

'A brilliant, fascinating, generous  
novel...wonderful' *Guardian*



*The* Enchantress  
*of* Florence  
SALMAN  
RUSHDIE

WINNER OF THE 'BEST OF THE BOOKER'

VINTAGE

From the sea of stories our master fisherman has brought up two gleaming, intertwining prizes...a brilliant, fascinating, generous novel...the essential compatibility of the realistic and the fantastic imagination may explain the success of Rushdie's sumptuous, impetuous mixture of history with fable. But in the end, of course, it is the hand of the master artist, past all explanation, that gives this book its glamour and its power, its humour and shock, its verve, its glory. It is a wonderful tale full of follies and enchantments. East meets West with a clash of cymbals and a burst of fireworks. We English-speakers have our own Aristo now, our Tasso, stolen out of India. Aren't we the lucky ones?

Ursula K. Le Guin, *Guardian*

'Carefully wrought and often exquisite'

*The Economist*

'Rushdie has a rare mastery of language, and when you read his work you cannot help but feel you are in the company of a mighty intelligence...undoubtedly one of our greatest storytellers'

*Daily Herald*

'It is magnificent, a work of genius'

Richard Holloway, *Scotsman*

'*The Enchantress of Florence* is vintage Rushdie and reminds us, in case we may have forgotten, that he can tell a story across East and West better than anyone else in the language'

*Sunday Telegraph*

## THE ENCHANTRESS OF FLORENCE

Salman Rushdie is the author of nine previous novels, one collection of short stories, four works of non-fiction, and the co-editor of *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing*. In 1993 *Midnight's Children* was judged to be the Booker of Bookers, the best novel to have won the Booker Prize in its first 25 years, and in 2008 it was awarded the Best of the Booker, the best novel to have won the Booker Prize in its 40-year history. *The Moor's Last Sigh* won the Whitbread Prize in 1995 and the European Union's Aristeion Prize for Literature in 1996. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and a Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres. He was knighted in June 2007.

ALSO BY SALMAN RUSHDIE

Fiction

*Grimus*

*Midnight's Children*

*Shame*

*The Satanic Verses*

*Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

*East, West*

*The Moor's Last Sigh*

*The Ground Beneath Her Feet*

*Fury*

*Shalimar the Clown*

Non-fiction

*The Jaguar Smile*

*Imaginary Homelands*

*Step Across This Line*

Plays

*Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

(with Tim Supple and David Tushingham)

*Midnight's Children*

(with Tim Supple and Simon Reade)

Anthology

*The Vintage Book of Indian Writing* (co-editor)

SALMAN RUSHDIE

# The Enchantress of Florence

A Novel

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VINTAGE BOOKS

London



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To Bill Buford

Published by Vintage 2009

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Her way of moving was no mortal thing  
but of angelic form: and her speech  
rang higher than a mere human voice.

A celestial spirit, a living sun  
was what I saw . . .

FRANCESCO PETRARCA  
*translated by A.S. Kline*

If there is a knower of tongues here, fetch him;  
There's a stranger in the city  
And he has many things to say.

MIRZA GHALIB  
*translated by S.R. Faruqi*

'Convincing and funny...ambitious  
the view here is a beautiful  
*Spectator*

'Rushdie's work is as baroque, even  
almost overwhelmingly lush  
Stuart Kelly, *Scotland on Sunday*

4568 34 12 12 0123

'Rushdie's new novel is a hall of mirrors. They distort and flatter, and above all, they reveal what is hidden. Two great civilisations, the Moghul empire of Akbar, and the Florence of the Medicis and of Machiavelli, reflect on each other while they are linked by a series of fairytale improbabilities... It's a haul of stories, gathered with magpie glee, arranged to glitter...'

Helen Dunmore, *The Times*

'For Rushdie, as for the artists he writes about, the pen is a magician's wand... If *The Enchantress of Florence* doesn't win this year's Man Booker I'll curry my proof copy and eat it'

John Sutherland, *Financial Times*

'Salman Rushdie has long been adept at fusing fantasy and realism, pulling off spectacular narrative flights of fancy'

*Independent on Sunday*

'Another dazzling fantasia... Rushdie's legion of fans will be enraptured'

D. J. Taylor

'A master storyteller'

*New York Review of Books*

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(Museo de San Marco dell'Angelico, Florence); Medici Psalter Ms 37-1950 f.1  
(Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge); Lion attacking a bull, Turkish School (Topkapı  
Palace, Istanbul); Frame from a Mughal painting (Private Collection)



# 'A WILD AND WHIRLING NOVEL'

*Observer*

A tall, yellow-haired young European traveller calling himself 'Mogor dell'Amore', the Mughal of Love, arrives at the court of the real Grand Mughal, the Emperor Akbar, with a tale to tell that begins to obsess the whole imperial capital. The stranger claims to be the child of a lost Mughal princess: Qara Köz, 'Lady Black Eyes', a great beauty believed to possess powers of enchantment and sorcery, who becomes the lover of Argalia, a Florentine soldier. When Argalia returns home to Florence with his Mughal mistress the city is mesmerised by her presence, as two worlds are brought together by one woman attempting to command her own destiny...

But is Mogor's story true? And if so, then what happened to the lost princess?

'My first desire on finishing it was to go back and re-read it. Like all of Rushdie's work, the playfulness, the passion, the erudition and the sensuousness go hand in hand. It's immensely rich...it's one of his best'

Catherine Lockerbie, *Scotsman*

'Mesmerising, picaresque... It is a boisterous tale piled high with sex and adventure and fantasy'

Geordie Grieg, *Tatler*

'A coherent mix of fantasy and history'

Colvin, *Daily Mail*

VINTAGE B

FICTION

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