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Posted on 05 April 2019 By Courtney Maum

!Free ? Costalegre ? PDF or E-pub free

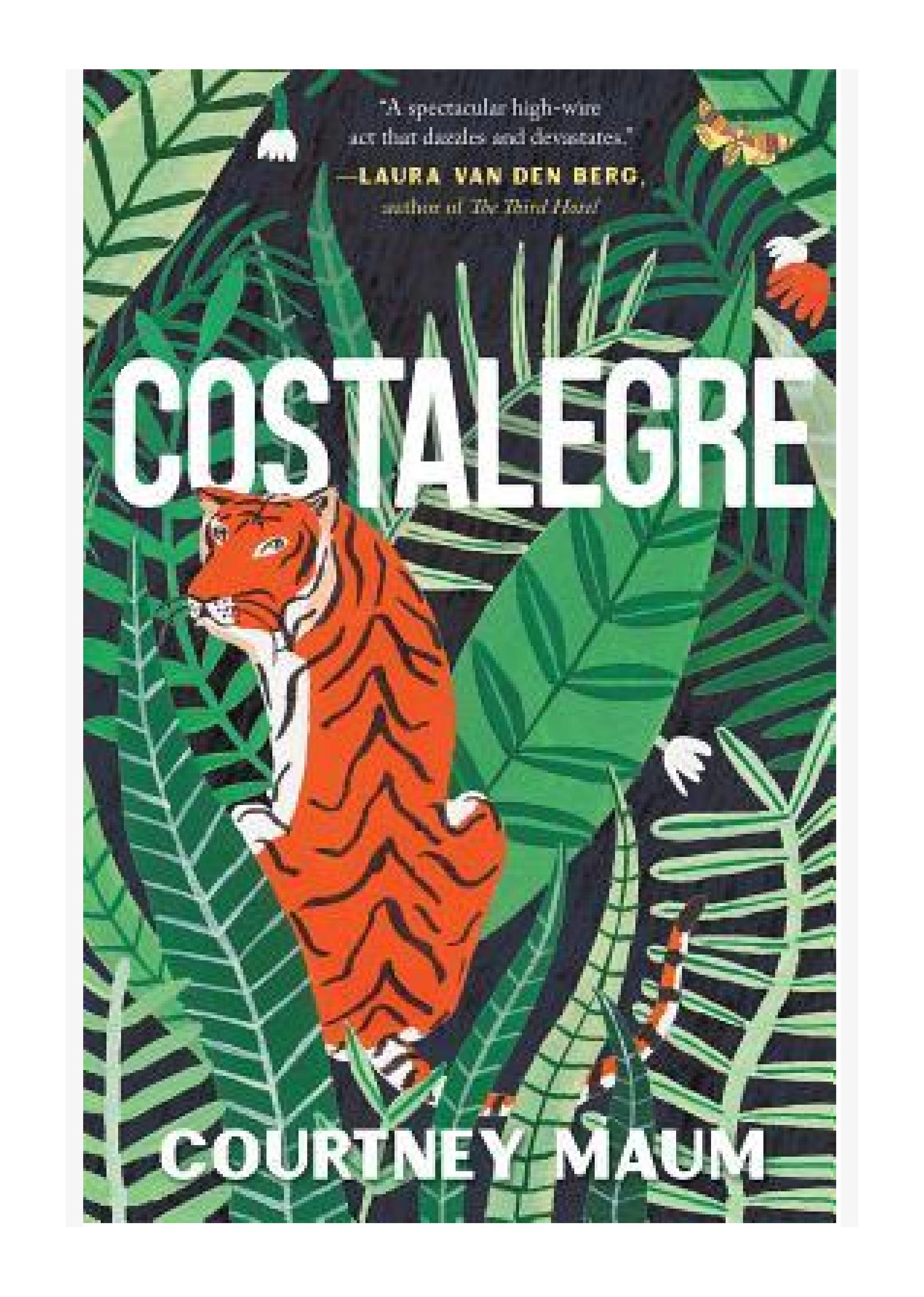
!Free ? Costalegre ? It Is , And Europe Is On The Brink Of War In The Haute Bohemian Circles Of Austria, Germany, And Paris, Hitler Is Circulating A Most Wanted List Of Cultural Degenerates Artists, Writers, And Thinkers Whose Work Is Deemed Antithetical To The New Regime To Prevent The Destruction Of Her Favorite Art And Artists , The Impetuous

