Mariella Mehr is a writer of great intensity and a uniquely stark, unsentimental but highly poetic language. Many of her works have children as protagonists, children caught in loveless, oppressive, and abusive circumstances, who see no other way than to resort to criminal acts as a way of survival.

Mariella Mehr, the 2005 Oberlin writer-in-residence, was born in 1947 in Switzerland and is of Roma (Gypsy) background. Her work brings new perspectives to our notions of how minority writers transform very painful personal experiences into compelling literary works of universal meaning. Her poetry, plays, and novels have won numerous awards. In 1998 she was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Basel.

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