Foreign Rights
Fall Highlights 2022
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A Café Without Name

Vienna, 1966. Robert Simon is in his early thirties and works at the traditional Carmelite Market. He lives a simple life; he has no big ambitions and appreciates how predictable his routine is.

But as the city emerges from its slumber 20 years after the war, the sparks of change and possibility ignite him. Insecure yet determined, he rents a shop and opens a café in one of the city’s poorest quarters. He does not have much to offer, yet people come by, bringing their stories of passion, longing, friendship, and death. Some are looking for company, others are trying to find love, and as the city around them becomes busier and busier, Simon’s life transforms as well.

With his new novel, Robert Seethaler returns to the setting of his great success Der Trafikant. With a cast of unforgettable characters and an electrifying sense for the details of life, he tells how a new world emerges that, like everything new, already carries its end within itself.

"That’s the impressive thing about Robert Seethaler: the visible is not everything. You almost want to advise to read his books in the dark, with your eyes closed.” - Florence Noiville, Le Monde

"Seethaler is a master of unsentimental simplicity, of the moment, of the ephemeral, everything floats, everything is easy.” - Elke Heidenreich, Focus

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France (Sabine Wespieser éditeur) | Netherlands (Uitgeverij De Bezige Bij)
Two men, friends and adversaries, and their struggle for a better life.

Christian Baron was born in 1985 in Kaiserslautern. He studied political science, sociology and German philology in Trier. After working for various local newspapers, he is an editor for the weekly newspaper Freitag. His literary debut A Man of his Class published in 2020 and won several awards.

Beautiful is the Night

Based on the lives of his grandfathers, Christian Baron tells the story of that part of the war and post-war generation for whom the promise of economic upswing remained empty. He shows the lives of “simple people” in the 1970s and, with the night as an ambivalent leitmotif, deals with the fateful alignment of racism, sexism, and classism.

Willy wishes for nothing more than a normal, decent life. He does his best at his job as a carpenter, he wants to provide for his family, he dreams of having a small house of his own. With his honest nature, he keeps bumping up against barriers.

Horst, an unskilled laborer, has long since stopped believing in making it anywhere the honest way, and resorts to shady means. When he loses his grip on his aggressions, his life begins to slip away from him, and he drags his friend Willy down with him - with disastrous consequences for both.

Between their wives striving for emancipation and "guest workers" on strike, between their children leaving and bosses pressuring them, between speculators' dreams and construction site reality, Willy and Horst wage hopeless battles for their share of prosperity.

“Reminiscent in tone and narrator position of Hans Fallada” - Ulrich Seidler, Berliner Zeitung

“A brilliant novel […] full of pain and anger, fear and hope, love and hate, which gives the book power and, above all, authentic language.” - Elke Heidenreich, Süddeutsche Zeitung

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Christian Baron

Christian Baron was born in 1985 in Kaiserslautern. He studied political science, sociology and German philology in Trier. After working for various local newspapers, he is an editor for the weekly newspaper Freitag. His literary debut A Man of his Class published in 2020 and won several awards.
A declaration of love to a mother who is far from picture perfect yet gives her daughter her all.

For You

Iris' parents, her mother a cast-out from a narrow-minded Cologne family, her father a "guest-worker" from Turkey, have little, but they have each other, an adorable little daughter, and a love for life. And money always comes by somehow, even if it hurts:

"Toilet attendant wasn't the dirtiest job you did. Every day. Whether sick or healthy. You had nothing, even slept on the street, and there was always trouble with the police. In the end you could only sell what no one could take from you: Your body. You had many scars and wounds, you got sick. You never complained. You even kept your sense of humor. How did you manage all these years? You always said: 'For you'. But for a long time, I didn't understand how literally you meant it and what you sacrificed for me. Until this weekend."

Iris Sayram is so upfront about her story, tells it so full of emotion and humor as it's only possible from the child's perspective. She takes her readers to Cologne in the 80s and 90s, but as in Jeanette Wall's Glass Castle or Tara Westover's Educated, her family lives in a world of its own, leaving the wealthy western country her story is set in barely recognizable in the background.
An entire village erased from the map.

