

2012

2013

2014

WINNING AUTHORS

CYCLE 02



EUROPEAN UNION
PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

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Can you imagine a European literary Prize, covering the 40 or so countries taking part in the Creative Europe programme, with the ambition of raising the profile and recognition of authors who have received little or no translation? And if so, how can it be organised and how can the authors receiving this unique award be promoted? Since 2009, the organisers, with financial support from the European Union, have been tackling this almost impossible task.

The task is to find trustworthy and experienced contacts in the various participating countries, so as to be able to put the spotlight on the author who will represent his or her literature. But not all at the same time, as it is not possible to make such a selection from so many countries each year, so it was decided to work in three-year cycles, with all countries represented once per cycle.

Each year, between eleven and fourteen countries take part in the selection of authors who have published between two and four works of fiction and

who have not yet been discovered by publishers in other countries, whether in Europe or beyond.

Over the years, the Prize has changed, but the rules for selecting authors have remained the same. The vast majority of the authors featured in this compilation have been translated into many European languages and beyond. The Prize is therefore achieving its objective of highlighting new European works and introducing new readers to the talents of neighbouring countries (in the broadest sense).

The Prize organisers would like to thank all those who have been associated with this prize since its inception, who have selected the books, promoted the authors, translated them and introduced them to new readers.

The authors' bibliographical notes refer to the date on which they took part in the prize. For longer translated extracts, please visit the Prize website.

Long live literature, long live Europe!

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2012

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AUSTRIA

Anna Kim

Die gefrorene Zeit Frozen Time

Literaturverlag Droschl,
2008



BIOGRAPHY

Anna Kim was born in 1977 in Daejeon, South Korea. She studied Philosophy and Theatre Studies at the University of Vienna. She has published several short stories, essays and poems in newspapers, literary magazines and anthologies. Her three novels are *Anatomie einer Nacht* (*Anatomy of a Night*, 2012), *Die gefrorene Zeit* (*Frozen Time*, 2008), and *Die Bilderspur* (*The Trace of Pictures*, 2004). She has also written a collection of poems, *Das Sinken ein Bückflug*.

SYNOPSIS

Since the end of the war in the former Yugoslavia, more than 30,000 people were reported as missing. This is the background to the story: the search of a Kosovar for his missing wife and the first-person narrator's gradual penetration of the complexities behind this traumatic event. In this extraordinary book, Kim explores concepts such as foreignness with a depressing relevance to the present. However, it is not just contemporary history that she is interested in, but also the linguistic portrayal of such incomprehensible horror, the search for the right words and sentences to describe something so extreme.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Du hast beschlossen zu berichten, doch manchmal zittern die Hände, ein Zwillingsszittern, wie das der Worte, ein Nachbeben im Hals; starrst auf die Tür, als wäre sie ein Fenster und in ihr unvergessliche Landschaft, dann ein Erwachen, du kramst in der Hose und legst den Reisepass deiner Frau, ein schmales Fotoalbum sowie die Heiratsurkunde auf den Tisch.

You agreed to answer the questionnaire, but sometimes your hands tremble, tremble in concert, as do your words, an aftershock in your throat; you stare at the door, as if it were a window with an unforgettable landscape in it, then wake, rummage in your pocket and place your wife's passport, a slim photograph album and your marriage certificate on the table.
(Translated by Michael Mitchell for Ariadne Press)





CROATIA

Lada Žigo

Rulet *Roulette*

SysPrint, 2010



BIOGRAPHY

Lada Žigo is a Croatian writer born in 1970 in Zagreb and graduated in Comparative Literature and Philosophy. Her first book, *People and News People* (*Ljudi i novinari*, 2007) was shortlisted for two prestigious awards – Ksaver Šandor Gjalski and Kiklop. Her second novel, *Bitches* (*Babetine*, 2009) sets itself against the “women’s writing” then in vogue. In 2010 Žigo published *Roulette* (*Rulet*). In 2011 she published *Healer* (*Iscjelitelj*). Lada Žigo is a member of the Croatian Writers’ Association and Croatian Freelance Artists Organisation.

