

## Milan Kundera Farewell Waltz

*In seven independent, but closely related chapters, Milan Kundera presents his personal conception of the European novel, which he describes as 'an art born of the laughter of God'. 'Invigoratingly suggestive . . . Kundera's map of the development of the European novel is outlined with the reckless brevity of the man who knows exactly what and where the salient points are.'* *London Review of Books* 'Kundera is the saddest, funniest and most loveable of authors.' *The Times*

*There are situations in which we fail for a moment to recognize the person we are with, in which the identity of the other is erased while we simultaneously doubt our own. This also happens with couples--indeed, above all with couples, because lovers fear more than anything else "losing sight" of the loved one. With stunning artfulness in expanding and playing variations on the meaningful moment, Milan Kundera has made this situation--and the vague sense of panic it inspires--the very fabric of his new novel. Here brevity goes hand in hand with intensity, and a moment of bewilderment marks the start of a labyrinthine journey during which the reader repeatedly crosses the border between the real and the unreal, between what occurs in the world outside and what the mind creates in its solitude. Of all contemporary writers, only Kundera can transform such a hidden and disconcerting perception into the material for a novel, one of his finest, most painful, and most enlightening. Which, surprisingly, turns out to be a love story.*

*Sometimes - perhaps only for an instant - we fail to recognise a companion; for a moment their identity ceases to exist, and thus we come to doubt our own. The effect is at its most acute in a couple where our existence is given meaning by our perception of a lover, and theirs of us. With his astonishing skill at building on and out from the significant moment, Kundera has placed such a situation and the resulting wave of panic at the core of the novel. In a narrative as intense as it is brief, a moment of confusion sets in motion a complex chain of events which forces the reader to cross and recross the divide between fantasy and reality. Profound, sad and disquieting but above all a love story, Identity provides further proof of Kundera's astonishing gifts as a novelist.*

*Have you ever wondered why there are so many "dumb blonde" jokes--always about women? Or how Ivanhoe's childhood love, the"flaxen Saxon" Rowena, morphed into Marilyn Monroe? Between that season in 1947 when readers encountered Becky Sharp playing the vengeful Clytemnestra--about to plunge a dagger into Agamemnon--and the sunny moment in 1932 when moviegoers watched Clark Gable plunge Jean Harlow's platinum-tressed head into a rain barrel, the playing field for women and men had leveled considerably. But how did the fairy-tale blonde, that placid, pliant girl, become the "tomato upstairs," as Monroe styled herself in The Seven Year Itch? In I'm No Angel: The Blonde in Fiction and Film, Ellen Tremper shows how, at its roots, the image of the blonde was remodeled by women writers in the nineteenth century and actors in the twentieth to keep pace with the changes in real women's lives. As she demonstrates, through these novels and performances, fair hair and its traditional attributes--patience, pliancy, endurance, and innocence--suffered a deliberate alienation, which both reflected and enhanced women's personal and social freedoms essential to the evolution of modernity. From fiction to film, the active, desiring, and sometimes difficult women who disobeyed, manipulated, and thwarted their fellow characters mimicked and furthered women's growing power in the world. The author concludes with an overview of the various roles of the blonde in film from the 1960s to the present and speculates about the possible end of blond dominance. An engaging and lively read, I'm No Angel will appeal to a general audience interested in literary and cinematic representations of the blonde, as well as to scholars in Victorian, women's, and film studies.*

*Testaments Betrayed*

*Rethinking Power and Evil Today*

*The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

*An Essay in Seven Parts*

*De grap*

This is the first comparative study of literature written by writers who fled from East-Central Europe during the twentieth century. It includes not only interpretations of individual lives and literary works, but also studies of the most important literary journals, publishers, radio programs, and other aspects of exile literary cultures. The theoretical part of introduction distinguishes between exiles, émigrés, and expatriates, while the historical part surveys the pre-twentieth-century exile traditions and provides an overview of the exilic events between 1919 and 1995:

one section is devoted to exile cultures in Paris, London, and New York, as well as in Moscow, Madrid, Toronto, Buenos Aires and other cities. The studies focus on the factional divisions within each national exile culture and on the relationship between the various exiled national cultures

among each other. They also investigate the relation of each exile national culture to the culture of its host country. Individual essays are devoted to Witold Gombrowicz, Paul Goma, Milan Kundera, Monica Lovincescu, Miloš Crnjanski, Herta Müller, and to the “internal exile” of Imre Kertész.