**The Village**

Physically and psychologically severely damaged in World War I, a young farmer returns to his home village. He has lost half of his face to a grenade. His wife cannot bear the sight of him and meets him with disgust and horror. But Albert does not give up. He succeeds in finding his place in the family and the village community again, not least because Leni, the fiancée of his best friend who died in the war, helps him. For a while, it looks as if life can go on: The family grows, the farm gets bigger and, with the help of a famous surgeon, Albert gets back his face, albeit scared.

But as soon as the wounds of World War I begin to heal, the rise of the Nazis divides the village’s inhabitants and, ultimately, leaves the place completely deserted and destroyed. The village is hit hard in World War II. And even after the liberation, all inhabitants are evacuated, and the buildings continue to be attacked in military trainings of the British and Belgian forces.

For readers of Anne Gesthuysen and Susanne Abel: *The Village* closely intertwines individual drama with the big tragedy of the last century. While the life of the villagers, the intrigues, love stories, and the rise and fall of families, are universal and immediately accessible to an international readership, the special setting based on a real village adds a unique perspective.
Forests are burning. Democracies crumble. Two women fight to stop climate change and to save humanity from itself.

Tipping Point

Student and well-known activist Tessa knows that humanity must change its ways to stop climate change. As an idealist, she hopes to make a difference by means of education and harsh criticism of politicians, in particular the German chancellor Carsten Pahl whose Green Party fails to finally take effective steps to stop global warming. Meanwhile, her partner Shannon, a powerful investor from Silicon Valley, is convinced that salvation can only come by ways of new technologies. She pragmatically opts to side with the Chinese to fund a giant project masterminded by charismatic scientist Zhāng Li that will turn the Sahara into a forest. The green desert will bind enough carbon dioxide to avert global disaster, but it will also make China the most powerful nation in the world. Saving the planet comes at the cost of compromising democracy and human rights. Both Tessa and Shannon have to ask themselves what they are willing to sacrifice for their convictions.

Thrilling suspense with an urgent message and a global setting for readers of Frank Schätzing, Kazuaki Takano’s Genozide of One, Kim Stanley Robinson’s The Ministry of the Future, or David Class’ Out of Time

"The book is a fast paced and an exciting read - perfect material for all who love a palatable thriller (…). En passant, however, von Tschischwitz treats social debates in a realistic and multi-layered way."
— Spiegel Online

"Despite Fridays for Future and scientific admonitions, we are still not waking up when it comes to climate change. Maybe a novel like this will do the trick." — Prof. Dr. Klaus Hasselmann, climate researcher and Nobel laureate in physics
A tough thriller that turns the male gaze at dead female bodies around.

Stigma

A male body is found in a park in the northern Hamburg, a bag fixed over his head with cable ties, the eye sockets empty. The mutilations make police investigator Jagoda "Milo" Milosevic and her colleague Vincent Frey believe in organized crime initially. However, all leads come to nothing: The dead man seems to be a completely blameless citizen. Only when a colleague of the victim reports a sexual assault at a Christmas party does the picture change. And when a second dead man is found, this one a convicted sex offender, Milo and Vince ask themselves if someone is preying on men who have a history of violence against women. While they investigate in this direction, the killing spree continues, and Milo has the uncomfortable feeling that someone is watching her every step.

© Foto-Auer Anja
Unterhitzenberger

Lea Adam is the pseudonym of authors Regina Denk and Lisa Bitzer. Between the Swedish coast and the outskirts of Munich, they have published numerous books individually. Stigma is their first thriller as a team.
Toni Russo – young, non-binary, migrant – investigates her first case in turn-of-the-century Berlin.

A Very Cold Death

Antonella a.k.a. Toni Russo is a young woman who prefers to move around the city in men’s clothing, free from the rigid gender conventions of the times. Her parents fled poverty in Italy but as most of their compatriots found mostly exploitation in factories and on construction sites while the Berlin landlords offer them only the worst housing. Then, on New Year’s Eve, on the turn to the 20th century, Toni’s life changes radically.

In a bar in her working-class neighborhood, Toni meets Grete who has come into town on an adventure from her wealthy western suburb. Toni helps her out of a dangerous situation. As the two continue to celebrate the New Year, she suspects what it might mean to be happy. When Grete discovers that Toni’s shabby pants and coat cover a woman’s body and simply accepts her, Toni falls in love.

