



# KIM THÚY

First name: Kim Thúy | Last name: Ly Thanh | Born in Saigon, Vietnam

Kim Thúy was born in Vietnam in 1968. At the age of 10 she left Vietnam along with a wave of refugees commonly referred to in the media as “the boat people” and settled with her family in Quebec, Canada. A graduate in translation and law, she has worked as a seamstress, interpreter, lawyer and restaurant owner. She lives in Montreal and devotes her life to writing.

Kim Thúy has received many awards, including the Governor General’s Literary Award in 2010, and was one of the top 4 finalists of the Alternative Nobel Prize in 2018. Her books have sold more than 765,000 copies around the world and have been translated into 29 languages and distributed across 40 countries and territories.

- Nov. 1978 - March 1979 Kuantan refugee camp, Malaysia
- March 27, 1979 Settled in Granby, Quebec
- 1990 Bachelor’s degree in translation – Université de Montréal
- 1993 Bachelor’s degree in law – Université de Montréal
- 1995 Barreau du Québec
- 1992 - 1998 Lawyer – Stikeman, Elliott  
Posted to Hanoi
- 1998 - 1999 Consular agent – Canadian Consulate, Saigon
- 2002 - 2007 Entrepreneur/Restaurant owner – Ru de Nam

## PUBLISHED WORKS

- 2009 *Ru* published by Libre Expression
- 2011 *À toi (Yours)* published by Libre Expression (with co-author Pascal Janovjak)
- 2013 *mãn* published by Libre Expression
- 2016 *Vi* published by Libre Expression
- 2017 Contributed to *L’Autisme expliqué aux non-autistes (New Ways of Understanding Autism)* by Brigitte Harrisson and Lise St-Charles, published by Trécarré
- 2017 *Le Secret des Vietnamiennes (Secrets from My Vietnamese Kitchen)* published by Trécarré
- 2019 Contributed to *L’Estime de soi et l’Autiste (Autism and Self-Esteem)* by Brigitte Harrisson and Lise St-Charles, published by Trécarré
- 2019 Picture book *Le Poisson et l’oiseau (The Fish and the Bird)* illustrated by Rogé, published by Les Éditions de la Bagnole
- 2020 *Em* published by Libre Expression

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

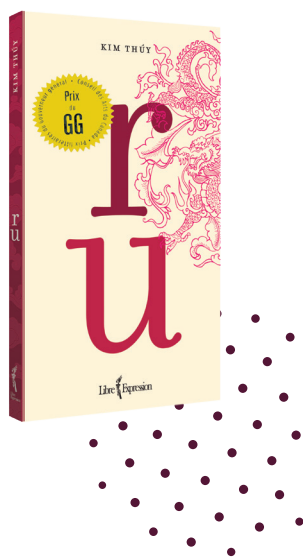
- 2019 Honorary doctorate in Civil Law by Bishop’s University for outstanding achievements and community engagement
- 2019 Appointed Compagne des arts et des lettres du Québec by the Government of Quebec
- 2018 Women of Distinction Award, Montreal Women’s Y Foundation
- 2017 Medal of Honour, National Assembly of Quebec  
Honorary doctorate awarded by Concordia University for giving eloquent voice to the refugee experience
- 2016 Spokesperson for the Petit Robert dictionary between 2016 and 2018, honoured with her own entry in the 2018 Robert illustré illustrated edition
- 2015 Knighted Chevalière de l’Ordre national du Québec by the Government of Québec
- 2013 Paul-Gérin-Lajoie Award for Tolerance, awarded in 2013 by Together for Respecting Diversity organization

2009

## Ru

Kim Thúy's debut novel, *Ru*, became a runaway success upon publication in 2009 by Libre Expression. A bestselling title in Quebec and France, *Ru* was translated into twenty-eight languages, earning an array of literary awards, including Canada's prestigious Governor General's Award in 2010, the 2010 Grand prix RTL-Lire at the Paris Book Fair, Italy's Premio Mondello per la Multiculturalità Award in 2011 and the 2011 Archambault Literary Award. *Ru* was also shortlisted for the Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie Award in 2010 and a finalist in 2012 for the esteemed Giller Prize, awarded to Canada's best book. The English translation won the Canada Reads book battle in 2015 and was proclaimed "the" book to read in Canada that year.

*Ru* is a mosaic of very short stories that play off each other the way a wind chime jingles in the breeze. The first sentence of a chapter tends to pick up on the idea where the previous chapter left off, bridging the gap between the events the narrator experiences in her life: born in Vietnam during the war, she and her family flee their home with the boat people and are welcomed as refugees in a small town in Quebec. She later goes on to higher education, starts a family and discovers life with an autistic child. The writer pens a tale of a life filled with charming, unique characters and a happy-go-lucky approach to the most absurdly challenging of situations, tugging expertly at the reader's heart strings.



