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# Headlong By Michael Frayn

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Headlong

The Human Touch

Spies

The Trick of It

The Two of Us

Magic Mobile

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Wild Honey

The Russian Interpreter (Valancourt 20th Century Classics)

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## **DILLON TESSA**

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*Headlong* Viking Adult  
A striking new  
repackaged edition of  
Michael Frayn's Booker  
shortlisted comedy  
thriller, set in the world  
of fine art.

### **The Human Touch**

Faber & Faber  
'An unknown place.'  
This was what Michael  
Frayn's children called  
the shadowy landscape

of the past from which  
their family had  
emerged. Shortlisted  
for the Costa Book  
Awards, My Father's  
Fortune sets out to  
rediscover that lost  
land before all trace of  
it finally disappears  
beyond recall. As Frayn  
tries to see it through  
the eyes of his parents  
and the others who  
shaped his life, he  
comes to realise how  
little he ever knew or  
understood about

them. This is above all the story of his father, the quick-witted boy from a poor and struggling family, who overcame disadvantages and shouldered many burdens to make a go of his life; who found happiness, had it snatched away from him, and in the end, after many difficulties, perhaps found it again. Father and son were in some ways incredibly alike, in others ridiculously different; and the journey back down the corridors of time is sometimes comic, sometimes painful, as Michael Frayn comes to see how much he has inherited from his father and makes one or two surprising discoveries along the way. Michael Frayn is the celebrated author

of fifteen plays including *Noises Off*, *Copenhagen* and *Afterlife*. His bestselling novels include *Headlong*, which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, *Spies*, which won the Whitbread Best Novel Award and *Skios*, which was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize. *Spies* Faber & Faber He knows everything about her before they meet; more about her nine novels that she does herself. He has devoted his life to studying and teaching them and yet he is four times as clever as she is. Now, as she steps off the train in London, something about her in the flesh sets him thinking. Maybe he has a chance to resolve the one remaining mystery at the heart of things. . . Through a series of

letters sent by a minor English Literature academic to his old friend in Australia, Frayn combines a vivid and moving study of obsession, with a witty and playful account of what it's like to be on the fringes of the creative process.

Michael Frayn is the celebrated author of fifteen plays including *Noises Off*, *Copenhagen* and *Afterlife*. His bestselling novels include *Headlong*, which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, *Spies*, which won the Whitbread Best Novel Award and *Skios*, which was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

**The Trick of It** Picador USA

One of the funniest writers of his generation, Michael Frayn has been writing

humorous newspaper columns since 1959, principally for the "Guardian" and "Observer", and originally came to prominence as the thrice weekly purveyor of these short, surreal, razor-sharp explorations of human foibles, sex, politics, manners, and the events of the day. This volume brings together 110 of his finest and funniest pieces from over the years, selected and introduced by Michael Frayn himself, and is an unmissable treat for the many fans of his unique comic voice, as well as a revelation for fans of the award-winning literary novels and plays of his later career.

*The Two of Us* Faber & Faber

This amusing satire

about audiences by the author of *Noises Off*, *Copenhagen* and other acclaimed plays takes place in the stalls (orchestra) of a West End theatre. The cast includes an usherette, audience members and a playwright in agony over crinkling candy wrappers, talking out loud, and inattention to his play. The characters in Michael Frayn's metatheatrical comedy are actually watching the audience, expecting them to perform, and comedy ensues as Frayn holds a mirror up to the audience and they see their own foibles as audience members.

#### Magic Mobile

Bloomsbury Publishing  
Oh, Misha, it's terrible to be an educated woman. An educated woman with nothing to do. What am I here for?

Why am I alive? They should make me a professor somewhere, or a director of something ... If I were a diplomat I'd turn the whole world upside down ... An educated woman ... And nothing to do. Village schoolmaster Mikhail Vasilyevich has it all: wit, intelligence, a comfortable and respectable life in provincial Russia, and the attentions of four beautiful women - one of whom is his devoted wife... As summer arrives and the seasonal festivities commence, the rapidly intensifying heat makes everyone giddy with sunlight, vodka - and passion. Michael Frayn's comedy of errors, drawn from Chekhov's untitled and posthumously discovered early play,

is a tale of nineteenth-century Russian life replete with classic misunderstandings, irrepressible desires and nostalgia for a vanishing world. *Wild Honey* received its premiere in the National Theatre's Lyttelton space, London, on 19 July 1984. This edition was published for the revival at the Hampstead Theatre in December 2016.

