



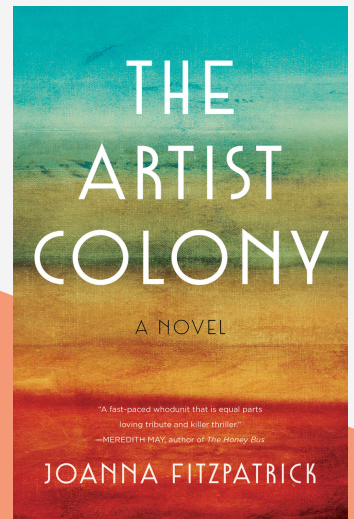
Joanna FitzPatrick

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Joanna FitzPatrick



about

JOANNA FITZPATRICK was raised in Hollywood. She started her writing habit by applying her orange fountain pen and a wild imagination to screenplays, which led her early on to produce the film *White Lilacs and Pink Champagne*. Accepted at Sarah Lawrence College, she wrote her MFA thesis *Sha La La: Live for Today* about her life as a rock 'n' roll star's wife. Her more recent work includes two novels, *Katherine Mansfield*, Bronze Winner of the 2021 Independent Publisher Book Award (IPPY) in Historical Fiction, and *The Drummer's Widow*. *The Artist Colony* is her third book. Presently, FitzPatrick divides her time between a cottage by the sea in Pacific Grove, California and a hameau in rural southern France where she begins all her book projects.

connect

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the details

THE ARTIST COLONY: A Novel

By Joanna FitzPatrick

She Writes Press

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Paperback ISBN: 978-1-64742-169-4, Fiction, 5.5 x 8.5, \$16.95, 317 pages

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praise

"... delivers an escape to gorgeous Carmel and an engaging mystery."

—**KIRKUS REVIEWS**

"...readers who enjoy an exciting narrative with unexpected twists will find this a diverting and illuminating read."

—**HISTORICAL NOVELS REVIEW**

"***The Artist Colony*** is bold, creative, and unexpected – all the things nice ladies weren't supposed to be in the 1920's when they escaped to Carmel-By-The-Sea to make art without criticism. Joanna FitzPatrick, a descendant of one of those feisty female pioneers, has honored her family legacy and entertained her fans yet again with **a fast-paced whodunnit that is equal parts loving tribute and killer thriller.**"

—**Meredith May, author of THE HONEY BUS and LOVING EDIE**

"***The Artist Colony*** is a sumptuous ride through the Carmel-by-the-Sea, circa 1920, as Sarah Cunningham, newly arrived from Paris, attempts to uncover the truth about her sister's mysterious death. **Atmospheric and delicious, Fitzpatrick delivers a thrilling page-turner woven with artistic flourish. This exquisite novel does not disappoint! Highly recommended!**"

—**Michelle Cox, author of THE HENRIETTA AND INSPECTOR HOWARD SERIES**

"***The Artist Colony*** brilliantly interweaves real life people - Robinson Jeffers the poet, Louise Brooks Hollywood starlet - with fictional characters many of whom we come to love like the Japanese abalone divers. The dramatic landscapes of Carmel, beautifully depicted by Fitzpatrick, are central to the plot, whose blow-by-blow story keeps us gripped to the final revelation of Ada's murderer....**a must-read novel for anyone who loves historical fiction, art, detective stories, and the West coast.**"

—**Maggie Humm, author of TALLAND HOUSE**, chosen by *The Washington Independent Review of Books* as one of its '51 Favorite Books of 2020

"It's 1924 and a young woman journeys to Carmel, California, to learn more about her sister's sudden death. She soon learns that the bohemian arts colony is anything but idyllic, as she's confronted by flagrant racism and intimations of murder. **Fitzpatrick has written a vivid historical novel with an absorbing mystery at the center of it, and I was riveted.**"

—**Elizabeth McKenzie, author of THE PORTABLE VELEN**

■ from the Introduction to **THE ARTIST COLONY**

"If I hadn't inherited a landscape painting by my great-aunt, Ada Belle Champlin, and if I hadn't moved to Carmel Valley, California, because of that wondrous landscape, I would still be in Manhattan and I would have written a different story.

After my husband, Jim, and I moved into our new home, I hung Ada Belle's landscape over the stone fireplace. I wondered where in Carmel she had stood to paint the country road bordered by a row of eucalyptus trees in a golden pasture lit by a blue sky brushed lightly with clouds like white powder puffs. In the background, a range of mountains rise in purple splendor.

I am not a painter but I think ***The Artist Colony*** started on a blank canvas, not a blank piece of paper. I had a palette of vivid ideas. As I brush-stroked layer upon layer of pigments onto that imaginary canvas, it evolved into an historical novel set in 1924 when Carmel-by-the-Sea was a thriving women's art colony.

I became very curious about an art colony populated by women who, like my great-aunt, had become painters at a time when it was declass  for a woman to do anything artistic beyond needlepoint. Women were expected to marry and make babies, not art. I wondered how Ada Belle succeeded as a painter under these restraints.

Soon I was deep into a mystery plot, interweaving the history of Carmel's artist colony with the actions of my characters. As my research expanded, I added real people—the poet Robinson Jeffers and his wife, Una; the painters Armin Hansen, William Ritschel, and August "Gus" Gay—and had them meet my fictional characters in the locations where they had lived. Then I stepped back and let them tell their story."