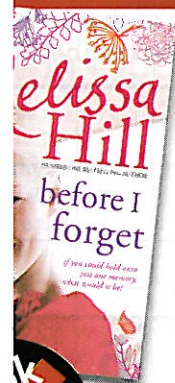


Books*

Edited by Donal O'Donoghue >>> guidebooks@rte.ie



Fiction

Before I Forget, by Melissa Hill

(Hodder & Stoughton, PB)

Reviewer: Suzanne Byrne

Rating: *****

Plot: Abby's life changes in a split second when she walks under a ladder and is knocked unconscious by falling debris. When she wakes up in hospital the doctor informs her that as a result of her injury, she could lose long-term memory. Determined not to lose all her memories, Abby decides to make the most of the time she has left

with them by creating new, life-affirming ones. In a year in which she spends a magical Christmas in Manhattan, blows a fortune in Las Vegas and races a Formula One Car, Abby

also falls in love; the one thing she set out not to do! Will it turn

out to be the most unforgettable experience of them all?

Verdict: Melissa Hill's latest tale is compelling and, like her previous novels, deserves to go straight to the top of the best-seller list. Hill has a knack of coming up with new and refreshing storylines that are different from the other books that line the shelves. A thoroughly good read.

Port

The Republic of Ireland International Football Facts, by Dean Hayes

(Harper Collins Press)

Reviewer: John Byrne

Rating: *****

Plot: Everything you wanted to know about the Republic of Ireland international team but were afraid to ask.

Verdict: Dean Hayes has been down a similar path several times, having written books about several English clubs, the Cardiff City-Swansea rivalry and that most English of sports, cricket. This time around the focus is on the Boys in Green and, while the book has its flaws – the odd factual error here and there – it does

offer a good introduction to the Irish international team, and is most suitable for the early teen end of the market. There's a history of the FAI and its senior team from its foundation in 1921, player and

manager profiles, match reports from key games, and stats from all senior internationals. One disappointing omission from those match stats is that they're not contextualised (i.e. the reader doesn't know whether they are friendlies or competitive fixtures).

Fiction

Cold Case, by Faye Kellerman

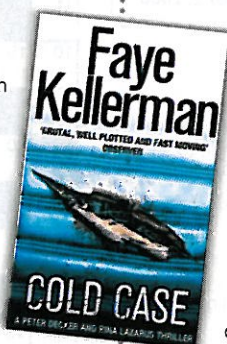
(Harper Collins, HB)

Reviewer: Janice Butler

Rating: *****

Plot: An investigation of an 18-year-old cold case re-awakens spine-chilling secrets in the riveting new thriller from Faye Kellerman, featuring LA detective Peter Decker and Rina Lazarus.

Verdict: When LAPD detective Peter Decker is ordered to investigate an old murder case as well as a current killing, he little realises how much more malevolent the past can be than the present. The sense of menace grows as old secrets are brought to light. Kellerman does the



police procedural with an elegant twist and she introduces religious practice to detection, so a knowledge of Judaism is essential to the solution for the lead characters. Her novel tilts into the romance suspense genre but she is always original. The story contains a lot of complex layers as the puzzle pieces come together. A relentlessly gripping tale spun by a master.

Anthology

Sunday Miscellany: a selection from 2006 – 2008, edited by Clíodhna Ní Anluain

(New Island, PB)

Reviewer: Donal O'Donoghue

Rating: *****

Plot: Between the sheets with a Sunday morning institution.

Verdict: With its signature tune – Samuel Scheidt's *Galliard Battaglia* – *Sunday Miscellany* has over the decades become one of radio's landmark shows, with well-known (and not so familiar) voices offering snapshots into private worlds. The late and great Benedict Kiely features among the contributors and also as the subject of Gerald Dawe's touching tribute (Ben Kiely died in 2007). There are other tributes in here, notably one from Joseph O'Connor recalling the time he was



exiled in London and received a personal invitation to Listowel's Writers' Week from "that genius of storymaking", John B Keane. Much of life hustles between the covers – from a hike up Croagh Patrick, an emotional visit to Graceland (Conor Bowman); a life-changing visit to the Basque country (Paddy Woodworth) and the pain and triumph of running a marathon (Paul Cullen). It is a mixture of prose and poetry (including Seamus Heaney, Pat Boran, Ciaran Carson) and if no music spills from the pages (unlike the radio show) this anthology trumpets its own musicality.

Shelf life*



What I'm reading...

John O'Connor, pianist and composer

What is your current read? Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. I spend a lot of my year in the USA and I realised that I had not read all the staples of 19th-century American fiction.

What was your favourite childhood book? I devoured everything of Enid Blyton, moved on to Billy Bunter, then to Agatha Christie and then started out on Dickens. As soon as I finished one book I had to start another as soon as possible.

Which fictional character has left the most lasting impression on you? No fictional character has impressed me as much as real people. I love reading biographies and history, particularly about the American War of Independence, WWII and anything to do with Dublin.

Is there a book that influenced your life or career? Yes, and I can't even remember the name of it! When I was about 16, my piano teacher gave me a book on the life of Beethoven and I devoured it. I particularly remember the story of Beethoven and Goethe walking on the footpath when suddenly the Imperial party came towards them, including the young princesses. Goethe stepped into the muddy road to allow the young ladies to pass but Beethoven ploughed straight through them grunting "my genius bows to no man!"

John O'Connor plays Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25 with the RTÉ NSO on Friday September 26 at the National Concert Hall, as part of the RTÉ NSO 2008–2009 Season.

Classic **Excellent *****Good *****Fair *****Tragic

RTÉ RADIO 1

THE TUBRIDY SHOW BOOK CLUB

WITH THE RTÉ GUIDE

Tune in to **The Tubridy Show Bookclub** on Monday morning, October 6th at 9am, when we will reveal the book of the month.

The Tubridy Show, Monday to Friday 9am - 10am, RTÉ Radio 1, 88-90 fm