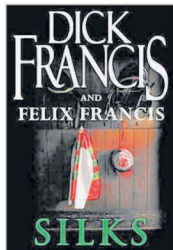


# WHAT'S ON **B O O K S**

## ▶▶ Book reviews



A real page-turner of a murder mystery, incorporating the exciting world of horse racing

### Silks

Dick Francis and Felix Francis

Pan Macmillan, £6.99



WHEN defence barrister Geoffrey Mason hears the judge's guilty verdict, he quietly hopes that a long custodial sentence will be handed down to his arrogant young client.

That Julian Trent receives only eight years seems all too lenient.

Little does Mason expect he will be seeing Trent again much sooner than he'd ever imagined.

Setting aside his barrister's wig, Mason heads to Sandown to don his racing silks, but a fellow rider is brutally murdered and the prime suspect is champion jockey Steve Mitchell.

A gripping murder mystery set against the glamorous world of horse racing, with a bit of violence and romance thrown in for good measure.

Emma Joseph



Life is timeless, days are long when you're young... but you grow up

### The Last Mad Surge of Youth

Mark Hodkinson

Pomona Books, £8.99



A RICHLY evocative love letter to a recent history, Hodkinson's debut novel recalls the era immediately after punk but before MTV, when literally anything was possible to the newly liberated teenage minds obsessed with music and words, and maybe girls as well.

The narrative traces the early days of post-punk band Killing Stars in flashback as their middle-aged singer Barrett prepares to go back into action to plug his latest solo album and his one-time inspiration Carey is hired to ghost-write his life story.

As well as gently commenting on the vacuous nature of contemporary celebrity culture, this book applies a meticulous eye for detail to what it meant to be in a band in the early 1980s.

Nick Churchill



Chuckle-worthy look at what happens if you apply for all the jobs going

### Guardianwork

Ian Carpenter

Beautiful Books, £7.99



IAN Carpenter's basically just a bloke with an idea – to apply for all the jobs advertised in one particular edition of the Guardian newspaper.

It's not the most earth-shattering idea, but it had potential, which it almost certainly fulfilled in the weblog he wrote while carrying out his "project".

However, while really quite funny in places, the content simply isn't sufficient to warrant an entire book – it's very thin and unsubstantial.

What works on the web can't quite satisfy in the pages of a good read, and Carpenter's idea just isn't that brilliant when he gets going.

The editor notes that much of the web's off-tangent copy was removed. This was a mistake.

Angela Young

## Book Ends

### Dark is rising

New Milton writer Lindsey Darking has been accepted on a top national writing scheme. She is one of only 12 women selected out of 100 applicants for the Athena Screenwriting Showcase.

### High spirits

A new book looking at the mysteries of Portland has just been launched by Dorset publishers Roving Press, entitled *The Spirit of Portland: Revelations of a Sacred Isle*, written by Gary Birfields.

### Shelter skelter

Literary figures are backing a campaign to preserve the sea-front shelter where TS Eliot is believed to have composed some of his most famous lines – *Nayland Rock Shelter* at Margate.

### Whale of a time

British author Philip Hoare won the BBC Samuel Johnson Prize for non-fiction with *Leviathan*, or *the Whale*.