American Heiress And Modern Art Collector, Leonora Calaway, Begins Chartering Boats And Planes For An Elite Group Of Surrealists To Costalegre, A Mysterious Resort In The Mexican Jungle, Where She Has A Home The Story Of What Happens To These Artists When They Reach Their Destination Is Told From The Point Of View Of Lara, Leonora S Neglected Year Old Daughter, Who Has Been Pulled Out Of School To Follow Her Mother To Mexico Forced From A Young Age To Cohabit With Her Mother S Eccentric Whims, Tortured Lovers, And Entourage Of Gold Diggers, Lara Suffers From Emotional, Educational, And Geographical Instability That A Mexican Sojourn With Surrealists Isn T Going To Help But When She Meets The Outcast Dadaist Sculptor Jack Klinger, A Much Older Man Who Has Already Been Living In Costalegre For Some Time, Lara Thinks She Might Have Found The Love And Understanding She So Badly Craves Sinuous And Striking, Heartbreaking And Strange, Costalegre Is Heavily Inspired By The Real Life Relationship Between The Heiress Peggy Guggenheim And Her Daughter, Pegeen Acclaimed Author Courtney Maum Triumphs With This Wildly Imaginative And Curiously Touching Story Of A Privileged Teenager Who Has Everything A Girl Could Wish For Except For A Mother Who Loves Her Back I m reviewing Costalegre by Courtney Maum as I just turned the last page and it s still fresh on my mind I will tell you that this is not a book I would normally choose to read, but after reading it I am again so impressed with the titles coming from Norton and Tin House lately I loved The Key to Treehouse Living last year, Biloxi this year, and now this beautiful and strange novel, Costalegre Based loosely on the lives of Peggy Guggenheim, her daughter Pegeen, and the surrealist art movement that Peggy supported during WWII by rescuing numerous artist and artwork from Schlechty the nickname for Adolf Hitler , the author has chosen to place all these characters in the jungles of Mexico instead of New York which can be a jungle itself, when you think about it Costalegre is a slim novel narrated in journal entries by 14 year old Lara, who finds herself in a strange land with even stranger people, and most tragic of all, a mother, Leonora, who is so caught up in the art of her guests that she ignores her daughter and leaves her entirely to her own devices Without a tutor to educate her, Lara is learning about life from the kaleidoscopic world around her, with her only friends being the neglectful, narcissistic artists who struggle to work with few supplies, food, or inspiration Since her father and brother stayed behind in Switzerland to wait out the war, Lara is truly on her own and her only real pleasure is attempting to draw and paint herself, which the reader gradually realizes is the only way she can gain any attention from the self obsessed adults orbiting her life. The theme of disappearing resonates in this novel horses, a goat, the servants, and finally some of the artists themselves disappear, too Lara feels invisible, and when she is thrown from a horse and gone for a night, no one realizes she was even gone she may have well disappeared herself. When an older male artist, who has lived in Costalegre full time since escaping Germany, expresses dismay that Lara is living in such circumstances, is it any surprise that she latches onto the one person in her world who seems to care about her The

novel ends rather suddenly, and at first I was disappointed that there wasn't closure to the story. But upon reflection, I realized that I was feeling so much like Lara, having lived with her voice all day as I read there is no closure for her in Costalegre. She knows not what the future holds for her, and when anything will get any better. She says near the end, "If I could speak the language here, I could call for a boat. But what kind of boat? To where? And I can't travel alone, not really. What a curse to be a girl. And, I should be an orphan at least. I'd be in school. At least people would make sure that I was in bed at night, at least, that. Instead of this, which is never ending nothingness, nowhere for me to be." She ends with the hope that the ship that her mother commissioned with all the art from Germany will sink, so there'd be nothing left to fawn over and boast about and move around the world for and maybe she, Leonora, would be emptied enough to finally mother me. Getting to know Lara has been beautiful and sad and worthy. Costalegre is a short novel with a much larger story than its length suggests, and the emotional impact will linger. Really well done. Thanks to Tin House Books and W.W. Norton Library Marketing for the ARC.

