

FICTION

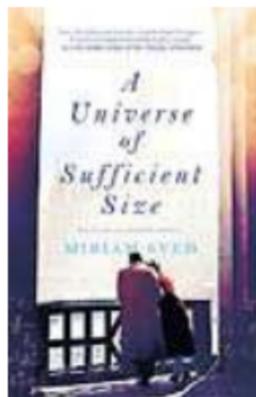
KERRY N GOLDSWORTHY

A Universe of Sufficient Size

Miriam Sved

Picador, \$32.99

This tale of five young student mathematicians in pre-war Budapest is one of the most convincing and impressive novels about the life of the mind that I have ever seen written in Australia. Its immediate concerns are gripping and dramatic, for the year is 1938 and the five friends are Jewish. And only one of them, it seems, can see clearly what is coming. The story toggles between the Hungary of 1938 and the Sydney of 2007, where one of the five, now an old woman, has just been widowed and has moved in with her only daughter. But then the only other surviving member of the group, a brilliant and now internationally famous mathematician, comes on a university visit and the friends are reunited for the first time in more than 50 years. This is a novel about youth and maths: about friendship, family, hopeless love, intellectual passions, and the long, long shadow of World War II.



PICK OF
THE WEEK