Special attention is devoted to the new forms of exile that emerged during the ex-Yugoslav wars, and to the problems of “homecoming” of exiled texts and writers.

Klima, a celebrated jazz trumpeter, receives a phone call announcing that a young nurse with whom he spent a brief night at a fertility spa is pregnant. She has decided he is the father. And so begins a comedy which, during five madcap days, unfolds with ever-increasing speed. Klima's

beautiful, jealous wife, the nurse's equally jealous boyfriend, a fanatical gynaecologist, a rich American, at once Don Juan and saint, and an elderly political prisoner who, just before his emigration, is holding a farewell party at the spa are all drawn into this black comedy, as in A

Midsummer Night's Dream. As usual, Milan Kundera poses serious questions with a blasphemous lightness which makes us understand that the modern world has taken away our right to tragedy.

In de levens van vier mensen die via verschillende relaties verbonden zijn, blijken tegengestelde gevoelens en gedachten verwisselbaar, afhankelijk van ieders levensperspectief.

This breathtaking, reverberating survey of human nature finds Kundera still attempting to work out the meaning of life without losing his acute sense of humour. It is one of those great unclassifiable masterpieces that appear once every twenty years or so. 'It will make you cleverer, maybe

even a better lover. Not many novels can do that.' Nicholas Lezard, *GO*

Jacques en zijn Meester

The New Yorker

The Curtain

The Farewell Party

Schelling's Practice of the Wild

'*A cult figure.*' *Guardian* 'A dark and brilliant achievement.' *Ian McEwan* 'Shamelessly clever ... Exhilaratingly subversive and funny.' *Independent* 'A modern classic ... As relevant now as when it was first published.' *John Banville* *A young woman is in love with a successful surgeon - a man torn between his love for her and his incorrigible womanising. His mistress, a free-spirited artist, lives her life as a series of betrayals - while her other lover stands to lose everything because of his noble qualities. In a world where lives are shaped by irrevocable choices and fortuitous events, and everything occurs but once, existence seems to lose its substance and weight - and we feel 'the unbearable lightness of being'. A masterpiece by one of the world's truly great writers, Milan Kundera's The Unbearable Lightness of Being encompasses passion and philosophy, infidelity and ideas, the Prague Spring and modern America, political acts and private desires, comedy and tragedy - and illuminates all aspects of human existence. What readers are saying: 'Some books change your mind, some change your heart, the very best change your whole world ... A mighty piece of work, that will shape your life forever.' 'One of the best books I've ever read ... A book about love and life, full of surprises. Beautiful.' 'This book is going to change your life ... It definitely leaves you with a hangover after you're done reading.' 'A must read - loved it, such beautiful observations on life, love and sexuality.' 'Kundera writes about love as if in a trance so the beauty of it is enchanting and dreamy ... Will stay with you forever.' 'A beautiful novel that helps you understand life better ... Loved it.' 'One of those rare novels full of depth and insight into the human condition ... Got me reading Camus and Sartre.' 'One of the best books I have ever read ... An intellectual love story if ever there was one.'*

*A young woman in love with a man torn between his love for her and his incorrigible womanizing; one of his mistresses and her humbly faithful lover—these are the two couples whose story is told in this masterful novel. In a world in which lives are shaped by irrevocable choices and by fortuitous events, a world in which everything occurs but once, existence seems to lose its substance, its weight. Hence, we feel "the unbearable lightness of being" not only as the consequence of our pristine actions but also in the public sphere, and the two inevitably intertwine.*

*Karen von Kunes traces Milan Kundera's creative ideas to a 1950 police report filed in Stalinist era Czechoslovakia. Demonstrating how this incident influenced Kundera's literary trajectory and ultimately contributed to his acclaim as a writer, von Kunes interprets his work in a new way.*