SYNOPSIS

Metaphorically speaking, human beings become like roulette balls in a game in which only powerful croupiers take the winnings. The main character of this novel is a disillusioned soldier who starts to gamble after he finds out that powerful Serbian and Croatian leaders are united in crime. At the same time, the Americanisation of the culture and language is further annulling the sovereignty of this “small country”. Disappointed and disillusioned, the main character in Žigo’s novel indulges in playing roulette, a game that becomes one of destiny in which one can win or lose all.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

“Ilica je bila opet pusta. Bilo je oko tri u noći. Hodali su prema Zagrebačkoj pivovari. Ante je gledao u beton. Profesor je gledao u nebo. Ali, kao da su im pogledi bili u istoj ravnini.

Ilica Street was once again deserted. It was three in the morning. They were walking towards the Zagreb Brewery. Ante was looking down at the asphalt. The professor was looking up at the sky. But they seemed to be gazing at the same plane.

(Translated by Tamara Budimir)



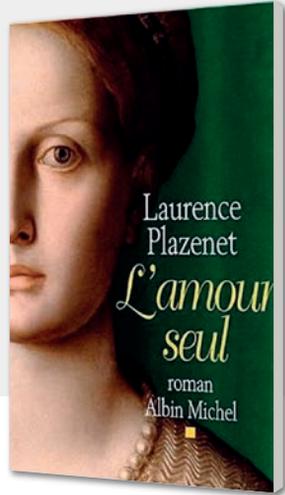
FRANCE

Laurence Plazenet

L'amour seul

Love Alone

Albin Michel, 2005



BIOGRAPHY

Laurence Plazenet was born in Paris in 1968. For a long time she was convinced that she didn't have anything to say that was worth being printed. She broke the silence in 2005 with *L'amour seul*, then with *La Blessure et la soif* in 2009 and *Disproportion de l'homme*. Plazenet is lecturer of French Literature at Paris-Sorbonne, a member of the French National Centre for Scientific Research and the Institut Universitaire de France, and a vice-chair of the Société des Amis de Port-Royal.

SYNOPSIS

Mlle Louise Catherine d'Albrecht is tormented by her feelings but she ends up giving herself to Monsieur de Ramon who seduced her. When her father forces her to leave the city to return back to the country, Louise is looked after by her young aunt. Later, back in Paris, she hopes her lover will find her again, but he fails to return. Full of anxiety, she dedicates her life to her studies and writes her first book. Thanks to this book and her words, Monsieur de Ramon comes back to her. They give their love to each other, an absolute love, until Monsieur de Ramon, feeling old and not worthy of his lover's brightness, decides to leave her while she is pregnant. Later, tragedy strikes when she loses her six-year old daughter, and she sinks into a lonely life, full of memories of her lover and haunting desires.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

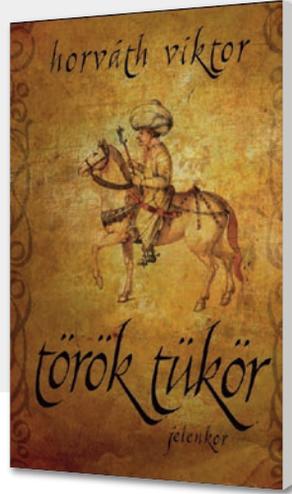
Quand sa femme était morte, Monsieur d'Albrecht avait refusé de s'écarter du corps qu'elle avait déserté. Il était resté agenouillé, ses mains jointes à celles de son épouse. Il n'écoutait pas les prières des prêtres ni les objurgations de ses domestiques.

After his wife died, Monsieur d'Albrecht had refused to relinquish the body she had abandoned. He had remained kneeling, his wife's hands in his own. He ignored both the priests' prayers and the rebukes of his servants.
(Translated by Jessica Alexander)



HUNGARY

Viktor Horváth
Török tükör
Turkish Mirror
 Jelenkor, 2009


BIOGRAPHY

Viktor Horváth was born in 1962 in Pécs. Between 2003 and 2006, he studied for his Ph.D. at the University of Miskolc. Since 2003, he has been teaching the theory of poetic structure and the history of form in medieval times at the University of Pécs. His guidebook, *Through Other New York Variations (Át avagy New York-variációk)* was published in 2004.

