

BOOK AND AUTHOR

Title

The Maiden Dinosaur

Author

Janet McNeill



RECOMMENDER'S NAME

Bernie McGill is the author of two novels, *The Watch House* and *The Butterfly Cabinet*, and of the short story collection *Sleepwalkers*.

She is the Royal Literary Fund Writing Fellow at Queen's University, Belfast.

REASON FOR CHOOSING PUBLICATION

My pick from the latest acquisitions to the NIPR list would be *The Maiden Dinosaur* by Janet McNeill, originally published in 1964 and recently republished by Turnpike Books. It tells the story of Sarah Vincent, a fifty-two year old unmarried school teacher living in Thronehill, her parental home, on the north shore of Belfast Lough in the early 1960's. This is a book that's told with real insight and honesty and it's important to say, with laugh-out-loud humour. Sarah is a poet and is undeluded enough to acknowledge that her ego (which she refers to as 'the beast') needs to be exercised from time to time. At one point she writes: 'Beasts in the Province are private animals, secretly cosseted. One requires a licence from London or America to justify a public parade.' One can't help but wonder how much of McNeill's personal experience was expressed in that sentiment of Sarah's.

NIPR COLLECTION

Question:

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