But in the wee hours, they find the gruesomely mutilated corpse of Toni’s uncle Francesco that has been hung from a lamppost. Suspecting a gangland murder between rival Italian families, the authorities quickly close the case. Grete who is a fan of crime novels, and Toni who wants justice for her uncle – and to be close to Grete, resume the investigation on their own. However, they do not reckon with how deep the swamp of violence and corruption really is.

Dark, atmospheric suspense for the fans of Berlin Babylon by Volker Kutscher and Berlin Noir by Philip Kerr - from a minority perspective.
Endless days on the French Riviera and a thunderous friendship with the Fitzgeralds.

My Summer With Zelda

The young and vivacious Mylène works in a small hotel on the French Riviera, a holiday home to many prominent guests. As the summer season begins, she becomes infatuated with Sébastien, a shy medical student, and befriends Zelda and F. Scott Fitzgerald, quickly becoming Zelda’s confidante.

Before she realizes it, Mylène’s friendship with Zelda is put to the test as she is swept into the Fitzgeralds’ notorious feuds. And then there’s Sébastien, who sees Mylène’s turbulent life with Zelda and Scott with suspicious eyes.

A page-turner and the perfect beach read: sun, glitz, glamour, and deep blue water.
The daughter of a chocolate factory owner and a young salt worker in the early years of the GDR

Salt and Chocolate

Irene grew up with the smell of chocolate in the air and loved to watch her father create new sweets. But since the war, everything has changed. Irene's brother is a prisoner of war in Russia, her mother has retreated into her own world, and the family business has been expropriated. A party functionary seizes the factory and also has his eye on Irene. But Irene is in love with Paul. The two have known each other since childhood but they were worlds apart. In the newly founded socialist state, class should no longer divide them. Still, the salt worker does not find her family's approval and the situation escalates when her powerful suitor has him arrested.

A sweet love story spiced with the frictions of politically turbulent times.
A touching love story about mental health, borderline, and dealing with loss.

Spiegel Bestseller

When I Lose the Two of Us

When Maggie starts her new job at a café, life gives her a hard challenge: The student runs into Leo again, the young man with whom she spent an unforgettable night two years ago and to whom she confided her darkest secret. A mistake she painfully regrets, because even though she broke up with Leo afterwards, she hasn’t been able to get him out of her mind.

Leo, too, is thunderstruck when Maggie suddenly appears. Her brusque rejection hurt him at the time, but he must admit to himself that the encounter with the beautiful stranger has changed him: it has given him the strength to believe in his dream and become a writer. Now he is working on his first novel in the café.

Maggie’s feelings for Leo come back full force. But as much as she’d like to give in to them, her fears of loss prevent her from getting involved with Leo. He knows too much about the night her sister died. But at the same time, he also knows far from everything. For Maggie not only struggles with her grief and self-reproaches, but also experiences moments of greatest inner tension due to her borderline disorder.

Antonia Wesseling tells the wonderful love story of a couple as unforgettable as Emma and Dexter from One Day by David Nicholls.

Antonia Wesseling | When I Lose the Two of Us

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Antonia Wesseling lives in Cologne with her cats. She began inventing her own stories as a child and started publishing books for young people later on. Besides being an author, she blogs on Instagram (@antoniawesseling) and YouTube (@tonipure) about good books, her love for writing, and mental health.
Time is NOT Money. Freedom and social justice mean equal distribution of time.

All Time

Time is the central resource of our society. But it is not equally distributed. Teresa Bücker, one of the most influential journalists in Germany, calls for a new time culture that ensures greater justice, quality of life, and a stronger sense of community.

Access to time is a question of power and freedom. Today, most of our time is occupied by paid employment; only economically usable work is considered valuable. That leaves too little room for social relationships, care work and recreation. Our society’s material prosperity has not translated into time prosperity and time is unfairly distributed. Bücker claims that time poverty drives us into isolation and exhaustion, destroys families and friendships, and turns political commitment into a class issue. A balanced life for all can only succeed if we understand how urgent time justice is and finally start a debate about how we can distribute time fairly.

Part a “big ideas”-book, part a call-to-arms, Teresa Bücker delivers concrete plans and suggestions on how a radically new time culture will lead to more gender and generational justice, a sustainable economy, and a future worth living.
Bestselling author Maja Göpel shows us how we can set the course for the future in times of upheaval and why this concerns us all.