SYNOPSIS

Turkish Mirror takes the reader to 16th century Hungary. The novel describes an unstable borderland situated between two great empires. In the book, we see the city of Pécs gradually giving way to the world of the *Thousand and One Arabian Nights*. The great charm of *Turkish Mirror* lies in its uninhibited flair for storytelling, while its ingenuity lies in showing us the world of Hungary through the eyes of the occupying Ottoman Turks. This is presented as a complex, puzzling, multicultural land, fraught with danger and ruled by complex power relations, as opposed to the Padishah's civilised and refined empire. Thanks to this surprising point of view, the reader visits a terrain where everything that was familiar is now foreign and exotic.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

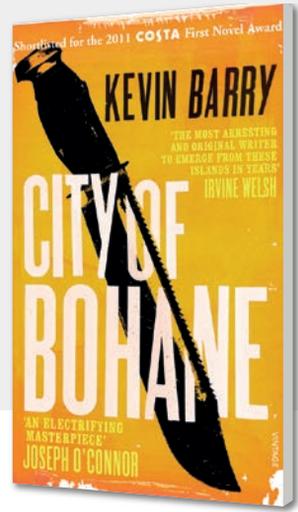
Szejfí, a nevelőm, úgy mondta el nekem, ahogy az áldott emlékü oszmán történetírók megírták. Én csak ámultam azon a beszéden, Szejfí pedig nagy komolyan mondta, mondta, de időnként megállt és mosolygott. Szerettem Szejfít. Így mesélte.

My tutor Sejfi told me the story just as the Ottoman scribes of blessed memory had recorded it. I listened to him spellbound, and he, Sejfi, continued to relate it with due seriousness, though from time to time he stopped for a smile. I loved Sejfi very much. This is the tale he told.
 (Translated by Judith Sollosy)



IRELAND

Kevin Barry
City of Bohane
 Jonathan Cape, Random
 House, 2011

**BIOGRAPHY**

Kevin Barry is the author of the short story collections *Dark Lies The Island* and *There Are Little Kingdoms* and the novel *City of Bohane*. His stories have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Granta Book of the Irish Story*, and many other journals.

SYNOPSIS

Forty years in the future. The once-great city of Bohane on the west coast of Ireland is on its knees. For years, the city has been in the cool grip of Logan Hartnett, the dapper godfather of the Hartnett Fancy gang. But there's trouble in the air. They say his old nemesis is back in town; his trusted henchmen are getting ambitious, and his missus wants him to give it all up and go straight. And then there's his mother... *City of Bohane* is a visionary novel that blends influences from film and the graphic novel, from Trojan beats and calypso rhythms, from Celtic myth and legend, from fado and the sagas, and from all the great inheritance of Irish literature. A work of mesmerising imagination and vaulting linguistic invention, it is a taste of the glorious and new.

**ORIGINAL EXCERPT**

“Whatever’s wrong with us is coming in off that river. No argument: the taint of badness on the city’s air is a taint off that river. This is the Bohane river we’re talking about. A blackwater surge, malevolent, it roars in off the Big Nothin’ wastes and the city was spawned by it and was named for it: city of Bohane.

Tout ce qui cloche chez nous vient du fleuve. Pas à discuter : la méchante infection dans l’air de la ville vient de ce fleuve. On parle de la Bohane là. Un flot trouble, malveillant, qui arrive en rugissant des terrains vagues de Big Nothin’ et la ville en est le rejeton, elle en prend le nom : Bohane.
 (Translated by Antoine Monvoisin)



ITALY

Emanuele Trevi
Qualcosa di scritto
Something Written
 Ponte alle Grazie, 2012

BIOGRAPHY

Emanuele Trevi was born in Rome in 1964. He was creative director of the publisher Fazi and he also edited an anthology with Marco Lodoli. Trevi has written many critical essays on poets and writers, including a work on the poet Pietro Tripodo which won the Sandro Onofri Prize. Trevi was in the jury of several literary awards and he has written for magazines and various national newspapers.

