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“Karen Green smashes the boundaries between the visual and the written, the found and the invented, the comic and the tragic.” —Jonathan Franzen

KAREN GREEN: FRAIL SISTER

PUB DATE: **OCTOBER 23, 2018** \$39.95 HB 7.5 x 10 164 pages full color artist's books/literature/fiction ISBN: 978-1-938221-19-4

ADVANCES AVAILABLE NOW. All Siglio titles are available at www.sigliopress.com and distributed by ARTBOOK/D.A.P.

There will also be a signed and numbered limited edition of 25 with a small work by Karen Green.

A fictional archive of altered photos, letters, collages and drawings, *Frail Sister* is a rescued history of a missing woman's life. As a child, Constance Gale is put to work with her sister, performing as musical prodigies during the Great Depression. As a teenager, she escapes the confines of her impoverished life by joining the U.S.O. and touring a ravaged Italy during World War II. Men—some kind, some nefarious, some an ineluctable cocktail—write to Constance, smitten by her stage persona. Letters to and from Constance expose not only the quotidian reality of war but also the ubiquitous brutality it throws into relief. After the war, she returns to an unsparing life in New York City in which the violence persists and her ghosts multiply.

Artist and writer Karen Green's second book originated in her search for a woman who had vanished: her Aunt Constance whom Green knew only from a few family photos and keepsakes. Finding almost no trace of her aunt, Green instead invents, appropriates and alters artifacts. Then she constructs an elliptical, arresting arrangement of these fragments to pursue a new inquiry: what becomes of a woman whose talent, ambition, and appetite defy what the world expects of her? How does she disappear?

In this exquisitely woven, epistolary and visual fiction, Green imagines for her aunt a childhood in which she is bold, reckless, perspicacious, mischievous; an adolescence ripe with desire and scarred by violation and loss; and an adulthood in which she strives to sing above the din. Nimble, unnerving and darkly funny, *Frail Sister* examines the thin membrane between resiliency and fragility, the love of family and its betrayals, bringing a forgotten life into focus.

KAREN GREEN is an artist and writer whose inventive, hybrid image-text works narrate the intimate spaces of human experience. Her first book *Bough Down* earned numerous accolades and a devoted readership. She lives in Northern California and New York City.

Frail Sister is a singular achievement that defies genre naming. Here image is formed by epistolary text which is informed by the unformed facts of actual lives reformed by fiction. Sisters in life and the men who admire, cajole or destroy them stand in for every woman who has felt missing, gone missing, found dead. If there must be a question at the center of every breath, *Frail Sister* asks what it is to “faint upwards” or “float and fall” in the same moment. This is a masterwork creating its own terms for existence—every page a marvelous and terrifying journey.

—Claudia Rankine

Glorious, a haunting prism of art and artifact, *Frail Sister* builds its power as a mystery does, with clues and secrets, the story inseparable from the form. Moving, sly and skillful, a portrait of woman's life in the embodied history of its materials. A marvel.

—Janet Fitch

Karen Green smashes the boundaries between the visual and the written, the found and the invented, the comic and the tragic; between uncompromising art and pure fun. Her ear is as keen as her eye is dazzling. And her obsessions are contagious.

—Jonathan Franzen

MORE →

CALIFORNIA BOOK SIGNINGS TO CELEBRATE THE RELEASE OF **FRAIL SISTER**

(New York signing to be announced.)

Point Reyes, California **POINT REYES BOOKS**, October 6 at 7 p.m. 11315 Highway 1. P: 415.663.1542

Los Angeles, California **ARTBOOK @ HAUSER & WIRTH**, October 13 at 4 p.m. 917 E 3rd Street. P: 213.988.7413



Also by Karen Green: **BOUGH DOWN**

WINNER OF THE BELIEVER POETRY AWARD 2013

New Italian edition, translated by Martina Testa, out August 30 from Baldini & Castoldi

\$36 • HB + dust jacket • 188 pages • 56 color illustrations • 5.75 x 7.75 • 2013 • 3rd printing • ISBN: 978-1-938221-01-9

“One of the most beautiful expressions of love and loss you will ever read. *Bough Down* put me in mind somehow of the Portuguese fado: a lament rendered so precisely it becomes luminous and affirmative. This is a profound, lovely, bitterly funny book that fulfills the first requirement of great art: it is magical.” —**George Saunders**

With fearlessness and grace, *Bough Down* reports from deep inside the maelstrom of grief. Karen Green summons memories and the machinations of the interior mind with poetic precision, a startling sense of humor, and an acute awareness of contradictory truths and the volatility of language. Crystalline fragments of text refract meaning with the emotional precision of music; in counterpoint, her tiny collages of salvaged language and scraps of the material world evince the reassembling of life. Conjuring that inscrutable space in which clarity and contradiction, sense and madness converge, she charts her passage through the devastation. *Bough Down* is lapidary, keenly observed and awash with the honesty of a strikingly open heart.

Maggie Nelson, LOS ANGELES REVIEW OF BOOKS: *Karen Green's new—and incredibly, her first—book is an astonishment. It is one of the most moving, strange, original, harrowing and beautiful documents of grief and reckoning I've read . . . It is suffused throughout with the dissonant, private richness of the minor, while also managing to be a major achievement.*

NEW YORKER: *Grief emphatic, grief redeeming, grief protracted, grief abraded all intertwine in this funny, prickly memoir . . . The book intersperses its vignettes with tiny sepia collages of text, fingerprints, and crime-scene-like shots that function as peepholes into grief. The result would be too painful if not for its insistence on humor as a palliative. Green has the eye of a novelist and rejects the easy ending. She writes, “Ultimately, the loss becomes immortal and hole is more familiar than tooth.”*

J. Mae Barizo, HYPERALLERGIC: *Bough Down is a beautiful anomaly in itself. It is many things: art book, collage, lyric, prose poetry and ultimately, a dizzying and wondrous incantation of grief . . . The work entralls because it exposes artistic creation as an act of necessity, this feat of laying it all down.*

Meghan O'Rourke, SLATE: *One of the most singular books I read this year—a book that left an indelible impression on me—is Karen Green's Bough Down, a lyric elegy for a husband who took his own life. Comprising both visual collages and elliptical prose entries, Bough Down is a lament for a lost love, by turns yearning, acerbic, resigned, and alive with protest.*



In 2018 Siglio is celebrating its tenth year of fiercely independent publishing, driven by its feminist ethos and its commitment to artists and writers who obey no boundaries, pay no fealty to trends and invite readers to see the world anew by reading word and image in provocative, unfamiliar ways. Since its inception, Siglio has seen publishing itself as an act of resistance to the literal, the authoritarian and the facile, publishing cross-disciplinary, hybrid and often unwieldy works. **We continue this mission in 2018 with a rigorously eclectic list by Mirtha Dermisache, Ellie Ga, Karen Green and Dick Higgins**, artists and writers who resist categorical distinctions, envisioning image, language and the space of the book in expansive and utterly imaginative ways.

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