and Welsh-language literature in anthologies and magazines.



TWENTY THOUSAND SAINTS
Fflur Dafydd



Comic thriller set on Bardsey Island about finds, losses, secrets, privacy and intrusion... and how the most important things always happen off-camera.

pb, £9.99, ISBN: 9780955527227

Welsh Woman to Watch, *Mslexia*

Literary Agent: AM Heath

Worldwide Rights Available

www.fflurdafydd.com

The most compelling novel I've read in years; a love story, a thriller, and a profound meditation on language and identity. **Peter Florence**,
Guardian Hay Festival Director

A wild, exhilarating read.
Catherine Taylor, **The Guardian**

2008 Pick of the Year. *Compelling.*
Prospect Magazine

*A magical writer and an acute observer of human nature, ****.*
Diva Magazine

Dark, comedic thriller that explores intense bonds between people and their loved ones... a gripping read.
The Spokesman Journal

Novelist and singer-songwriter Fflur Dafydd had her work first published age 20. A graduate of UEA's Creative Writing MA, she participated in the Scrittura Giovani project for emerging writers, has performed throughout Europe and was one of only five writers representing our country as guest nation at the Washington Meets Wales, Wales Smithsonian Cymru programme at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in 2009. She currently lectures in Creative Writing at Swansea University.



Lee is a grown man with a sweet tooth and a mild case of uniform fetish.... An intimate, drily humorous novel about the missing parts of our lives, and the things we fill them with.

pb, £7.99, ISBN: 9780955527241

Worldwide Rights Available

www.jebloynichols.co.uk



THE UNTOGETHER
Jeb Loy Nichols

Delightful novel... the writing is spare and charming... with an easy, gentle pace... nice touches of conversational fantasy and wit... convincing and enjoyable. **The Morning Star**

A small book with a huge heart... [a] wry and tender narrative... all characters... beautifully portrayed... a poignant, desolate, funny, gently uplifting book that explores human frailties and failings with immense generosity of spirit. Nichols is not afraid to address 'the leaden mess of life', the enduring damage caused by wrong choices and the necessity of living with their consequences, but nor does he ever give up hope of change and redemption. **www.gwales.com**

A voice that emanates warmth, his sparse style is punctuated, staccato, with dry wit – discover and re-read. **New Welsh Review**

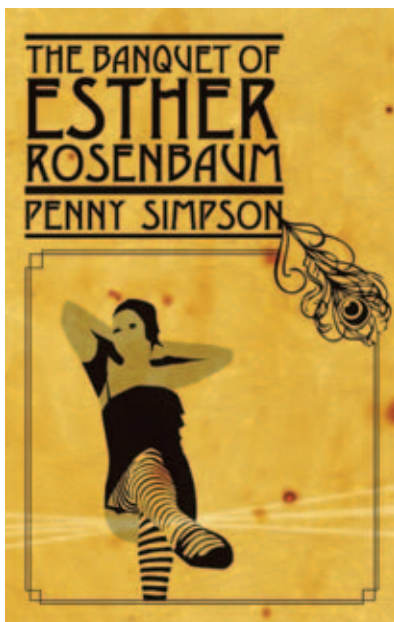
Demonstrates a proper allegiance to the peripheries... a supple intelligence: a sprightly, welcome voice in a time of stalled metaphors and gassy rhetoric. **Iain Sinclair**

Haunting... account of lives struck by loss and threatened by love... a singular voice.
John Williams, author of The Cardiff Trilogy

Artist, musician and writer Jeb Loy Nichols was born and raised in the American mid-west. At seventeen he moved to New York; four years later he moved to London. He has had exhibitions of his artwork in London, Tokyo, Berlin and Cardiff. He is also a singer-songwriter of American acoustic soul/country music who has acted as supporting act to the guitar legend Richard Thompson and has, over the past sixteen years, both as a member of Fellow Travellers and as a solo artist, released ten CDs. He now lives near Welshpool in mid Wales, where he continues to exhibit art, make music, tour, write and plant trees.



