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**MAESTRA, PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER
ACQUIRED IN MAJOR FILM DEAL BY
FORMER SONY PICTURES CHIEF AMY
PASCAL, FINDS U.S. PUBLISHER AT
PUTNAM**

***The Talented Mr. Ripley* meets *Gone Girl* and *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* in L.S. Hilton's sexy psychological thriller, the first in a trilogy, about a London art auction house assistant who finds herself fleeing for her life after identifying a forged painting. Currently sold in 3 foreign territories with offers in 13 more, *Maestra* already scored a major Hollywood deal with Columbia Pictures.**

NEW YORK, NY, April 2015 – G.P. Putnam's Sons has acquired L.S. Hilton's MAESTRA, the first of three sexy psychological thrillers set in the art world which tell the story of a remarkable and unforgettable heroine Judith Rashleigh, who is as wickedly perceptive as *Gone Girl*'s Amy Dunne and as dangerous as *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*'s Lisbeth Salander. Putnam Senior Editor Tara Singh Carlson acquired North American rights in a seven-figure pre-empt with Mark Smith at U.K. publisher Zaffre, the new adult fiction imprint at Bonnier Publishing. Zaffre has already closed foreign rights deals in three territories and has offers in 13 more. Hardcover publication of *Maestra* is set for Spring 2016 by Putnam.

Judith Rashleigh spends her days working as an assistant in a prestigious London auction house, and during her evenings she moonlights as a hostess in one of the West End's less salubrious bars to make ends meet. When Judith stumbles across an art forgery conspiracy at work, she is fired before she can expose the fraud. In desperation, she accepts an offer from one of the bar's clients to accompany him to the French Riviera. But when an ill-

advised attempt to slip him sedatives has momentous consequences, Judith finds herself fleeing for her life.

Now alone and in danger, all Judith has to rely on is her consummate ability to fake it amongst the rich and famous – and her inside knowledge of the hugely lucrative art fraud that triggered her dismissal. *Maestra* marks the beginning of a razor-sharp series that will have readers around the world holding their breath.

Maestra has already secured a major film deal at Columbia Pictures, with film rights acquired by Amy Pascal for her new production company, Pascal Pictures, in a deal by CAA. Amy Pascal said: “*Maestra* is riveting with a dominant character who is brilliant, sly, deadly and entirely in control of her life. The book is unpredictable and multifaceted. Judith is one of the most memorable females in recent fiction; she is a marvellous character, perfect for film.”

Senior Editor Tara Singh Carlson said: “I couldn’t be more thrilled to publish L.S. Hilton’s *Maestra* in the U.S. I couldn’t take my eyes off of heroine Judith Raleigh. She’s sexy, smart and very, very bad in all the best ways. It reminded me of a female *Talented Mr. Ripley*, set in the glamorous and decadent worlds of London, the French Riviera, the Italian coast and Paris. I was mesmerized.”

L.S. Hilton said: “I am overwhelmed to be working with such a distinguished house as Putnam to bring this story to the U.S., and particularly delighted to be collaborating with such a dynamic and brilliant editor as Tara Singh Carlson.”

L.S. Hilton grew up in England and has lived in Key West, New York City, Paris, France and Milan, Italy. She is presently based in London. With a background in literature and art history, she has worked as a journalist, art critic and broadcaster.

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