SYNOPSIS

Rome, in the early nineties. A writer in his thirties, cynical and naive, finds work in an archive, the Fund Pier Paolo Pasolini, where he meets a shrewish old woman called Laura Betti. The encounter with the mad heroine of this book, a spiritual heir of the Friulian poet, is an encounter with Pasolini himself. Meanwhile, a hidden story in *Petrolio*, the unfinished novel by Pasolini becomes a guide to the disenchantment of our time and the mysteries of life. *Qualcosa di scritto* tells the story of a farewell to adolescence and an entire era, and explores the eternal secrets of life.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Tra le tante, troppe persone che hanno lavorato per Laura Betti al Fondo Pier Paolo Pasolini di Roma, tutte dotate di un loro pittoresco bagaglio di ricordi più o meno spiacevoli, credo di poter vantare, se non altro, una resistenza al di sopra della media.

Among the many—too many—people who worked for Laura Betti at the Pier Paolo Pasolini Foundation in Rome, all of them endowed with a colorful store of more or less unpleasant memories, I believe that I can boast of, if nothing else, above average endurance.
 (Translated by Ann Goldstein)



LITHUANIA

Giedra Radvilavičiūtė
Šiąnakt aš
miegosiu prie
sienos
Tonight I Shall Sleep
by the Wall

Baltos lankos, 2010



BIOGRAPHY

Giedra Radvilavičiūtė (1960) graduated from Vilnius University with a degree in Lithuanian language and literature. After that, she worked for a few years as a schoolteacher and as a journalist. She is now working at a government institution as a language editor.

SYNOPSIS

These short stories, which can also be seen as semi-autobiographical essays, mostly deal with everyday occurrences, seemingly insignificant experiences and perceptions. Their sophisticated sensibilities reveal a rich existence, a deep sense of every quotidian moment. Some of the stories deal with the situation of a middle-aged woman, living with her daughter in a small flat in the Old Town of Vilnius; they look deep into everyday events, but at the same time the exquisite literary quality of the text contributes to a rewarding reading experience.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Būsiu praleidusi gerą gabalą pasakojimo galvodama, kaip atsitiko, kad šita moteris tapo geriausia mano drauge. Drauge, kurios kaip ir kitų, kuriuos norėčiau sutikti dar kartą, objektyviai aprašyti neįmanoma, nes tam trukdo meilė.

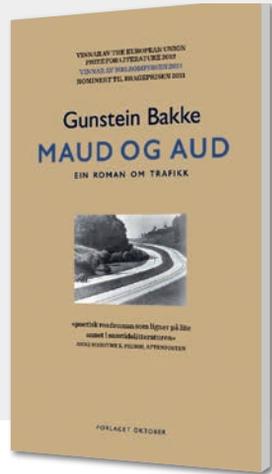
I will have missed a good portion of the story by thinking of how it happened that this woman became my best friend. A friend who, like others I would like to meet again, is impossible to write about objectively, because love gets in the way.
(Translated by Elizabeth Novickas)



NORWAY

Gunstein Bakke
Maud og Aud –
ein roman om
trafikk
Maud et Aud – roman
de circulation

Forlaget Oktober, 2011



BIOGRAPHY

Gunstein Bakke (1968) was born in Setesdal in southern Norway. He made his authorial debut in 2000 with the novel *Kontoret*. With *Maud and Aud* he has finally been recognized as one of the most interesting voices among Norwegian authors. Bakke's thought-provoking book combines poetic language, polyphonic narrative and astute analysis in a manner that stands out in contemporary Norwegian literature.

