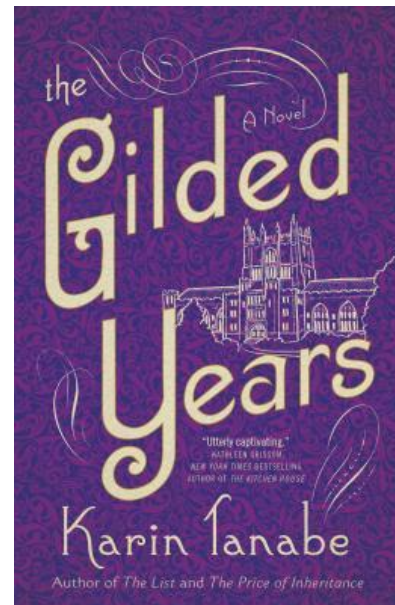


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**Karin Tanabe's** gripping new historical novel, *The Gilded Years* (Washington Square Press, June 7, 2016) is based on the true story of Anita Hemmings, the first black student to attend Vassar College. With “spot on” dialogue and “narration reminiscent of novels of the 1890s” (Anna Jean Mayhew, author of *The Dry Grass of August*), Tanabe has crafted a tonally masterful yet supremely relevant narrative on race, women’s rights, and the challenges of finding one’s place in the world.

Since childhood, Anita Hemmings has longed to attend Vassar, the country’s most exclusive school for women. Now, a bright, beautiful senior in the class of 1897, she is hiding a secret that would have banned her from admission: she is the only African-American student ever to attend the college. With her olive complexion and dark hair, she has successfully passed as white for three years, but now finds herself rooming with Louise “Lottie” Taylor, the scion of one of New York’s most prominent families.





*Anita Hemmings*

Pulled into Lottie's elite world, Anita learns what it's like to be treated as a wealthy, educated white woman—the person everyone believes her to be—and even finds herself in a relationship with a moneyed Harvard man. With this closeness comes trouble, however, as Anita faces what it truly means to pass: the guilt of betraying her family, of lying to her friends, of cutting herself off from her community in exchange for an education. As Anita's relationships with Lottie and her affluent classmates grow closer, she must make the near impossible decision of whether to choose the love of a man who can open doors she could not reach on her own, or to be true to her heritage and return home to her family after graduation, leaving the ease of white

society behind in favor of a different sort of freedom.

Set against the vibrant backdrop of the Gilded Age, an era when old money traditions collided with modern ideas, Tanabe has written an unputdownable and emotionally compelling story of hope, sacrifice, and betrayal. [The Gilded Years](#) is a riveting account of how one woman dared to risk everything for the chance at a better life (Hemmings Photo Credit: Archives & Special Collections, Vassar College Library).

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“An utterly captivating narrative that kept me turning pages late into the night.”—**Kathleen Grissom, New York Times bestselling author of *The Kitchen House***

“Karin Tanabe limns the tensions of a young woman's desire to participate fully in a world in which she doesn't dare reveal her full self...Most impressive are the characters' emotional complexity; Tanabe understands that human relations are never so simple as black and white.”

—**Christina Schwarz, #1 New York Times bestselling author**

“This engaging novel, set in a time of conflict between old money and new ideas, captures both the bravery and the heartbreak of Anita's decision...Readers won't soon forget Anita Hemmings or the choices she made.”

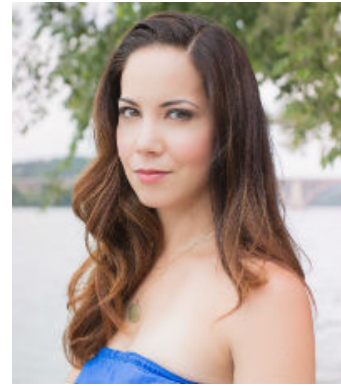
—**BookPage**

“In Anita's captivating story, heightened by richly drawn characters, Tanabe insightfully grapples with complex and compelling issues.”

—**Booklist**

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**Karin Tanabe** is the author of the novels *The List* and *The Price of Inheritance*. ***The Gilded Years*** is her third novel. A former *Politico* reporter and a frequent contributor to *The Huffington Post*, her work has also appeared in publications including *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Miami Herald*, *Newsday*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and in the anthology *Crush: Writers Reflect on Love, Longing and the Lasting Power of Their First Celebrity Crush*. She lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband and daughter.



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