*Against Entropy*

Bloomsbury Publishing  
A collection of writings by Michael Frayn, based on his column in *The Guardian*, covering the pomposities and inanities of public announcements, fashionable conversations and self-advertising of all kinds. *Wild Honey* Faber & Faber

In mid-career, Michael

Frayn took up his old trade of journalism, and wrote a series of occasional articles for the *Observer* about some of the places in the world that interested him. He wanted to describe 'not the extraordinary but the ordinary, the typical, the everyday', and his accounts became the starting point for some of the novels and plays he wrote later. From a kibbutz in Israel to summer rains in Japan, bicycles in Cambridge to Notting Hill at the end of the 1950s, they are glimpses of a world that sometimes seems tantalisingly familiar, sometimes vanished forever. Michael Frayn is the celebrated author of fifteen plays including *Noises Off*, *Copenhagen* and *Afterlife*. His bestselling

novels include Headlong, which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, Spies, which won the Whitbread Best Novel Award and Skios, which was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize. "All writers of fiction should be required by law to go out and do a bit of reporting from time to time, just to remind them how different the real world in front of their eyes is from the invented world behind them." Michael Frayn 'Whether he's on a kibbutz or a bicycle, Frayn makes acute observations and the writing is enchanting.' Conde Nast Traveller *The Russian Interpreter (Valancourt 20th Century Classics)* Heinemann Educational Books Three political parties, in and out of bed with

each other like drunken intellectuals, fifteen warring cabinet ministers, and sixty million separate egos. All making deals with each other and breaking them. All looking round at every moment to see the expression on everyone else's face. All trying to guess which way everyone else will jump. All out for themselves and all totally dependent on everyone else. Not one Germany. Sixty million separate Germanies. The tower of Babel! Set in West Germany in 1969, DEMOCRACY follows Willy Brandt as he begins his brief but remarkable career as the first left-of-centre Chancellor for nearly forty years. Always present but rarely noticed is Günter Guillaume, Brandt's

devoted personal assistant - and no less devoted in his other role, spying on Brandt for the Stasi. Published to tie in with major new production at the Royal National Theatre directed by Michael Blakemore starring Roger Allam, Conleth Hill, Nicholas Blane, Jonathan Coy, Christopher Ettridge, Paul Gregory, Glyn Grain, Steven Pacey and David Ryall.

*The Copenhagen Papers* Samuel French, Inc.

Frayn combines the wit of Calvin Trillin with the wisdom of John Updike in this hilarious novel about an unlikely con man wagers wife, wealth, and sanity in pursuit of an elusive Old Master.

*A Landing on the Sun* Samuel French , Incorporated

First published in 1974 and republished following the success of Frayn's masterly work of philosophy, *The Human Touch*, *Constructions* is a dazzling, thought-provoking and fascinating book which explores some of the great problems in philosophy and of everyday life.

*Born Free* Bloomsbury Publishing

*Afterlife* is Michael Frayn's first new play for the National Theatre since *Democracy*, which premiered at the National in 2003 before West End and Broadway transfers. *Afterlife* opens in the NT Lyttelton in June. Investigating the life of the Austrian impresario and founder of the Salzburg Festival, Max Reinhardt, *Afterlife* is a



grand epic and a highly theatrical work that will be directed by Frayn's long-term collaborator Michael Blakemore. With his morality play 'Everyman', Reinhardt captivated first the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg, and then the city itself, with the play opening the Salzburg festival each year from 1920 until the accession of the Nazis in 1938. As Reinhardt and his company are forced into exile, 'Everyman' is taken to America until life imitates art and Death comes for first Reinhardt's master of ceremonies and chief associate, Kommer, and then for Reinhardt himself.

### *Hotel World*

Metropolitan Books  
Pocket Playhouse is Michael Frayn's latest imaginative offering

that brings the stage to the page. In thirty-six comic sketches, he provides a tour de force of theatrical imagination and satire. Each sketch reveals the author's infectious delight in writing between the lines of theatre, fiction and comedy. Charmingly packaged and published with flair, Pocket Playhouse is the perfect gift for all theatre and comedy writers.