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**Top 5 Spiegel Bestseller**

We Can Do Better

The way we live will change fundamentally. Things we have taken for granted so far in the environment, the economy, politics, society, and technology are crumbling. But this book is encouraging: Based on scientific findings, Maja Göpel clarifies how we can understand such complex developments and use this knowledge for a better world. Because there have always been great transformations in history. They were triggered by us humans - thus, we can also shape them. Our window to the future is as open as never before. With this attitude, structural change is not an imposition, but an opportunity. It is time that we - each of us individually, but also society as a whole - allow ourselves to think anew, to dream and to ask a radical question: Who do we want to be?

After her previous book Rethinking Our World eloquently untangled the complex world we live in, Maja Göpel now delivers the encouragement and the tools to get into action and build the world we want to live in.

Rethinking Our World sold over 250,000 copies. Rights sold to World English (Scribe), Russia (Alpina), Netherlands (Pluim), Greece (Psichogios), Japan (Otsuki), Korea (Thoughts of a Tree Publishing), Croatia (Naklada Ljevak), Brazil (Record), China (China Translation & Publication)

"Great inspiration, smart thinking." NDR Das!

"It is an encouragement because it shows that people are not helplessly at the mercy of developments." Berliner Zeitung

"Profound diagnosis and wake-up call" - Deutschlandfunk Kultur

Rights sold to: World Englisch (Scribe) | Korea (Thoughts of a Tree)
"There are no straight lines in this life.” FAZ

My Life

Samuel Meffire’s life is an uphill battle from the start. His father, a student from Cameroon, dies under mysterious circumstances the day Samuel is born. His mother, an aspiring engineer from East Germany, starts an excruciating battle with the government to return the father’s body to his homeland – a fight that leaves her broken and unable to properly care for her children.

Samuel finds validation and belonging in sports. Against all odds, he becomes East Germany’s first black police officer. In the 1990s, an era marked by upheaval and unrest, he is the face of an anti-racism campaign. He is invited to politicians’ receptions, talk shows, and shines in media appearances. Under the overwhelming pressure from public life, he grows frustrated by the highly bureaucratic state and leaves the police force.

A whirlwind of events ensues: small criminal offenses lead to a bigger robbery going wrong, Samuel flees Germany via Paris and ends up in Congo. Eventually, he turns himself in and spends seven years in prison. After his release, Samuel finds redemption once more on the “front line” of social upheaval, this time as a social worker for violent youths and as a successful author of dystopian crime novels.

Witty, enigmatic, and gripping – in his memoir, Samuel Meffire looks back at the twists and turns of his unique life, at the same time builds the portrait of a rarely depicted part of German history.

Samuel Meffire’s life story is also the basis for Disney + first German original TV series, which will be available and marketed internationally via the streaming platform next year.

Rights sold to:
UK Commonwealth (Little Brown)
“One of the most important theorists of the left”
Philosophiemagazin

Conflict. The Importance of Solving Tomorrow’s Problems Today

Our age is characterized by completely new confrontations that threaten the social order and overwhelm us. There is hardly an area that is not described as full of conflicts: between genders and generations, between civilizations and cultures - and of course we are also at odds with ourselves. At the same time, a tendency to suppress conflict is growing even beyond filter bubbles and cancel culture. Moreover, the conflicts of the future are already shaping the present, racing toward us achronologically and exponentially.

Armen Avanessian frames these dynamics scientifically for the first time. He analyzes our present and debunks its failed strategy of conflict avoidance, looks back into the past and discusses seminal thinking on the subject from Kant’s antinomies via the development of a sociology of conflict to Donna Haraway’s “Staying with the Trouble”. Moreover, he develops concrete instructions for dealing with these challenges, while focusing on what is coming: We must look at the present from the future, because only if we are ready to face conflict today will there be a tomorrow.

A fully new take on the challenges of our globalized world by an internationally renowned philosopher with a wide spanning academic network.