*The Joke, Milan Kundera's first novel, gained him a huge following in his own country, and launched his worldwide literary reputation. 'Kundera is the saddest, funniest and most lovable of authors.'* *The Times*

*Kundera, Or, The Memory of Desire*

*Grammar Girl's 101 Troublesome Words You'll Master in No Time*

*A Compendium*

*Immortality*

*Encounter*

**A man and a woman meet by chance while returning to their homeland, which they had abandoned twenty years earlier when they chose to become exiles. Will they manage to pick up the thread of their strange love story, interrupted almost as soon as it began and then lost in the tides of history? The truth is that after such a long absence 'their memories no longer match'. We always believe that our memories coincide with those of the person we loved, that we experienced the same thing. But this is just an illusion. Then again, what can we expect of our weak memory? It records only 'an insignificant, minuscule particle' of the past, 'and no-one knows why it's this bit and not any other bit'. We live our lives sunk in a vast forgetting, a fact we refuse to recognise. Only those who return after twenty years, like Odysseus returning to his native Ithaca, can be dazzled and astounded by observing the goddess of ignorance first-hand. Milan Kundera is the only author today who can take such dizzying concepts as absence, memory, forgetting, and ignorance, and transform them into material for a novel, masterfully orchestrating them into a polyphonic and moving work.**

Kundera's essay has been written like a novel. In the course of nine separate sections, the same characters meet and cross paths with each other. Stravinsky and Kafka with their odd friends Ansermet and Brod; Hemingway with his biographer; Janáček with his little nation; and Rabelais with his heirs - the great novelists. In the light of their wisdom this book examines some of the great situations of our time. The moral trial of the twentieth century's art, from Celine to Mayakovsky; the passage of time which blurs the boundaries between the 'I' of the present day and the 'I' of the past; modesty as an essential concept in an age based on the individual and indiscretion which, as it becomes the habit and the norm, heralds the twilight of individualism; the testaments, the betrayed testaments - of Europe, of art, of the art of the novel and of artists.

Published simultaneously with *Identity*, his new novel, here is a masterful new translation of Milan Kundera's most brilliantly plotted and sheerly entertaining novel -- a dark farce of sex, murder, and motherhood. Set in an Old-Fashioned Central European Spa Town, *Farewell Waltz* follows the lives of eight characters: a pretty nurse and her repairman boyfriend; an oddball gynecologist; a rich American who is at once a saint and a Don Juan; a popular trumpeter and his beautiful obsessively jealous wife; a disillusioned former political prisoner about to leave his country and his young female ward. Perhaps the most accessible of Milan Kundera's novels, *Farewell Waltz* poses the most serious questions with a blasphemous lightness that makes us see that the modern world has deprived us even of the right to tragedy. Translated from the French text prepared by the author himself a quarter century after the novel was originally written, *Farewell Waltz* sparkles anew with wit, humor, and irony. A valuable addition to HarperFleming's impressive Kundera backlog, it offers readers a chance to discover, or rediscover, one of the very best works of a legendary writer. "It is hard to imagine anything more chilling and profound that Kundera's apparent lightheartedness". -- Elizabeth Pochoda "Kundera ... remains faithful to this subtle, wily, devious talent for a fiction of 'erotic possibilities". -- New York Times Book Review

Trevor Cribben Merrill offers a bold reassessment of Milan Kundera's place in the contemporary canon. Harold Bloom and others have dismissed the Franco-Czech author as a maker of “period pieces” that lost currency once the Berlin Wall fell. Merrill refutes this view, revealing a previously unexplored dimension of Kundera's fiction. Building on theorist René Girard's notion of “triangular desire,” he shows that modern classics such as *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* display a counterintuitive- and bitterly funny-understanding of human attraction. Most works of fiction (and most movies, too) depict passionate feelings as deeply authentic and spontaneous. Kundera's novels and short stories overturn this romantic dogma. A pounding heart and sweaty palms could mean that we have found “the One” at last-or they could attest to the influence of a model whose desires we are unconsciously borrowing: our amorous predilections may owe less to personal taste or physical chemistry than they do to imitative desire. At once a comprehensive survey of Kundera's novels and a witty introduction to Girard's mimetic theory, *The Book of Imitation and Desire* challenges our assumptions about human motive and renews our understanding of a major contemporary author.

