

Novel Brings Cairo to Life During World War II

Author Juliana Maio has written a historical novel that showcases events during World War II in the Middle East. Don't dismiss *City of the Sun* (Greenleaf Book Group Press, 2014) too quickly: A love story and intrigue are mixed with historically accurate details to make a story that grabs your attention and keeps you engaged until the end.

Mickey Connolly is an American who has come to Egypt to make a name for himself as a newspaper reporter. He is rather naïve and idealistic and seems somewhat uninformed about the area he is in and the events happening around him as he tries to report on civilian life in Egypt. He is caught up in the exotic world of "Paris on the Nile" until he gets recruited to work for the American Embassy on a covert mission.

As the novel unfolds, we see that the United States was not the only country interested in the Jewish scientists who were escaping from Germany. As Rom-

mel is trying to expand the Nazi influence further in Northern Africa, Maio creates a story of intrigue and espionage, pitting Connolly against a Nazi spy as they both try to recruit the same scientist who has information about creating a bomb that could end the war.

The story of a developing romance between the fictional Mickey and his love interest Maya is interwoven with real historical characters like Anwar Sadat, the young King Farouk, Sir Miles Lampson, and U.S. Ambassador Alexander Kirk and the situations that were happening during the

1940s in Egypt. Maio has rewritten the real-life German spy Johannes Eppler as the character Heinrich Kesner, an obsessive Nazi spy working to get recognized by the SS. Like Eppler, he has mixed Arab and German background and lives on a houseboat while infiltrating Egyptian society to spy on the British and American presence there.

The story is centered in Cairo, a very

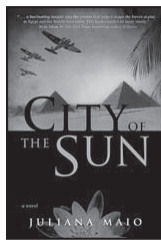
sophisticated city where French was the main language spoken and Europeans, Jews, and Arabs coexisted in peace. The Suez Canal is built and the country becomes more modernized. Then the English take control, and the book explains the history of turmoil as dissonance is heard from the Islamic fundamentalists, the nationalists, and the Egyptian monarchy. Even as war is waging in Europe and coming closer to North Africa, life in Cairo is still glamorous, as seen in this passage: "Ataba Square, the wide-open plaza at the west end of the city, was easily Cairo's foremost commercial center, buzzing all day with soldiers and merchants. But this evening when Mickey descended from the arabya Hantour, the horse-drawn buggy he had taken to the Continental Hotel, he encountered a very different crowd. Men in linen suits and women in pearls emerged from Rolls Royces and Bentleys arriving at the hotel in battalions. Valets, dressed all in white, scurried frantically to assist this influx of Cairo's high society."

The author, Juliana Maio, was drawn

to this topic because of her personal background of Jewish- Egyptian heritage. Her family was expelled from Egypt during the Suez Crisis, and she grew up in France. She knew she wanted to write and learn about the Jews of Egypt, so she began studying Egypt's history, and after 10 years of research and writing she has completed *City of the Sun*.

Maio received a B.A. at the University of California, Berkeley, and her Juris Doctor degree from UC Hastings. She practices entertainment law in Los Angeles and has represented internationally renowned filmmakers as well as a host of independent production companies. Prior to that she served as vice president of worldwide corporate and business affairs for Triumph Films, a joint venture between Columbia Pictures and Gaumont Films.

Maio co-founded Lighthouse Productions, an independent film and television company. She has spoken both domestically and abroad about the Arab Spring. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband, film producer Michael Phillips.



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April is Genocide Awareness Month in New Hampshire

ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS:

Keene State College students, high school and middle school students, and community members are invited to submit work related to the Holocaust, genocide or both.

SUBMISSIONS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Research papers or projects | Short stories |
| Essays • Poems | Visual works of art |
| Dance compositions | Films • Plays |
| Musical creations | |

CASH AWARDS will be given in the following categories:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Keene State College Student | Middle School (Grades 6-8) |
| High School (Grade 9-12) | Community Member |

DUE DATES

All final entries must be submitted by Wednesday, March 11, 2015. A submission form must accompany the entry and can be found at www.keene.edu/cchgs. Selection process will begin on March 25, 2015.

Award Presentation will take place on Sunday, April 12, 2015 at 7 PM in the Alumni Recital Hall of the Redfern Arts Center.

For more information and for a proposal form, please visit: www.keene.edu/cchgs



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