Armen Avanessian is a philosopher, literary scholar and political theorist. He has been a visiting professor at various art academies and universities, including Nuremberg, Hamburg, Copenhagen, and Paris. From 2017 to 2021, he directed the popular event series “Armen Avanessian & Enemies” in Berlin. Since August 2021, he is Professor of Media Theory at Zeppelin University in Friedrichshafen.
An ecological ethics based on the recognition of the radical otherness of nature and animals

Humans as Animals. Why We Are Still Strangers to Nature

Star philosopher Markus Gabriel sketches human beings as animals as well as intellectual explorers of nature, including their own animal-ness. As part of the New Enlightenment, he enlists all sciences – contemporary humanities and social sciences on par with the newest findings of the natural, life, and behavioral sciences – to weave the self-portrait of a species that has brought its habitat to the brink of destruction.

Based on the arrogant assumption that we can fully comprehend nature in and around us and the false promise that we can endlessly exploit and completely control its resources and processes, we have tried to establish a technocratic paradise on Earth but gained only the power to destroy our planet and ourselves. However, the next step cannot be to colonize Mars or to create enhanced humans through technology. Besides the fact that they would only be the continuation of our problematic path, we are simply in no position to achieve those feats. Harari’s “Homo Deus”, Gabriel is sure, will not come.

Instead, Gabriel demands a change of perspective: We need to confront our physical and psychological vulnerability and accept our dependence on natural processes that we are far from understanding. As impressively illustrated by the discovery that 95% of the universe consists of dark matter and energy that eludes our methods of exploration and description, we know next to nothing. To live up to our generic name “homo sapiens” and to the Socratic wisdom, we need to become aware of our lack of comprehension and control. From this spot, we can develop an Ethics of Unknowing.

“One of the most important contemporary German philosophers” - Süddeutsche Zeitung

Rights sold to:
Korea (Open Books) | Japan (Kodansha) | Spain (Pasado y Presenta) | Netherlands (Boom Publishing) | World English (Polity) | China (Guanxi Normal University Press)
An inspiring response to Hannah Arendt’s vision of The Human Condition as vita activa.

Vita Contemplativa

Inaction, Byung-Chul Han argues in his newest book, is what constitutes the human condition. It is the ferment of culture. If we lose it as a capability, we resemble a machine that must only function smoothly.

Where only the scheme of stimulus and reaction, of need and satisfaction, of problem and solution, of goal and action prevails, life withers to survival. Because reduced to its efficacy, our existence becomes exploitable and ultimately pointless. Moreover, ceaseless doing has turned us into exploiters of our social and natural surroundings. Instead of piling up the riches consumer capitalism promised, it has left us impoverished.

Han convincingly shows that the current crisis in our society calls for a very different way of life, one based on the vita contemplativa. He pleads for bringing our ceaseless activities to a stop and make room for the magic that happens in between: Life receives its splendor only from idleness.

"The master of contemporary thought - Byung-Chul Han" - El País

Rights sold to:
Italy (Nottetempo) | China (Citic) | Portugal (Relogio d'Agua) | Korea (Gimmyoung) | Spain (Taurus) | World English (Polity) | Brasil (Vozes) | Netherlands (Ten Have) | Spain La Magrana

Byung-Chul Han is a South Korean-born German philosopher and cultural theorist. His critically acclaimed publications have been translated into more than 20 languages.
Why we should not be too convinced by our beliefs: A new take on subjective experience, social consciousness, and perception.

The Illusion of Reason

Corona deniers, climate skeptics, alternative facts - how is it possible that people are so convinced of things that are clearly wrong? Are they simply uneducated? Or even crazy? Or is it because they like to believe only what they want to believe?

Philipp Sterzer has long been concerned with the question of how we form beliefs - as a neuroscientist and as a psychiatrist. In the process, he has discovered something astonishing: Beliefs are much less rational than expected. Our brain builds worlds that seem right and reasonable to us. In fact, however, our perceptions are fantasies that sometimes correspond more, sometimes less with the outside world. Thus, beliefs always imply irrationality and sometimes craziness. This new view of the processes in our brain forces us to critically question our own thinking. For this is the only way to stay open to peaceful coexistence in plural societies.

Philipp Sterzer, a leading expert in neurology, psychiatry, and brain research, delivers a work about how beliefs are formed that is both topical and foundational. It incorporates the latest findings of the sciences as well as the current sociological and philosophical background in a very accessible text with numerous clarifying illustrations.

Rights sold to:
Korea (Gimmyoung )
How to outsmart our subconscious and turn off negative thought loops.