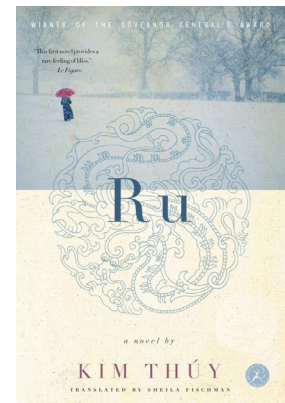
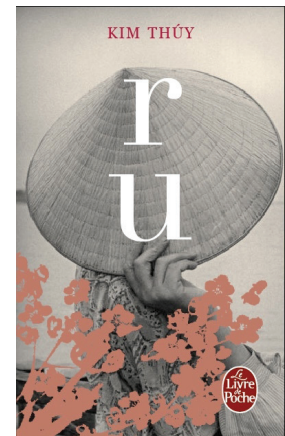
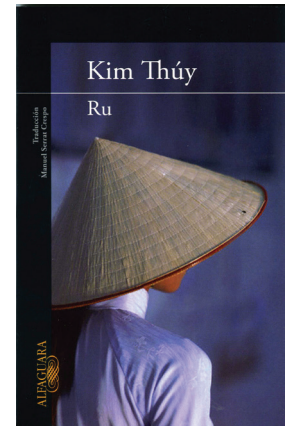
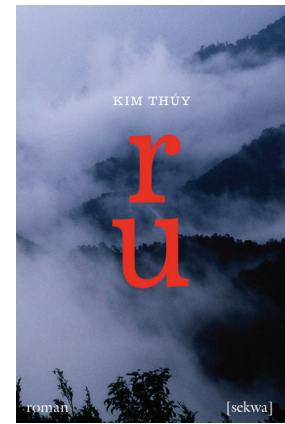
### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- 2015 Winner – Canada Reads
- 2014 Winner – Ambassadors of Francophone Countries Literary Award (Denmark)
- 2011 Winner – Mondello Prize for Multiculturalism (Italy)
- 2011 Winner – Archambault Literary Awards – People's Choice Award
- 2010 Winner – People's Choice Award, Montreal Book Fair
- 2010 Winner – Governor General's Literary Award
- 2010 Winner – Grand Prix RTL-Lire, Paris Book Fair (France)
  
- 2018 Shortlist – The New Academy Prize in Literature (The Alternative Nobel)
- 2012 Shortlist – Scotiabank Giller Prize (Canada)
- 2012 Shortlist – Governor General's Literary Award for Translation
- 2010 Shortlist – Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie Award (international)
- 2010 Shortlist – Prix Première Award (Belgium)
- 2010 Shortlist – Prix Ouest-France Étonnants Voyageurs Award (France)
- 2010 Shortlist – Prince Pierre de Monaco Foundation Discovery Grant
  
- 2012 Longlist – Man Asian Literary Prize
- 2014 Longlist – International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award
- 2012 Nominee – Amazon.ca First Novel Award
  
- Bestseller in Quebec (Renaud-Bray, Archambault and *Le Devoir* charts)
- National bestseller in Canada (Maclean's, BookNet Canada)
- CBC Books Canadian Writer to Watch in 2012
- Chapters Indigo bookstores – Heather's Pick in 2012
- BBC Radio 4 Book at Bedtime Pick (Readings from modern classics, new works by leading writers and literature from around the world) in June 2012
- Top 10 of Quebec submissions, 2013 Canada Reads

## FOREIGN EDITIONS

- Albanian – Dritan  
 German – Kunstmann  
 DTV  
 English – Random House (Canada)  
 Clerkenwell Press (Great Britain)  
 Bloomsbury (United States)  
 Arabic – IQRAni Publishing House  
 Bulgarian – Colibri  
 Chinese – Haitian Publishing House  
 Korean – Moonji  
 Danish – Gad  
 Spanish – Periférica  
 Estonian – Loomingu Raamatukogu  
 Finnish – Gummerus  
 French outside Canada – Liana Levi  
 Livre de Poche  
 Grand Livre du Mois  
 France Loisirs  
 Feryane  
 Greek – Agra  
 Italian – Nottetempo  
 Japanese – Sairyu Sha  
 Macedonian – Antolog  
 Dutch – Van Gennepe  
 Norwegian – Perleblekk  
 Polish – Drzewo Babel  
 Portuguese – Objectiva (Portugal)  
 Âyiné (Brazil)  
 Romanian – Spandugino  
 Serbian – Clio  
 Swedish – Sekwa  
 Czech – Emitos  
 Turkish – Epsilon  
 Ukrainian – Anetta Antonenko Publishers