SYNOPSIS

Maud and Aud consists of short chapters that alternate between narrative flashes and poetic descriptions. At the centre of the plot is a family which is devastated by a car accident: the mother dies, the father can only live on supported by artificial body parts, and the twin sisters Maud and Aud survive with bodily and mental scars. In short, Gunstein Bakke touches on questions of existential importance in a country where oil fuels not only the cars, but also a large part of society's development – and possibly also environmental developments that may eventually pose new threats to human life.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Det er ein nylagd asfaltveg, rettare sagt: det er ei nylagd asfaltstripe som utgjer halve vegen. Den andre halvdelan er gammal og grå og ligg nokre centimeter lågare i terrenget. På denne køyrer bilane forbi i små kolonnar som først har danna seg som køar ved dei transportable og provisoriske trafikklysa.

C'est une route d'asphalte qui vient d'être posée, ou plus exactement : une bande d'asphalte qui vient d'être posée et recouvre la moitié de la chaussée. L'autre, quelques centimètres plus bas, est vieille, grise. Dessus roulent de petites colonnes de voitures, comme des queues, qui se sont formées aux feux de signalisation provisoires et mobiles.
 (Translated by Aude Pasquier)



POLAND

Piotr Paziński
Pensjonat
Boarding House

 Wydawnictwo Nisza,
 2009

BIOGRAPHY

Piotr Paziński, born in 1973, is the author of three books: a monograph on James Joyce's *Ulysses*, a subjective guide tracing the footsteps of Joyce's *Dublin*, and the novel *Pensjonat*. He lives in Warsaw, where he works as the chief editor of the Jewish magazine *Midrash*.

SYNOPSIS

On the surface, the plot of *Pensjonat* is straightforward, describing a day trip to a boarding house outside Warsaw by a young man. But it is no ordinary boarding house: the residents are Jews who survived the Holocaust, and so everything that occurs here is like a resurrection of events, debates and ideological arguments from long ago. The book has an atmosphere full of warmth and gentle irony. It paints rich images, and shows the diversity of the Jewish heritage. This dispute permeates the everyday world in a comical way, but provides meaning even when it is going through drastic changes, and most of the people taking part in the argument are dying. At that point it is taken up by the survivors, who resurrect the dead as partners in the debate.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Hol i jadalnia trwały bezludne w półmroku oczekiwania na wieczór. Tylko ze słabo oświetlonego biura obok świetlicy dobywał się stukot maszyny do pisania – znak, że życie w pensjonacie nie wygasło jeszcze do cna.

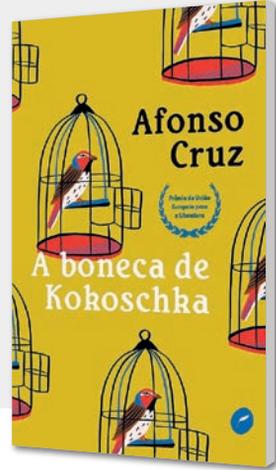
The hallway and dining hall have remained desolate in the dusk of evening waiting. Only the clicking of the typewriter was coming from the half-lit office next to the common room—a sign that life in the boarding house has completely not gone out.
 (Translated by Tusia Dabrowska)



PORTUGAL

Afonso Cruz
A Boneca de Kokoschka
Kokoschka's Doll

Quetzal, 2010


BIOGRAPHY

Afonso Cruz was born in Figueira da Foz in 1971. He works as a director of animation movies, illustrator, musician and writer. His animation career includes several movies and series. In 2007, he recorded an album with his blues/roots band, *The Soaked Lamb*, for which he composed the original songs, wrote the lyrics, sang and played the guitar, the banjo, the harmonica and the ukulele. He started his career as a fiction writer in 2008 with the novel *A Carne de Deus (The Flesh of God)*.