The farewell party

Let the Old Dead Make Room for the Young Dead

The Book of Laughter and Forgetting

Onwetendheid

Politics

*This book is a novel in the form of variations. The various parts follow each other like the various stages of a voyage leading into the interior of a theme, the interior of a thought, the interior of a single, unique situation the understanding of which recedes from my sight into the distance. It is a book about laughter and about forgetting, about forgetting and about Prague, about Prague and about the angels.' The Book of Laughter and Forgetting is the most secret of Kundera's novels. This new translation is the first to be fully authorized by Milan Kundera.*

*Casting light on the most serious of problems and at the same time saying not one serious sentence; being fascinated by the reality of the contemporary world and at the same time completely avoiding realism-that's The Festival of Insignificance. Readers who know Kundera's earlier books know that the wish to incorporate an element of the "unserious" in a novel is not at all unexpected of him. In Immortality, Goethe and Hemingway stroll through several chapters together talking and laughing. And in Slowness, Vera, the author's wife, says to her husband: "you've often told me you meant to write a book one day that would have not a single serious word in it... I warn you: watch out. Your enemies are lying in wait." Now, far from watching out, Kundera is finally and fully realizing his old aesthetic dream in this novel that we could easily view as a summation of his whole work. A strange sort of summation. Strange sort of epilogue. Strange sort of laughter, inspired by our time, which is comical because it has lost all sense of humor. What more can we say? Nothing. Just read.*

*Als een politieke vluchteling na de val van het communisme naar haar geboorteland Tsjechoë terugkeert, wacht haar een deceptie.*

*With the same dazzling mix of emotion and idea that characterizes his novels he illuminates the art and artists who remain important to him and whose work helps us better understand the world. An astute and brilliant reader of fiction, Kundera applies these same gifts to the reading of Francis Bacon's paintings, Leos Janáček's music, the films of Federico Fellini, as well as to the novels of Philip Roth, Dostoyevsky, and García Márquez, among others. He also takes up the challenge of restoring to their rightful place the work of major writers like Anatole France and Curzio Malaparte who have fallen into obscurity. Milan Kundera's signature themes of memory and forgetting, the experience of exile, and his spirited championing of modernist art mark these essays. Art, he argues, is what we have to cleave to in the face of evil, against the expression of the darker side of human nature. Elegant, startlingly original and provocative, Encounter follows Kundera's essay collections, The Art of the Novel, Testaments Betrayed and The Curtain.*

*Farewell Waltz*

*hommage aan Denis Diderot in drie bedrijven*

*The Book of Imitation and Desire: Reading Milan Kundera with Rene Girard*

*I'm No Angel*

*Afscheidswals / druk 7*

De Mijnj strijd-reeks is een ongekend literair project van zes boeken, waarin Karl Ove Knausgård onverholen over zichzelf en zijn familie schrijft. Zijn werk roept heftige reacties op, zowel bij pers en publiek als bij zijn naasten. Als nooit tevoren waardeert hij daarom zijn vrouw Linda, bij wie hij veel steun vindt. Maar juist zij, met haar bipolaire stoornis, lijdt sterk onder de gevolgen van zijn literaire ambities. Had hij dit ervoor over? Knausgård schrijft op ontroerende wijze over identiteit, menselijkheid, literatuur, kunst, geschiedenis, en wijdt een essayistisch intermezzo aan Het Kwaad. Doordat hij telkens het verstand voorbijgaat, op zoek naar de emotie, laat zijn werk niemand onberoerd.

This is more than a literary critique — it is a work of perception, of analysis that reveals a portrait of Kundera the novelist as one of the greatest demystifiers of our time. This significant work deals with all of Milan Kundera ’ s novels up to his most recent work, *Slowness*, which marks the beginning of a new phase of his writing. It is the first work that studies Kundera as a novelist, rather than a philosopher or intellectual guide, and the only one that diverges from the beaten path in examining and in reflecting on the composition and style of these novels, to discern the underlying humanity and originality of the work as a whole and to finally establish the connections and correlation within and between the novels —

