

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

7. The tenuous friendship Joshua and Veronica build during their stay in the Frick Collection is almost destroyed when Veronica betrays his trust. What are the stakes for each of them in that moment? What makes Veronica's actions dangerous for both, and how do their situations differ? What would you have encouraged Veronica to do with her find?

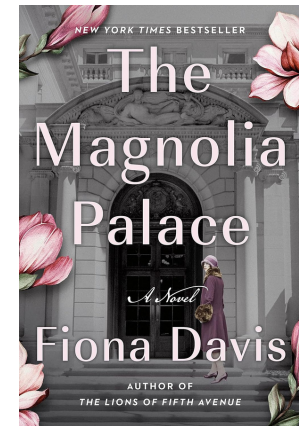
8. Did the ending surprise you? How do you think the truth of what really happened to Henry Clay Frick and the Magnolia diamond affected the different characters at the end?

9. If you could go back in time to one of the eras Fiona Davis writes about in *THE MAGNOLIA PALACE*, would you? Which would you choose?



WEST BABYLON LITERARY CLUB

THE MAGNOLIA PALACE



BY FIONA DAVIS

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West Babylon Public Library
211 Route 109
West Babylon, NY 11704
631-669-5445 www.wbpl.us

SUMMARY

When model English model Veronica Weber, while at the Frick museum, chances upon a series of hidden messages, she is led on a hunt that could not only solve her financial woes but could finally reveal the truth behind a decades-old murder in the infamous Frick family.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Fiona Davis is the New York Times bestselling author of several novels, including *The Dollhouse*, *The Address*, *The Masterpiece*, *The Chelsea Girls*, *The Lions of Fifth Avenue*, and *The Magnolia Palace*. She lives in New York City and is a graduate of the Columbia Journalism School.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could meet any of these characters and have a conversation with them, who would it be? What would your conversation be about?
2. When Miss Helen meets Lillian, she says, “I like to make things difficult for other people. You should know that right off: I’m known to be difficult.” How does their relationship evolve over the course of the book?
3. While trying to convince Lillian to pose for his statues, Mr. Konti says that if the people of New York “walk by one of my statues and look up and see something beautiful, an idea or person who inspires them, then I have done my job. I do this not for me. It’s for humanity.” What do you think of this statement? Does it resonate with you and the role public art plays in your life? Why or why not?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

4. Miss Helen seems disconnected from reality, and is frequently oblivious to the feelings and motives of those around her. Why do you think that is? How do you think her wealth and position have altered her worldview? How did it affect the way she treated people like Lillian, or the way her father regarded people like Bertha?
5. How do Joshua’s experiences as a Black man in the art world affect the way he views the art at the Frick? Do his experiences alter your views of art history in any way?
6. How do Lillian’s and Veronica’s experiences working as models in two different decades compare? In what ways does the novel explore the difference between being looked at versus being seen?