The year is 1937. A bitter little man disparagingly nicknamed Schlecty, better known to the world as Hitler, has declared a ban on modernism in the Reich. His former art school mates, denounced as degenerates, have been bankrolled by Leonora Calaway (think Peggy Guggenheim) and fled to the jungles of Costalegre. And bearing witness is Leonora's neglected 14-year-old daughter Lara, whose insights and observations drive the story. Temporarily unschooled and unmoored and unloved by her mother, Lara catalogs the indigenous plants, knowing that she and her mother's entourage of surrealists, Dadaists, and outcasts are all displaced species. When Jack Klinger, a rebel who may be the one artist her mother doesn't control arrives, an infatuated Lara regards him as a sense of solidness amidst the mayhem. This is a lovely book, filled with longing and yearning, of a girl on the cusp of adulthood who straddles the barriers between privilege and want. All of the themes of coming of age are here: loneliness and alienation, desire and want, internal growth and the power of imagination. Most of the characters are inspired by real-life counterparts: Guggenheim and her real-life daughter Pegeen, artists such as Andre Breton, and the location of Costalegre also plays a role: lush, exotic, filled with myths and tales, fodder for a young would-be writer and diarist. It's a fine book that dazzles the reader. This is a spare, elegiac, poetic, and moving book of longing, especially the hunger for parental love. I read it in one sitting. But I ask myself: would I have liked it as much if it wasn't an historical, fictional portrait about the daughter of the celebrated and enigmatic Peggy Guggenheim? Did that add just the right mystique, knowing that this wasn't just ANY fourteen-year-old? It's hard for me to say, as that fact pervaded the narrative. However, I was transported by the voice of the narrator, Lara, the daughter of the art philanthropist, Leonora. The relationship is fraught, as the mother is a self-centered and self-serving woman incapable of love. Written like a diary by Lara, she also includes letters to her brother and the botanical lexicon of numerous plants and flowers of the exotic locale, Costalegre, on the Pacific and western side of Jalisco, in Mexico. It is 1937, and Hitler's

power is gaining momentum There have been several movies and books fiction and non fiction about the heroes who hid some of the great art from the Nazis, so that Hitler wouldn't destroy it if it didn't conform to his politics Here is another but the thrust of the novel is not about the adventure of hiding the art it is about an intelligent, artistic, and neglected adolescent girl seeking love and connection. Leonora has taken Lara, her current husband, and several surrealist artists with her to Costalegre, where she feels secure from Hitler's advances She awaits a boat that is supposed to be coming, stored with the art that Leonora wants to sequester away for safe keeping She doesn't care that she has taken her daughter out of school and far away from her brother Her concern is her art artists, good food, sex, attention, and having control over everyone in her life. There's a lot of white space in this book, which allowed room for me to silently convey my thoughts and feelings in response to Lara's words Her sensitivity and maturity is eloquently manifested, despite her mother's indifference She seeks kinship during her sojourns on the island, and I was captivated by her awkward but tender appeal to attain a deep connection and understanding That he will tell me something and it will be true That he will continue to live in his small house and listening to people I don't think I have ever been contemplated Like all of us, Lara yearns to be contemplated, observed, considered She craves affection and reciprocity Her growth pains and emotional hunger pains are lightly stated but deeply felt. 3.5 Costalegre is based loosely on art heiress Peggy Guggenheim and her daughter, Pegeen It is narrated via diary entries from 15 year old Lara after she has been transplanted to Mexico by her mother and her gaggle of eccentric artists, as fascism rises in late 1930s Europe The slim novel is essentially a meditation on Lara's yearning for her peculiar mother's love, to be seen, to have a sense of stability that we all crave in the precarious teen years The writing is simply lush The surrealists think that passion is important, that nightmares are important But they don't value simplicity, which is how I think of love This patient, tense, and quiet thing that is leaving someone alone A pen in hand tempts misery from its shadows When I think of swimming underwater, I think of swimming through shattered wine glasses and the twisting, slow cravats Maum has created a delicate and tender portrait of a girl on the cusp of adulthood, love, freedom At times I wanted dialogue, plot development, and had a small yearning for a fully fleshed out novel of this daughter and mother living in a house of artists in the jungle, but I appreciate the book for what its intentions were Sitting with Lara's thoughts and musings as she navigates tumult gracefully was a delight. Courtney Maum takes us into this other world, where 15 year old Lara lives in a world of eccentric artists escaping World War II Hitler, we learned, made terrible water colors And Lara wants to paint and to be loved and to have a door to her room. Read it in a day, three settings The voice, the extravagance, and the books of the whole world make this book just deliberate, and cunning, and beautiful I have most pages dog eared for quotes to write down Thanks Tin House for an ARC.