Film adaptation – Amalga (Canada)



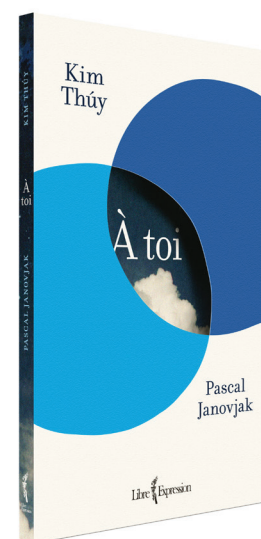
2011

## À toi (Yours)

Kim Thúy's second title, *À toi (Yours)*, was co-written with Pascal Janovjak and published in September 2011. Emerging from a rare literary complicity, this meditative correspondence traces the path of two children of exile and nomads through memories and anecdotes. The novel was selected by Radio-Canada as part of its Top 100 *Incontournables* list for 2016 and the audiobook version is available [online](#).

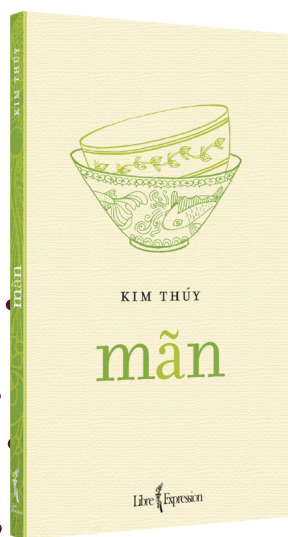
### FOREIGN EDITIONS

French outside Canada – Liana Levi  
Romanian – Spandugino  
Serbian – Clio  
Slovakian – Post Scriptum



2013

## mãn



The author's third book, *mãn*, was shortlisted for the Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie Award in 2014 and has been translated into thirteen languages. The English paperback version was a Barnes & Noble Discovery Pick in the United States in the autumn of 2015.

*Mãn* has three mothers. The teenager who gives birth to her and abandons her, the nun who plucks her from the vegetable garden of a Buddhist temple on the banks of the Mekong River, and her beloved Maman, a teacher forced to become a spy. For her safety, Maman sends Mãn to live with a restaurant owner in Montreal, whom she then marries. In this new world, Mãn develops her natural talent for cooking, an art she learns can not only nourish the body but also distill memories, emotions and sensual pleasure, one dish at a time. When she meets a Parisian chef, she encounters the dangers of passionate love and discovers how love and food are inextricably entwined.

*mãn* is a refined work of delicate beauty and a lesson in the meaning of the word "love".

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

2013 Shortlist – Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie Award

2013 Shortlist – Prix Ouest-France Étonnants Voyageurs Award (France)

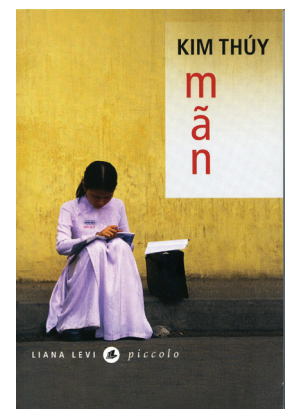
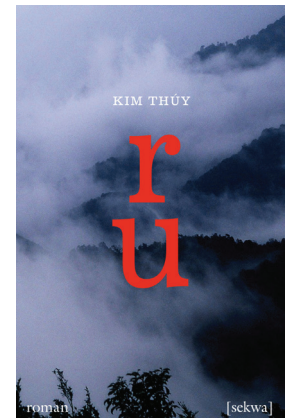
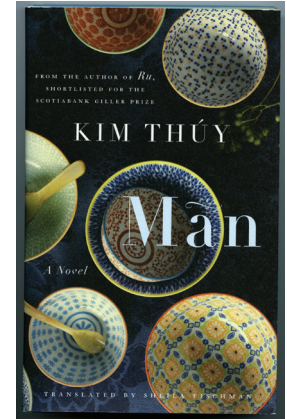
Barnes & Noble Discovery Pick, Autumn 2015 (United States)

MacEwan University Book of the Year, 2015 (Canada)

Algonquin College Book of the Year, 2015 (Canada)