*Audience* Faber & Faber

In 1941 the German physicist Werner Heisenberg made a strange trip to Copenhagen to see his Danish counterpart, Niels Bohr. They were old friends and close colleagues, and they had revolutionised atomic physics in the 1920s with their work

together on quantum mechanics and the uncertainty principle. But now the world had changed, and the two men were on opposite sides in a world war. The meeting was fraught with danger and embarrassment, and ended in disaster. Why the German physicist Heisenberg went to Copenhagen in 1941 and what he wanted to say to the Danish physicist Bohr are questions which have exercised historians of nuclear physics ever since. In Michael Frayn's new play Heisenberg meets Bohr and his wife Margrethe once again to look for the answers, and to work out, just as they had once worked out the internal functioning of the atom, how we can ever know why we do what

we do. 'Michael Frayn's tremendous play is a piece of history, an intellectual thriller, a psychological investigation and a moral tribunal in full session.' Sunday Times  
*Benefactors* Penguin UK

A mobile phone is something that gives you the whole world at the touch of your finger - but this book is even better. Magic Mobile is a collection of thirty 'pre-loaded' new text files in a no-fuss, non-digital entertainment system. In a volume that succeeds Matchbox Theatre and Pocket Playhouse, each of these short comic masterpieces displays Michael Frayn's unique genius in forever capturing life's latest absurdities. Tune in to the BBC Radio 4 adaptation of Magic

Mobile 13 May, 20 May, 27 May, 3 June.

Michael Frayn's eleven novels include *Towards the End of the Morning*, *Headlong*, *Spies* and *Skios*. His seventeen plays range from *Noises Off* to *Copenhagen*.

Look Look Bloomsbury Publishing

Laura Hird's superb debut novel is a punchy, acerbic, sharp-witted, and, above all, acutely observed account of family life set in a deprived area of west Edinburgh.

Published to outstanding acclaim in Britain, *Born Free* tells the story of an ordinary family who is trying to escape from something . . . and each other.

The interactions between Jake, Joni, Angie, and Vie reveal a hellish cocktail of adolescent and midlife

crises; the savagery of sibling rivalry; the waking nightmare of a marriage gone cold; and, naturally, the unbridgeable, infernal chasm between the generations. It's a story of everyday life.

### **Alphabetical Order**

Faber & Faber

TONY AWARD WINNER

- An explosive re-imagining of the mysterious wartime meeting between two Nobel laureates to discuss the atomic bomb. "Endlessly fascinating.... The most invigorating and ingenious play of ideas in many a year.... An electrifying work of art." —Ben Brantley, *The New York Times* In 1941 the German physicist Werner Heisenberg made a clandestine trip to Copenhagen to see his Danish counterpart and

friend Niels Bohr. Their work together on quantum mechanics and the uncertainty principle had revolutionized atomic physics. But now the world had changed and the two men were on opposite sides in a world war. Why Heisenberg went to Copenhagen and what he wanted to say to Bohr are questions that have vexed historians ever since. In Michael Frayn's ambitious, fiercely intelligent, and daring new play Heisenberg and Bohr meet once again to discuss the intricacies of physics and to ponder the metaphysical—the very essence of human motivation.

*Alphabetical Order and Donkeys' Years* Samuel French, Inc.

In a brilliant coda to

the play Copenhagen, Michael Frayn receives mysterious letters that take him back to the theme of his bestselling novel, *Headlong* -- human folly, this time his own. Michael Frayn's Copenhagen has established itself as one of the finest pieces of drama to grace the stage in recent years. The subject of the Tony-winning play is the strange visit the German nuclear physicist Werner Heisenberg made to his former mentor, scientist Niels Bohr, in Nazi-occupied Copenhagen and the quarrel that ensued. Heisenberg's intentions on that visit, for good or for evil, have long intrigued and baffled historians and scientists. One day, during the British run

of Copenhagen, Frayn received a curious package from a suburban housewife, which contained a few faded pages of barely legible German writings. These pages, which she claimed to have found concealed beneath her floorboards, seemed to cast a remarkable new light on the mystery at the heart of play. As more material emerged -- specifically notes that appeared to give instructions on how to put up a table-tennis table but perhaps containing important encoded information -- actor David Burke, who was playing Niels Bohr, began to display extreme, even suspicious interest in Frayn's growing obsession with cracking the riddle of

the papers. And Frayn, for his part, lost all sense of certainty. Was he the victim of an elaborate hoax? By turns comic and profound, *The Copenhagen Papers* explores the conundrum that is always at the heart of Frayn's work -- human gullibility and the eternal difficulty of knowing why we do what we do.

### **A Very Private Life**

*Viking Adult Spies* (1929) is from the pen of Thea von Harbou, author of "Metropolis."

Translated from the German by Helen J. Stiegler.

Copenhagen Faber & Faber

Michael Frayn's farce "Noises Off" was about actors at work; this later work shows the other half of the great

confrontation which  
constitutes live theatre  
- the audience. "Look

Look" was first  
performed at the  
Aldwych Theatre,  
London, in April 1990.