The Dark Side of the Brain

Current research has come to a startling conclusion: most processes in the brain are unconscious. In a flash and automatically, our subconscious recognizes dangers and even rewards, often long before we consciously register a corresponding situation. Unfortunately, however, this subconscious thinking keeps repeating the same mistakes: It seduces us into making purchases that we later regret, makes us put things on the back burner, simplifies numbers and probabilities, and changes memories without further ado based on new information. In addition, the autopilot of the subconscious generates "emotional errors". They are responsible for us circling in negative thought loops, getting into (self-) destructive conflicts with others, and falling into unhealthy moods. In his new book, Stefan Kölsch reveals this often rampant and therefore fatal mechanism and shows how we can escape the vicious circle of "bad vibrations".

Combining popular science at its best with self-help, renowned brain researcher Stefan Kölsch has written the first book that explores the importance and dangers of the subconscious for our health - based on the current state of science, easily understandable for all, and with many examples. His previous book, "Good Vibrations", was translated into six languages.
The true origin of coronavirus and a call to ecological action.

Covid-19 provides a lesson in evolutionary biology in real time - namely, it illustrates how viruses have always influenced humankind and its history, and how we ourselves are now, in the Anthropocene, creating the conditions for epidemics. For all over the world, animals - from pangolins to turkeys, from bats to cattle - harbor countless pathogens that also infect humans. Our globalized, ever more densely populated world makes it likely that even more dangerous pandemics will soon emerge. Because wilderness is being destroyed, huge areas are being deforested, and new diseases are reaching us through hunting and poaching, global trade and smuggling, and our livestock farming. Therefore, our attention must not be focused solely on the race for ever new vaccines; rather, we must urgently devote ourselves to the protection of nature and biodiversity. It is time to learn for future pandemics and end our war on nature.

Matthias Glaubrecht is an evolutionary biologist and professor of biodiversity at the Centrum für Naturkunde (CeNak) at the University of Hamburg. He writes for newspapers and magazines and has published several books, most recently Das Ende der Evolution (The End of Evolution).
How astrophysics solves the mysteries of archaeology.

Is the Answer Written in the Stars?

Sunken civilizations created buildings and artifacts that still raise the question today how such achievements could succeed without today’s technology: Time and again in human history, an explosion of knowledge has occurred seemingly out of nowhere. In particular, works of art from cultures with no written language often puzzle us. In Göbekli Tepe, the first temples were built 12,000 years ago. On the Indus River, entire cities had elaborate water supplies and sewage systems as early as the 3rd millennium BC. At the same time, in England, stones weighing tons were moved over hundreds of kilometers to build the Stonehenge monument. Researchers around the world keep coming across such enigmatic finds.

In this richly illustrated volume, Gisela Graichen describes spectacular archaeological finds and findings; Harald Lesch provides explanations that only natural science and astrophysics can give - such as where the West African Dogon got their knowledge about the mysterious Sirius star, what the geoglyphs of the Nazca and Sajama lines in South America mean, and whether aliens could have helped build the Egyptian pyramids.

As a television writer, Gisela Graichen developed many award-winning series. She is the author and co-author of numerous scientific bestsellers on archaeology.

Harald Lesch is Professor of Theoretical Astrophysics at the Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich and one of Germany’s best-known natural scientists. He hosts several TV shows and is the author and co-author of many successful books.
How to stay human in our digital world. For a healthy and balanced relationship with your phone - no detox needed.

“Im slowly realizing that this life I'm living here is no longer a real life at all. I'm physically sitting here, on the same chair, bent over my smartphone, in the same posture. My head is no longer up, no longer free, no longer new. The digital has consumed me to death."

All aspects of our lives – relationships, health, work, money – have been deeply influenced by the digital technologies, always present through the smartphone. Feeling constantly drained and tired, journalist and millennial Anna Miller looks closely at her relationship with her smartphone. After the initial shock of realizing how much time she spends with it, she decides to dig deep and find out what exactly makes her and all of us so attached. And more importantly: how to create a healthier balance between her online and offline life.

Anna takes the latest scientific findings from positive psychology, neuropsychology, motivation and relationship research and puts the digital in a larger context. She offers concrete tips and exercises for a more aware consumption of screen time and digital content, and proves that a good life full of focus, energy, creativity, closeness, and genuine connection is possible with your smartphone in hand – at least sometimes.
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