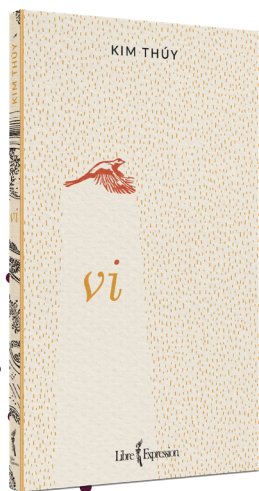
**FOREIGN EDITIONS**

- German – Kunstmann
- English – Random House (Canada)  
Clerkenwell Press (United Kingdom)
- Bulgarian – Colibri
- Simplified Chinese – Shanghai 99
- Korean – Moonji
- Spanish – Periférica
- French outside Canada – Liana Levi  
France Loisirs
- Italian – Nottetempo
- Japanese – Sairyu Sha
- Romanian – Spandugino
- Serbian – Carobna knjiga
- Swedish – Sekwa
- Turkish – Epsilon



2016

Vi



Published in 2016, Kim Thúy's most recent novel is the story of Vi, the youngest of four children and the only girl, the family's little treasure whose name means "precious, tiny one". Vi tests personal boundaries and crosses international ones, letting the winds of life buffet her. From Saigon to Montreal, from Suzhou to Boston, growing up in the midst of everyday heroes, she is witness to the immensity of the ocean, the intricate fabric of luxury, sorrow and peace, the complexity of love, the infinite possibilities before her and the violence of beauty. Ever the quiet observer, somehow Vi must find a way to finally take her place in the world.

#### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

**2017 Winner – NordSud International Award, Pescarabruzzo Foundation**

**2017 Winner – Arlette Cousture Award**

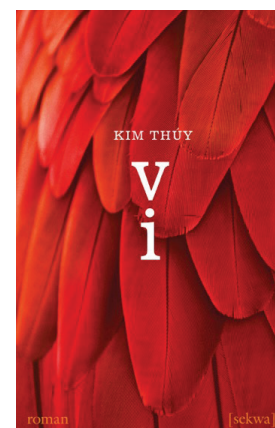
**2018 Shortlist – Scotiabank Giller Prize (Canada)**

**2017 Shortlist – Prix littéraire des lycéens Award – Île-de-France Region (France)**

**2016 Shortlist – Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie Award (international)**

#### FOREIGN EDITIONS

- German – Kunstmann
- English – Random House (Canada)
- Spanish – Periférica
- Finnish – Gummerus
- French outside Canada – Liana Levi
- Italian – Nottetempo
- Japanese – Sairyu Sha
- Romanian – Spandugino
- Swedish – Sekwa
- Turkish – Epsilon



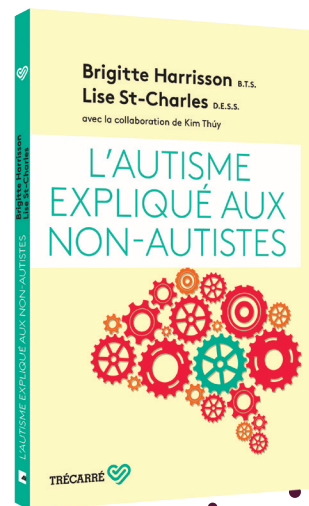
2017

## L'Autisme expliqué aux non-autistes (*New Ways of Understanding Autism*)

*L'Autisme expliqué aux non-autistes (New Ways of Understanding Autism)* embodies a cause dear to Kim Thúy as the mother of an autistic teenager. Using the method developed by autism experts **Brigitte Harrisson** and **Lise St-Charles**, founders of the SACCADE centre for autism, enabled her to truly understand and connect with her son Valmond, and she has since encouraged the specialists, one of whom is autistic herself, to publish their insight for readers. Their book is an accessible guide for parents of autistic children, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) care providers and members of the general public looking for a way to connect and understand more about this neurological disorder.

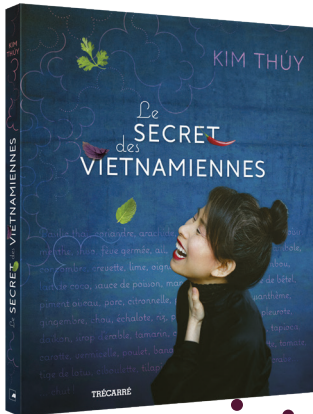
### FOREIGN EDITIONS

- English – Dundurn
- Arabic – King Saud University
- Spanish – Viena
- Catalan – Viena
- Chinese – China Worker Publishing House
- French outside Canada – Marabout
- Italian – Vallardi
- Dutch (Belgium) – Deltas