THE BANQUET OF ESTHER ROSENBAUM
Penny Simpson



*[An] extravaganza where the real and the imagined take turn and turn about... sumptuously detailed and fantastical... [this novel is] at once full of disturbing delicacy, and at the same time [forceful]... [marked by its] humour, verve and hallucinatory strangeness. **Clare Morgan, Times Literary Supplement***

Magic realism at its political best, finely echoing the sense of unreality and disorientation that reigned as Hitler and the Nazis gradually gained power in a country still reeling in the aftermath of the Great War. True to the genre, Simpson uses plain language and an understated narrative voice to speak of extraordinary

Penny Simpson is Head of Media at Welsh National Opera, coming full circle after a series of cleaning and receptionist jobs at Glyndebourne Opera House, which helped support her at art college. She trained as a journalist, specialising in the arts, before winning Barclays/TMA Theatre Critic of the Year in 1991. Her assignments took her to a post-war Croatian island beach to review *The Tempest*, and to Nikko, Japan, where she hung out with yabusame horseback archers. She is the 2007 Rhys Davies Short Story Competition winner. A playwright and author of short fiction which has appeared in anthologies from Bloomsbury, Honno and Virago, her debut collection of short fiction *DOGdays* was published in 2003. This is her first novel. She is representing Alcemi at the Left Coast Eisteddfod, Portland, Oregon, USA.



A novel about exile, told by a Jewish chef who uses extraordinary recipes as a subversive form of storytelling.

pb, £9.99, ISBN: 9780955527234

Welsh Woman to Watch, Mslexia

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www.pennysimpson.com

*things. When I turned the last page, I found myself wanting to start the book all over again. **www.gwales.com***

*Compelling... superb talent for storytelling and an almost Zola-esque delight in detailed and richly sensuous description of the material culture of both rich and poor. **Wales Literature Exchange 2008 selection, www.walesliterature.org***

*A feast of language... akin to those depicted in the Biblical Book of Esther... served on a platter of metaphors so strong that their aromas permeate the text. **Jewish Book World (USA)***

*Casts an intoxicating spell, blending tragedy, satire and magic realism to create a sensuous exploration of food, revolution and the resurrection of community through memory. **New Welsh Review***

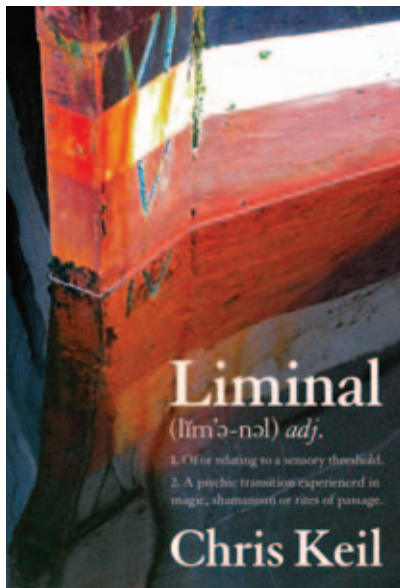
Set among Greek ruins and a crumbling Welsh estate, this novel is about relationships – father and youthful son; son and elderly mother; fiancés, lovers, colleagues – and how none of them stay static.

pb, £9.99, ISBN: 9780955527210

Wales Literature Exchange 2007 Selection

Worldwide Rights Available

www.chriskeil.eu



LIMINAL
Chris Keil

Evocative... Chris Keil's writing, which is limpid and often arrestingly vivid, has a charged quality that conveys the mysteries pulsing behind the everyday surfaces of things.

Nicolas Clee, The Guardian

Luminous yet unpretentious prose that leaves images lingering in the mind... an enchanting novel that continues to reveal its secrets long after you have put it down. **New**

Welsh Review

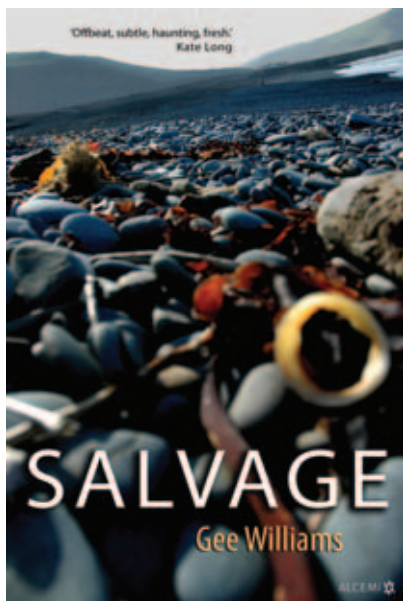
Hypnotic. **Jan Morris**

Each character's individual identity and voice emerges and evolves as subtly as the narrative shifts from Welsh clifftop and museum backrooms to the harsh light of the Greek coast. Relationships, a sense of place, past and present, are subtly intertwined in this sensitive novel.