SYNOPSIS

Kokoschka's Doll acts as a symbol and metaphor for a story of friendship, a story of how the Other is fundamental for our own identity. The characters include Isaac Dresner, a Jew who developed a limp in his left foot, after he was burdened with the memory of his best friend being killed in front of him during World War II. The reader is also introduced to Bonifaz Vogel, a man with a suspended conscience, Tsilia Kacev, an Orthodox Jew who gets stigmata, and a millionaire, Zsigmond Varga, who wants to weigh the human soul, measuring evil and sin with a hydraulic scale. Music is a constant in this story, which also includes defeated poets, a man who is too kind, Kokoschka's doll itself, and a guitar player who classifies people under chords: bearded philosophers, for example, are diminished seventh.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

O dia é metade morte, metade vida, tal como se pode ver pela quantidade de luz e escuridão que o compõe.

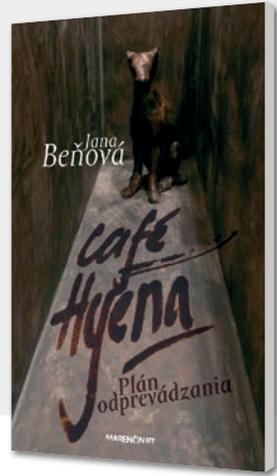
The day is half death, half life, as can be grasped by the quantity of light and darkness that make it.
 (Translated by Nuno Quintas)



SLOVAKIA

Jana Benová
Café Hyena (Plán
odprevádzania)
Café Hyena (Seeing
People Off)

Marenèin PT, 2012


BIOGRAPHY

Jana Benová (1974), is a poet and prose writer, who graduated from the Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts in Bratislava. She debuted with collection of poems, *Svetloplachý* (1993), *Lonochod* (1997) and *Nehota* (1997). A novel, *Parker* (2001), and a collection of short stories, *Dvanásť poviedok a Ján Med* (2003), followed. Her short stories are marked by a poetical sensibility bound with poignant insights into the human mind and human behaviour.

SYNOPSIS

Café Hyena (Seeing People Off) is an unusual mosaic of observations, perceptions, self-reflections and memories. Two couples sharing a grant that allows them to live however they want. The love story of Elza and Ian. Bratislava desperadoes not employed by an advertising agency, who have instead joined the carefree class of people who buy only what can be peed or pooped out or exhaled – recycled within twenty-four hours. *Seeing people off* means trying to protect them, to share the journey even when it leads to madness or death.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Jedli sme spolu hrozno a zapíjali ho ružovým vínom. Na druhý deň som nahmatala vo vrecku vlhkú hroznovú stopku. Vyzerala ako obratý vianočný stromček. Kalisto Tanzi zmizol z mesta, ktoré zachvátila horúčava. Teplo sáhalo z domov a ulíc rovno do tváre a rozpálené mesto sa ľuďom vtlačalo na čelo ako pečať.

Together we ate grapes and washed them down with rosé. The next day I discovered a damp grape stalk in my pocket. It looked like a Christmas tree, upside-down. Kalisto Tanzi disappeared from the town, which was gripped by a heat wave. The heat radiating from the houses and streets burned people's faces and the scorching town seared its mark on their foreheads.
 (Translated by Heather Trebaticka)



SWEDEN

Sara Mannheimer
Handlingen
The Action

 Wahlström & Widstrand,
 2011

BIOGRAPHY

Sara Mannheimer grew up in Gothenburg, Sweden. In addition to writing, she runs the glassworks Stockholm Heta Glas. *Reglerna (The Rules)*, her novel from 2008, was nominated for the August Prize and won the prize for debut writers from the newspaper Borås Tidning. *Handlingen (The Action)* was nominated for Swedish Radio's prize for novels.

SYNOPSIS

The protagonist is a woman who is driven by a desire to conquer The Library, containing the educated world and the entire global collection of literature. Underlying this neurotic need to control the world around her, is her overwhelming grief over a failed pregnancy. Magic and realism are intertwined in Mannheimer's poetic writing, and she succeeds once more in depicting the often well-concealed fragility of everyday life. Stylized and weighted with symbolism, *Handlingen* is a portrayal of a human being's obsession with spiritual purity, and with replacing the weakness of the body with an unassailable intellectual identity.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Äntligen! Jag måste säga det högt – Det är höst och jag är inte mållös, inte hemlös, jag har ett Hem inuti vilket målet är löst! Jag säger det högt, för att det verkligen ska få fäste i mitt medvetande, att jag har skrinlagt alla-andra-möjliga-kommande äntligheter som klibbar vid föreställningen om ytterligare platser och större framkomster.