2017

## Le Secret des Vietnamiennes (Secrets from My Vietnamese Kitchen)



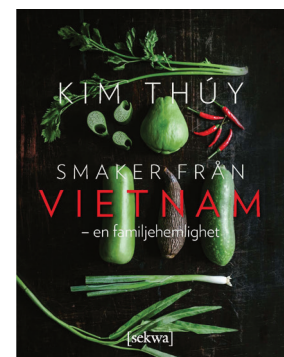
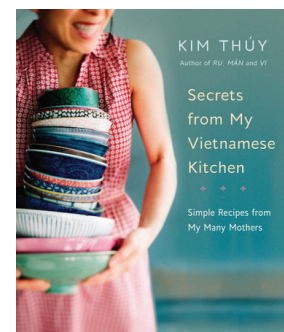
Kim Thúy serves up more than 50 recipes from her home country—many accompanied by a short text, an extract from a novel or an anecdote—offering readers an extraordinary glimpse into the writer's private world. In collaboration with sommelier Michelle Bouffard, the bestselling writer suggests wine pairings for Vietnamese dishes, as well as introducing readers to some harder-to-find ingredients and offering tips for substitutions. Fans of Vietnamese cuisine will appreciate her explanations of the different types of noodles and vermicelli, herbs and fruit.

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- 2018 Winner – Eugénie Brazier Award, Best Book from Overseas (France)
- 2018 Winner – Måltidsakademien – Best Cookbook in Translation (Sweden)
- 2018 Winner – Taste Canada Awards, Regional/Cultural Cookbooks (French-language)
- 2018 Selection – Reviewers' Top 30 Books, Svenska Dagbladet (Sweden)
- 2019 Winner – Canada The Gourmand Cookbook Awards of the category C18 Asia
- 2020 Shortlist – Taste Canada Awards, Regional/Cultural Cookbooks (English-language)

### FOREIGN EDITIONS

- German – Kunstmann
- English (Canada) – Appetite (Random House)
- Finnish – Gummerus
- French outside Canada – Marabout
- Swedish – Sekwa





2019

## L'Estime de soi et l'Autiste (Autism and Self-Esteem)

After weighing in on *L'Autisme expliqué aux non-autistes* (*New Ways of Understanding Autism*) written by two experts in autism, Kim Thúy draws on personal experience as the parent of an autistic teenager to add her voice to this complementary book about how individuals with autism build identity.

With their earlier book, *L'Autisme expliqué aux non-autistes* (*New Ways of Understanding Autism*) the authors threw a lifeline to many parents and caregivers by helping them understand the hows and whys of certain frustrating behavioural issues. This second book explores how those with autism can create a better life in a world full of neurotypical people. Caregivers must be especially mindful of the reality for those with autism when helping them to build a sense of identity and self-esteem. This book explains how the two fundamental aspects of developing self-esteem for those with autism—competence in areas they feel are important and validation from significant people in their environment—help them to cultivate social awareness.

**FOREIGN EDITIONS** French outside Canada – Marabout  
Dutch (Belgium) – Deltas



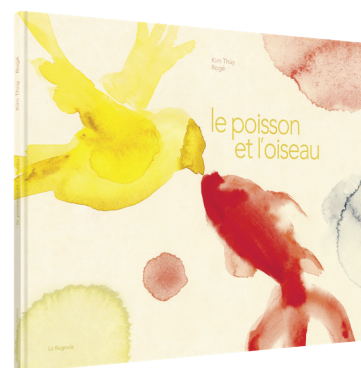
2019

## Le Poisson et l'oiseau (The Fish and the Bird)

Kim Thúy's first picture book, *Le Poisson et l'oiseau* (*The Fish and the Bird*) was born when she dreamed that a little girl had forgotten to close the door to her pet bird's cage. Close by, the goldfish in his bowl tries to strike up a conversation with the bird. But how can they play together with all the differences that set them apart? How might they come to love each other when they have nothing in common? The answer lies somewhere in the spreading of the bird's wings and the graceful flapping of the fish's gills.

Written in the form of a poem and superbly illustrated by Rogé, *Le Poisson et l'oiseau* (*The Fish and the Bird*) is a tribute to beauty and the differences between us.

**FOREIGN EDITIONS** Italian – Edizioni Piuma



2020

## Em

Written in her trademark style, Kim Thúy's stunning and formally complex new novel reveals a fascination with connection. Em, which in Vietnamese means "little brother", "little sister" or "beloved", explores how humans traumatized by war and exile are driven to seek out love and family when their present catches up with their past. Through the linked destinies of a family of characters, the novel touches on Operation Babylift, which evacuated thousands of biracial orphans from Saigon in April 1975, the nail polish and nail salon industry, as well as the rubber plantations of Indochina that was.

**FOREIGN EDITIONS** World English except Canada – Seven Stories Press

