

The Muralist: A Novel

By B. A. Shapiro



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"Vibrant and suspenseful . . . Like *The Art Forger*, this new story takes us into the heart of what it means to be an artist." —*The Washington Post*

"B. A. Shapiro captivated us in 2012 with her 'addictive' novel *The Art Forger*. Now, she's back with another thrilling tale from the art world." *—Entertainment Weekly*

When Alizée Benoit, an American painter working for the Works Progress Administration (WPA), vanishes in New York City in 1940, no one knows what happened to her. Not her Jewish family living in German-occupied France. Not her artistic patron and political compatriot, Eleanor Roosevelt. Not her close-knit group of friends, including Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock, and Lee Krasner. And, some seventy years later, not her great-niece, Danielle Abrams, who while working at Christie's auction house uncovers enigmatic paintings hidden behind works by those now-famous Abstract Expressionist artists. Do they hold answers to the questions surrounding her missing aunt?

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The Muralist: A Novel By B. A. Shapiro Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

"B.?A. Shapiro makes the radical, varied, and sometimes enigmatic world of abstract expressionism altogether human and accessible in her smart new historical thriller. ...It has more emotional ballast and is more skillfully written than what one customarily finds. The novel evokes the horror and sorrow of the Holocaust in just their tedious administrative tasks of retracing steps, of sifting through wreckage. Shapiro also does a wonderful job of restoring complexity to the historical moment and stripping away the clarity of retrospection." —*The Boston Globe*

"Shapiro's plotting is deft, and the anonymous paintings and Alizée's disappearance add mystery and intrigue to the tale. Like her well-received 2012 novel, "The Art Forger," this new story takes us into the heart of what it means to be an artist. ...vibrant and suspenseful. As tens of thousands of modern-day asylum-seekers from the Middle East and Africa surge into Europe, and pictures of their mistreatment are broadcast around the world, "The Muralist" is a grim reminder that history continues to repeat itself." —*The Washington Post*

"B.A. Shapiro captivated us in 2012 with her "addictive" novel *The Art Forger*. Now, she's back with another thrilling tale from the art world, set right on the brink of World War II." *—Entertainment Weekly*

"The Muralist is, like *What She Left Behind* by Ellen Marie Wiseman or *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline, a historical novel that brings the 20th century to life..." —USA Today

"Shapiro follows the enthusiastically received *The Art Forger* (2012) with an even more polished and resonant tale. [Her] novel of epic moral failings is riveting, gracefully romantic, and sharply revelatory; it is also tragic in its timeliness as the world faces new refugee crises." —*Booklist* (starred review)

"Shapiro's writing pulses with energy.... *The Muralist* brings the time period and setting to life. Readers will appreciate Shapiro's seamless integration of fact into the story and will feel immersed in a time when the world tipped into chaos. Art, history, and mystery — an intriguing and satisfying blend." —*Washington Independent Review of Books*

"In *The Muralist*, novelist B.A. Shapiro deftly layers American art history, the facts of World War II and the fictitious stories of Alizee and Dani. ...*The Muralist* is a compelling mystery. ...*The Muralist* elevates Shapiro to an even higher plane and is sure to be a crowning touch in an already celebrated career." —*BookPage*

"In this noirish intrigue and fine-art detective story, Shapiro ably intersects the early years of the abstract expressionist movement, the Roosevelts, institutionalized anti-Semitism that denied American visas to Jewish refugees, the relentless run-up to World War II, and the generational losses of the Shoah. Mystery and historical fiction lovers...will find this a riveting read." *—Library Journal* (starred review)

"Engaging ... Shapiro convincingly portrays the work of the artist as an agent of expression and hope in a world of despair." — *The New York Jewish Week*

"[Shapiro] knows how to craft a page-turner. The Muralist is certainly an engrossing tale. Perhaps it will also

send a few readers to the Museum of Modern Art for a fresh look at the craft of Rothko, Pollock, and their contemporaries. That would be a wonderful, and very un-abstract, mingling of art and real life." —*New York Journal of Books*

From the Back Cover

"B. A. Shapiro weaves a spellbinding mystery . . . With this starry cast (Pollock, Rothko, de Kooning, Krasner, even Eleanor Roosevelt), fans of Shapiro's earlier art-mystery hit, The Art Forger, will not be disappointed." —William Landay, author of *Defending Jacob*

New York, 1940. The country is teetering on the brink of war. A new art movement called Abstract Expressionism is burgeoning. European refugees are seeking asylum from rising fascism. Amid political turmoil, a promising career and a love affair are interrupted when a brilliant young artist vanishes . . . and today, seventy years later, another struggling artist, her great-niece, is piecing together the truth about her disappearance—and about so much more.

"I am a great fan of B. A. Shapiro, especially her new novel *The Muralist*. It is a tantalizing mystery, as well as an involving meditation on the meaning of art over time." —Scott Turow, author of *Identical*

"An expertly constructed, riveting tale of art, politics, love, and consequences in the Depression Era. I admire so much the way she vividly brings to life this passionate world of the past—it rings with originality and authenticity. What a compelling read!"—Jami Attenberg, author of *The Middlesteins*

About the Author Coming soon...

Xe Sands is an award-winning narrator known for her authentic characterizations and intimate delivery. She has more than a decade of experience bringing stories to life through narration, performance, and visual art, and she has been recognized for her engaging romance narrations.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Serafina Hayes:

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