"A spectacular high-wire
act that dazzles and devastates."

—**LAURA VAN DEN BERG**,
author of The Third Heart

COSTALEGRE

COURTNEY MAUM

I love watching authors do their strange historical novel thing. A few recent ones that spring to mind include *ISADORA*, *VISIBLE EMPIRE*, *AMERICA WAS HARD TO FIND*, and now *COSTALEGRE*. Maum takes the story of the Guggenheims fleeing Europe before WWII to set up a surrealist enclave on the Pacific coast of Mexico, changes a few things including names, and boils it all down into the diary of the daughter, our fictionalized Pegeen Guggenheim, Lara Calaway whose insights are searing, funny, and altogether perfectly rendered. Note this was a fun book to read interspersed with Tove Jansson's *THE SUMMER BOOK*, fwiw *Costalegre* is one of those books that's easier to admire than to enjoy. In this short novel, a wealthy socialite named Leonora gets a small group of artists and writers out of Europe ahead of WWII and settles them in a remote house on the coast of Mexico. Anyone who's ever seen a season of *The Real World* or *Survivor* knows there's no way all these strong personalities are going to get along for more than a few days at a time. Leonora is apparently based on Peggy Guggenheim, the writers and artists are based on real writers and artists, and 14-year-old Lara, our narrator, is the daughter Leonora neglects in favor of art, and the attention and love her financial support of the arts can garner her. The book also contains excerpts from a real book about Mexican flora, and includes a few of Lara's own drawings as she strives to become an artist in her own right. This novel is well intentioned and it has its good points, most particularly a strong sense of place, but to me it felt labored, trying to do too much in its short length. Lara is the only kid at the house in *Costalegre* and isn't privy to everything that's going on there; all we know is what she tells us. There's a pervasive feeling that she, and by extension the reader, is always outside of the real story, not just the story of her mother and the artists, but the story of what's happening over in Europe and to the people they left behind. This is no doubt intentional, and it does give the reader a strong sense of Lara's emotional isolation, but it also strands the reader outside most of the action and mutes what should be vivid. I think this book achieved what it set out to do. I'm just disappointed that what it achieved wasn't appealing to me. I hope the next novel I read has a much stronger protagonist who's allowed to be at the center of her own story. I won this book via the Tin House Galley Club. Thank you to the publisher. This short novel is a stunner. Inspired by the complex relationship between art and artist collector Peggy Guggenheim and her daughter, Maum creates a vivid and striking voice in Lara, a precocious and lonely girl coming of age in a tumultuous time. Despite the quick read, Lara will stay with you. This ARC was provided by Tin House Books Norton, in exchange for an honest review.

New Post

The Pull Out Method
Resurrecting Cybele
The Participants
The Hunted
Holes
Knight of the Purple Ribbon
Cruel Beauty
The Titan's Curse
The Final Reckoning
The Great Hunt
To Darkness Fled
SilverFin
The Oaken Throne
Return of the Guardian-King
Mattimeo

Recent Post

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows
The Last Battle
A Tale of Two Cities
The Lord of the Rings
The Last Olympian
The Maze Runner
The Queen of Attolia
The Witch of Blackbird Pond
The Black Cauldron
The Devil Wears Prada
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
If on a Winter's Night a Traveler
Rebecca
The Tale of Despereaux
Fahrenheit 451
The Princess Bride
To Say Nothing of the Dog
Great Expectations
Animal Farm / 1984

Crime and Punishment

The Return of the King

Ender's Game

The Final Empire

Lord Brocktree

The Hero of Ages

The High King

The Pull Out Method

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