

BIOGRAPHY

Author, pianist and composer **Leona Francombe** has pursued music and writing all her life. Guided by these twin muses - who have more in common than one might think - she can be found most days coaxing narrative from music and melody from words.

Leona was born in England of Czech and English parents and grew up in the United States, where she graduated Magna Cum Laude from Bryn Mawr College and received a Master's degree from Yale School of Music. In 1987, she was invited to Belgium by the European Cultural Foundation to create and perform with an international chamber ensemble: *Concorde East/West*. She also received grants from UNESCO and the Franz Josef Foundation of Liechtenstein for this project. She has lived in Brussels with her family ever since.

Many of Leona's essays and fiction are inspired by outdoor experiences, or by European themes and moods. Leona's writing has appeared in *Writers' Forum*, *Symphony Magazine*, *The Bulletin*, *Humanities Magazine*, *UNESCO's Reflections*, *Explore Magazine* and *Banff Letters*, among others. In 2010, Leona was asked to write and record a European essay series - *Letters from Brussels* - for "Here on Earth" on Wisconsin Public Radio. Her first novel, *Madame Ernestine und die Entdeckung der Liebe*, was published by Random House Germany in 2013. Her debut in English, *The Sage of Waterloo*, was published by W.W. Norton in the U.S. and U.K. in 2015.

As a pianist, Leona has given solo recitals in the United States, Czech Republic, Liechtenstein, Belgium, England, Germany and France, and performed in collaboration with: The Prague String Quartet, Prague Chamber Orchestra, Fine Arts Quartet, Marienbad Symphony Orchestra, Lewes Concert Orchestra, South Bohemian Chamber Philharmonic, among others. She gave her debut with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra at the age of sixteen.

CONTACT

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