

Caoilinn Hughes

On behalf of The Clegg Agency

Caoilinn Hughes is the author *THE WILD LAUGHTER*, which won the Royal Society of Literature's Encore Award and was longlisted for the International Dylan Thomas Prize, and *ORCHID & THE WASP*, which won the Collyer Bristow Prize and was longlisted for the International Dublin Literary Award. She was recently the Oscar Wilde Centre Writer Fellow at Trinity College Dublin, and is currently a Cullman Center Fellow at New York Public Library. *THE ALTERNATIVES* (Oneworld/Riverhead 2024) is her third novel.



Agents

Anna Webber

awebber@unitedagents.co.uk

+44(0)203 214 0876

Associate

Seren Adams

sadams@unitedagents.co.uk

+44 (0)203 214 0956

Publications

Fiction

Publication Details	Notes
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The Alternatives
2024
Oneworld (UK);
Riverhead (US)

Olwen, Nell, Maeve and Rhona were plunged prematurely into adulthood when their parents died in tragic circumstances. Now in their thirties, they have each carved out impressive careers – living distant lives, fighting separate battles. But Olwen's disappearance is about to change everything.

A geologist haunted by the weight of the earth's past and a crushing awareness of its volatile future, Olwen abruptly vanishes from her home without a trace. Her sisters track her down to a remote bungalow in rural Ireland, with little electricity and patchy connection to the outside world. Together for the first time in years, the sisters vie to confront old wounds and diagnose new ills – most urgently, Olwen's.

Fiercely witty and unexpectedly hopeful, THE ALTERNATIVES is an unforgettable portrait of a family perched on our collective precipice, told by one of Ireland's most gifted storytellers.

The Wild Laughter
2020
Oneworld

It's 2008, and the Celtic Tiger has left devastation in its wake. Brothers Hart and Cormac Black are waking up to a very different Ireland – one that widens the chasm between them and brings their beloved father to his knees. Facing a devastating choice that will put their livelihood, even their lives, on the line, the brothers soon learn that their biggest danger comes when there is nothing to lose.

A sharp snapshot of a family and a nation suddenly unmoored, this epic-in-miniature explores cowardice and sacrifice, faith rewarded and abandoned, the stories we tell ourselves and the ones we resist. Hilarious, poignant and utterly fresh, The Wild Laughter cements Caoilinn Hughes' position as one of Ireland's most audacious, nuanced and insightful young writers.

Orchid & the Wasp
2018
Oneworld (UK);
Hogarth (US)

In this dazzlingly original debut novel, award-winning Irish writer Caoilinn Hughes introduces a heroine of mythic proportions in the form of one Gael Foess. Raised in Dublin by single-minded, careerist parents, Gael observes from a young age how a person's ambitions and ideals can be compromised.

When Gael's financier father walks out during the economic crash of 2008, her family fractures. Her mother, a once-formidable orchestral conductor, becomes a shadow of her former self, and a tragic incident prevents her unwell brother Guthrie from finishing school. Determined not to let her loved ones fall victim to circumstance, Gael leaves Dublin for the leather-lined, coke-dusted social clubs of London, then Manhattan's gallery scene during the throes of the Occupy movement, always working an angle, but slowly becoming a stranger to those who know her.

Written in electric, heart-stopping prose, ORCHID & THE WASP is a novel about gigantic ambitions and social upheaval, chewing through sexuality, class, and politics, and crackling with joyful, anarchic fury. It challenges bootstraps morality, questioning what we owe one another and what we earn, what makes for a good life, and how events in our lives can turn us into people we never intended to be. A first novel of astonishing talent, ORCHID & THE WASP announces Caoilinn Hughes as one of the most exciting literary writers working today.
