

On Cigarette Papers

Pam Zinnemann-Hope

On Cigarette Papers is Pam Zinnemann-Hope's first full length poetry publication and her first book with Ward Wood.

After her mother's death in 1990, Pam finds a tiny pile of cigarette papers with writing pencilled in Russian in her hand. Surely these are recipes? They are the starting point for a journey of discovery, stretching from 1905 to 1995, a story of love and exile, dislocation and survival, and of a daughter's search for identity, through lands physically and politically remote.

Reviews

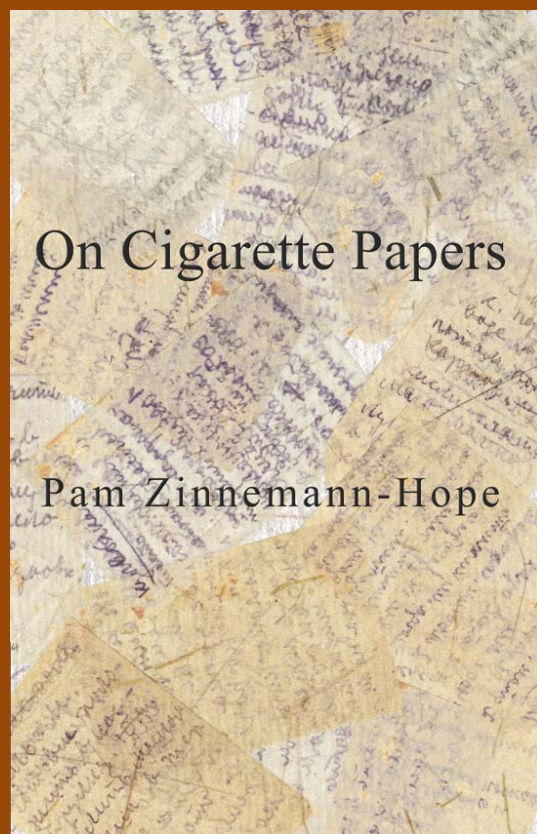
'The unbearable poignancy of 'My Mother Tells' is one of the intense memories that were never discussed afterwards, leaving a loving daughter dislocated and unable to understand fully until her mother died and left behind a collection of papers and letters. On the fragile cigarette papers of the title were inscribed recipes in Russian; starving women conversing on food and eating, the universal language of hearth and home. The same cigarette papers sent Pam Zinnemann-Hope on a voyage of discovery into the history of her family as they travelled the worst paths of repression and discrimination in 20th century Europe; this painfully honest and finely written collection is the result.' *Fiona Waters*

'The cigarette papers of Pam Zinnemann-Hope's title stand for the frailty and resilience of her grandparents, parents and their contemporaries. The recipes pencilled on them in Russian are testimonies to solidarity, hybrid identity and survival. The poems in this book are sensuously and cannily written in idiosyncratic, sometimes fractured, voices. The secret history they tell – of scrupulous betrayal, dislocation and painful love – allows us essential insights into a wounded century and its personal legacy.' *Paul Hyland*

'The poignancy of 'home' in a family that has suffered decades of brutal displacement - 'I ask for you/ and no-one knows/ the house belongs to us' – is an insistent theme in this remarkable book. The poems pull us into a story that hurtles to its inevitable shattering of lives – and the text slips almost invisibly from English to German and back again in a way that further intensifies a sense of profound dislocation. Home is always somewhere else – even the angels 'speak in German/ faintly, so I can't quite catch their meaning'. Home becomes something abstract, carried in tokens – letters, recipes, furniture. Pam Zinnemann-Hope gives us vivid cameos of characters in a family bound by the alienation they all share. They are passionate in their loves and hates, each intensely alive, and from the hinted at horrors of the historical context in which they are trapped, real people emerge. In language that is exact and without adornment, these carefully crafted poems are utterly believable and compelling.' *Jeni Couzyn*

Previous work: Four *Ned* books, Walker, 1986/7, *Who's In the Next Room?*, HappenStance, 2010, with Paul Hyland, Kate Scott & Catherine Simmonds, from a joint residency for the Poetry Society Centenary, sponsored by the National Trust. A reading of poems from WITNR with Poet in the City at King's Place, was introduced by Sir Andrew Motion & sponsored by the Sunday Times Magazine. Performances have also taken place at Max Gate & at The Thomas Hardy Society International Conference.

About the author: Pam Zinnemann-Hope is also a playwright and children's author. She won 3rd prize in the Strokestown competition 2010 and an award in the Troubadour Prize 2009. She lives in Dorset with her husband, the composer Peter Hope. In 2001 she co-founded Poetry Dorchester and has been running workshops in and around Dorchester since then. She is an occasional tutor for The Poetry School.



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