Finally! I must say it out loud– It's fall and I'm not mute nor aimless, nor homeless, I have a Home in which the case is not lost! I say this out loud, so it really takes root in my consciousness, that I've boxed up and shelved all-other-possible-forthcoming finalities that cling to the notion of farther-off places and grander arrivals.
 (Translated by Rika Lesser)

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BELGIUM

Isabelle Wéry Marilyn Désossée *Marilyn Deboned*

Editions Maelström, 2013



BIOGRAPHY

Isabelle Wéry is a Belgian actress, theatre director and author. She is the author of the novel *Monsieur René*, an imaginary biography of the Belgian actor René Hinaux, as well as *Saisons culottes amis* (*Yvette's Poems*), published in 2010. In 2013, her short story *Skai* was published as part of a collection of Belgian authors, *Feuilleton*, and her novel *Marilyn désossée* was published in 2013.

SYNOPSIS

While Marilyn Turkey is writing a novel, she revisits fragments of her life and becomes immersed in the memories of her intimate and explicit encounters. *Marilyn Deboned* is a road-movie in three acts: the first act when she is aged between six and eight, the second part as a young adult and the third act in the "here and now". It's the story of an exploration and a digression. What are the diverse forms in which love is embodied? What is this crazy thing that suddenly brings together two creatures for a unique moment? Marilyn's exploration knows no limits. Her unusual approach leads her into side paths, ravines, and unexplored corners of existence, experiencing life, "in all its splendour and all its rawness".



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

“**MON AMOUR**, Soyons clairs. Je veux une grande robe blanche de mariée. Dessous, je porterai un body de dentelle blanche qui moulera mon corps parfait de femme. Oui, une espèce de tout juste au corps, un peu comme celui que je porte au cours de gymnastique.

MY LOVE, Let's be clear. I want a big white wedding dress. Underneath, I will wear a white lace leotard that will cling to my perfect woman's body. Yes, a sort of extra second skin, a little like the one that I wear in gym class.

(Translated by
Astrid Howard)





BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Faruk Šehić
Knjiga o Uni
The Book of Una
 Buybook d.o.o., 2011



BIOGRAPHY

Faruk Šehić was born in 1970 in Bihac. Until the outbreak of war in 1992, Šehić studied veterinary medicine in Zagreb. After the war he studied literature. Critics regard him as one of the most gifted young writers in the former Yugoslavia. The collection of short stories *Pod pritiskom* (*Under Pressure*, 2004) was awarded the Zoro Verlag Prize. His debut novel *Knjiga o Uni* (*The Book of Una*, 2011) was awarded the Meša Selimović Prize for the best novel published in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Croatia in 2011.

SYNOPSIS

The Book of Una is about a man trying to overcome the personal trauma caused by the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995. The book covers three time periods, taking in childhood before the war, the battle lines during the war, and attempts to continue with normal life in a destroyed city and country after the war. *The Book of Una* attempts to reconstruct the life of the main character who, like the text in the book, is rather bipolar in nature: he's both a veteran and a poet. In parallel to this story, the novel expands into a poetic description of nature, seasons, flora and fauna, as well as childhood memories not yet tainted by all that will happen after 1992.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Ako kiša zapada uoči petka onda će padati sedam dana, tako nam je majka stalno govorila. I dažd je prekrrio naše nebo snagom ajetâ sure Al-Qari'a / Smak svijeta.

