



## ★ **Paper Bullets: Two Artists Who Risked Their Lives to Defy the Nazis**

**Jeffrey H. Jackson**

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Jeffrey H. Jackson's *Paper Bullets* is a captivating tale of queer love and resistance during World War II. From Paris's Jazz Age through the war and beyond, Jackson tracks two childhood friends who became lovers and artists and fought German leaders on the occupied Channel Island of Jersey.

Lucy Schwob and Suzanne Malherbe met as young women in their hometown, Nantes, and fell in love. They both came from wealthy families, and were able to afford to move to Paris in 1920, where they fell into literary and artistic circles. Though they never referred to themselves as lesbians, they eschewed feminine ideals and created alternate male identities. A progressive lifestyle suited them: Lucy spent her days writing essays, and Suzanne created art and illustrations.

In 1937, after many years spent vacationing on the island of Jersey, Lucy and Suzanne bought a large home to share right on the beach. Three years later, the Germans occupied Jersey. Thus began the women's artistic subterfuge and resistance to the Germans' presence. Including seemingly small acts, like creating montages to stick inside of German language magazines, they committed to disseminating regular anti-German propaganda across the island, and were eventually jailed.

Jackson's research is impeccable and his writing is lively. Even though this is a Holocaust biography, the trajectory of the women's lives, and their artistic symbiosis, make for fascinating reading. The book's clean, crisp language incorporates needed historical context well.

Full of struggles, triumphs, and intimate knowledge of a complex relationship, *Paper Bullets* is a gem of a historical text about two women who stood up to power defiantly, living on their own terms.

MONICA CARTER (November / December 2020)

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