

Sarah Moss

Writer - Fiction and Non-fiction

Sarah Moss writes on the history and literature of food and travel. She co-edits, with Nicola Humble, the Food series at Manchester University Press, and has a BA, M.St.



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Publications

Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
Ghost Wall 2018 Granta Books	Teenage Silvie and her parents are living in a hut in Northumberland as an exercise in experimental archaeology. Her father is a difficult man, obsessed with imagining and enacting the harshness of Iron Age life. Haunting Silvie's narrative is the story of a bog girl, a young woman sacrificed by those closest to her, and the landscape both keeps and reveals the secrets of past violence and ritual as the summer builds to its harrowing climax.

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THE TIDAL ZONE 2016 Granta	Adam is a stay-at-home dad who is also working on a history of the bombing and rebuilding of Coventry Cathedral. He is a good man and he is happy. But one day, he receives a call from his daughter's school to inform him that, for no apparent reason, fifteen-year-old Miriam has collapsed and stopped breathing. In that moment, he is plunged into a world of waiting, agonising, not knowing. The story of his life and the lives of his family are rewritten and re-told around this shocking central event, around a body that has inexplicably failed. In this exceptionally courageous and unflinching novel of contemporary life Sarah Moss goes where most of us wouldn't dare to look, and the result is riveting - unbearably sad, but also miraculously funny and ultimately hopeful. The Tidal Zone explores parental love, overwhelming fear, illness and recovery. It is about clever teenagers and the challenges of marriage. It is about the NHS, academia, sex and gender in the twenty-first century, the work-life juggle, and the politics of packing lunches and loading dishwashers. It confirms Sarah Moss as a unique voice in modern fiction and a writer of luminous intelligence.
SIGNS FOR LOST CHILDREN 2015 Granta	Only weeks into their marriage a young couple embark on a six-month period of separation. Tom Cavendish goes to Japan to build lighthouses and his wife Ally, Doctor Moberley-Cavendish, stays and works at the Truro asylum. As Ally plunges into the institutional politics of mental health, Tom navigates the social and professional nuances of late 19th century Japan. With her unique blend of emotional insight and intellectual profundity, Sarah Moss builds a novel in two parts from Falmouth to Tokyo, two maps of absence; from Manchester to Kyoto, two distinct but conjoined portraits of loneliness and determination. An exquisite continuation of the story of Bodies of Light, Signs for Lost Children will amaze Sarah Moss's many fans.
BODIES OF LIGHT 2014 Granta	Bodies of Light is a deeply poignant tale of a psychologically tumultuous nineteenth century upbringing set in the atmospheric world of Pre-Raphaelitism and the early suffrage movement. Ally (older sister of May in Night Waking), is intelligent, studious and engaged in an eternal - and losing - battle to gain her mother's approval and affection. Her mother, Elizabeth, is a religious zealot, keener on feeding the poor and saving prostitutes than on embracing the challenges of motherhood. Even when Ally wins a scholarship and is accepted as one of the first female students to read medicine in London, it still doesn't seem good enough. The first in a two-book sequence, Bodies of Light will propel Sarah Moss into the upper echelons of British novelists. It is a triumphant piece of historical fiction and a profoundly moving master class in characterisation.
NIGHT WAKING 2011 Granta	Anna and her husband Giles have decided to decamp with their two boys, Raphael and Moth, to Colsay, a deserted island south of the inner Hebrides that belongs to Giles's family. They want to 'get away from it all' and fix one of the cottages so they can rent it out to like-minded tourists. Anna, who is an academic, also wants to finish her book, while Giles, an ornithologist, is busy observing puffins. The idyll is rather rudely disrupted by the children's sleeping patterns and the discovery of a small dead body buried in the garden. A glorious exploration of modern motherhood, acerbic, funny and deeply thought-provoking.

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COLD EARTH 2009 Granta Books	Facing a Greenland winter for which they are hopelessly ill-equipped, knowing that their missives may never reach their loved ones, six archaeologists write their final letters home. In this exceptional and haunting first novel, Moss weaves a rich tapestry of personal narratives, history, ghost stories, love stories, stories of grief and naked survival.

Non-Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
NAMES FOR THE SEA - Strangers In Iceland 2012 Granta	In 2009, feeling bored of her middle class life with two children and a respectable job in a small English town, Sarah applied for and got a job at the university of Reykyavik. It turned out to be a tumultuous time for Iceland: the day she accepted, the Icelandic economy crashed and her future salary went through the floor. Halfway through her stay, Eyjafjallajokull erupted. Most of the travel books about Iceland are written by men discovering their inner Viking. Sarah, instead, lived and worked in Reykyavik fo a year. She provides an enchanting memoir of her day to day existince as a stranger in a strange land.
CHOCOLATE: A GLOBAL HISTORY 2009 Reaktion	Redolent of everything sensual and hedonistic, chocolate is adored around the world, and has been since the Spanish first encountered cocoa beans in South America in the sixteenth century. This short book sheds an historicised and engaging light on this universal obsession. With Alexander Badenoch.
THE FROZEN SHIP: THE HISTORIES AND TALES OF POLAR EXPLORATION 2009 BlueBridge	This ambitious book is primarily a literary historical examination of the myth and reality of Antarctica and the Arctic from the point of view of European settlers and explorers, including the history of Norse settlements in Greenland; the expeditions of Parry, Nansen, Franklin and others; and Arctic myth and imagery in literature from the likes of Donne, Mary Shelley and Lewis Carroll.
SCOTT'S LAST BISCUIT 2006 Signal Books	A thorough and thought-provoking examination of the most influential, popular and intriguing journeys into the eternal ice.