www.walesliterature.org

Chris Keil, an accomplished linguist, ran an upland sheep farm for nearly twenty years. He has worked as a Brixton schoolteacher and a teacher of English as a foreign language. He has specialised in marketing Welsh lamb in Europe, and in collective memory and representations of the Holocaust. He lectures worldwide and has published on dissonant heritage and traumatic memory at Auschwitz. He lives in Carmarthenshire, west Wales, and currently lectures at Trinity College, Carmarthen. This is his second novel.





A controlled and gifted stylist, Williams is inventive and inspiring in her craft. Salvage masquerades as a murder mystery while exploring the less sunlit aspects of the Welsh shoreline and of the soul. Dominant and daring, Williams relishes the act of writing and constructs five distinct characters with genres particular to each, including a wonderful Cosmo send-up for the gorgeous gold-digging nurse as well as a provocative intervention of the author herself. Salvage constantly shifts the literary goalposts from crime to romance to metafiction, while never losing the immediacy of the characters or the suspense of the crime. **Prof Colin Nicholson, JTB Prize Judge**

Power-sprayed with literary devices... Salvage is ultimately effective, conveying one inescapable message: never trust anybody in Cheshire. **Phil Rickman, Radio Wales**

Set in Goa, north Wales and Chester, this sophisticated thriller explores possession, betrayal and how much we can afford to lose.

pb, £9.99 ISBN: 9780955527203

James Tait Black Memorial Prize for Fiction Nominee 2008; Winner, Pure Gold Award, north Wales libraries, longlisted for Waverton Good Read award

Set text, Contemporary Fiction module, English Degree, Chester University

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www.gewilliams.info

Gee Williams dextrously moulds her material, revelling in her craft... [shaping it]... to defy genre... a complex and enthralling psychological drama. **New Welsh Review**

Riveting... a novel that defies genre and crosses boundaries to extraordinary effect... an author utterly in control of her material... nothing superfluous... nothing merely clever. **www.gwales.com**

Salvage is imbued with a haunting sense of credibility that can do nothing but satisfy. With descriptive prose that enriches each page and paragraph... a fine writer. **Chris High, Tangled Web crime website & www.shotsmag.co.uk**

Gee Williams is a poet and the prize-winning author of two short story collections. Numerous full length plays and short fiction pieces of hers have been broadcast on BBC radio. This is her first novel.



ALCEMI Publisher of Gee Williams' *Salvage*,
**James Tait Black Memorial Prize for
Fiction Nominee**; Winner, Pure Gold Award, north Wales
libraries, longlisted for Waverton Good Read award

**Msllexia's Women to Watch for 2009 — Alcemi authors
Fflur Dafydd and Penny Simpson**

CELEBRATING OUR SECOND YEAR WITH PRIZE WINNERS...

ALCEMI believes in publishing success stories,
kept on a human scale. Editor Gwen
Davies has worked with many new writers from Wales
who have been taken up by agents and made their name
worldwide. Gee Williams' *Salvage*, one of the two first
novels which launched the imprint, was the only debut
novel on the 2007 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for
Fiction shortlist, and Alcemi the only small press to be
represented on that list of five.

The imprint specialises in literary fiction, favouring genre
titles only if they have an intelligent twist and unique
voice, and preferring magic realism to fantasy, retro
novels to historical. Surrealism is welcome in most forms,
as is black comedy, sex, and urban voices as well as rural
ones which avoid the easy romance of Wales. Most of
all, we want to promote complex, well-handled narrative,
and especially narrators that are naive, vulnerable or
excluded, where irony manipulates those gaps between
a narrator's and a reader's viewpoint.

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3 chapters and synopsis of novels only;
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