If it starts to rain the evening before Friday it's gonna rain for seven days, so our granny always told us. And the heavy rain overspread our heaven with the force of a miraculous verse of Al-Qaria surah in the Koran – the one about the end of the world.
 (Translated by Zvonimir Radeljković)



CYPRUS

Emilius Solomou
Ημερολόγιο μιας απιστίας
The Diary of an Infidelity

Psychogios Publications
 SA, 2012



BIOGRAPHY

Emilius Solomou was born in 1971 in Nicosia. He studied history and archaeology at the University of Athens and journalism in Cyprus. He is now a teacher of Greek and history in a public high school. In addition, he is a member of the editorial board of the literary magazine Anef, and he has served as a member of the executive board of the Union of Cyprus Writers.

SYNOPSIS

Yiorgos Doukarelis, an archaeologist, returns to an island in the Small Cyclades 20 years after the excavation that made him famous, where he discovered the prehistoric remains of a young pregnant woman murdered 5000 years ago, named Kassioپی. During this trip, he had an affair with one of his students, Antigoni. They got married after Yiorgos' divorce from his former wife Maria. He returns to the island, six months after Antigoni disappeared, wandering amongst his memories, exploring the secret ties that connect him with the three women of his life. This is a second excavation for him, into the deepest places of his soul. *The Diary of an Infidelity* is also a novel about time, destruction, memory and love, which balances the present and the past.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

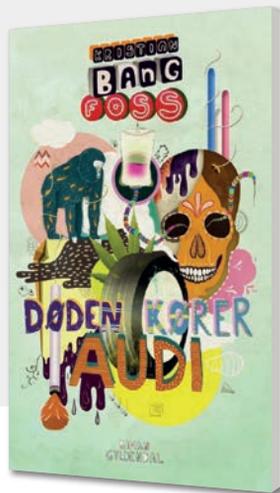
Κοιτούσαν εκστασιασμένοι
 τούτο το δύστυχο πλάσμα
 και σώπαιναν. Μια αλλόκοτη
 ύπαρξη που αναδύθηκε στο
 φως από τα έγκατα της γης
 πέντε χιλιετίες μετά.

*They looked in fascination at
 the unfortunate creature and fell
 silent. A strange being to come
 to light out of the bowels of the
 earth after five thousand years.*
 (Translated by Irene Noel)



DENMARK

Kristian Bang Foss
Døden kører audi
Death Drives an Audi
 Gyldendal, 2012

**BIOGRAPHY**

Kristian Bang Foss was born in Denmark in 1977. After initially starting a BA in mathematics and physics, he graduated from the Danish Writers' Academy in 2003. His first novel *Fiskens vindue* (*The Window of the Fish*) was published in 2004. His debut was followed by *Stormen i 99* (*The Storm in 99*) in 2008. In *Døden kører Audi*, he tells a satirical tale about the Danish welfare state and takes its characters on a trip through Europe to Morocco in search of a healer.

SYNOPSIS

It's 2008, the credit crunch has just begun to bite, Asger is fired. He spends his days lying on the sofa, developing problems with both his weight and alcohol. Half a year later, he is forced to look after a sick man called Waldemar. Their daily life together is a study in hopelessness. But Waldemar has a plan: he wants to go and see a healer in Morocco. Asger is sceptical, but nevertheless he helps Waldemar raise money for the journey, and after a while the two friends find themselves on a road trip through Europe. However, they are being followed by a person in a black Audi – and as they get closer to Morocco, the trip turns into a race with death.

**ORIGINAL EXCERPT**

Et andet udtryk, som vi var glade for, var „høje puder til sideliggere“. Vi samlede det op på en tur i Ikea, hvor Waldemar skulle have en ny lampe. Det stod på et fuldstændig dumialt diagram i sengeafdelingen, hvor man ud fra sin sovestilling – ryggen, maven, siden, etc. – kunne finde ud af, hvilken størrelse pude man skulle have.

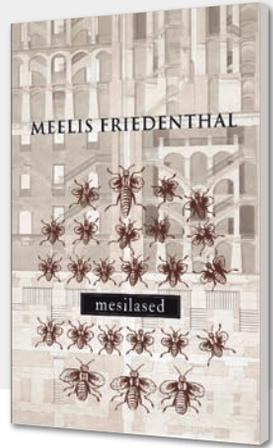
Another expression we were fond of was “plump pillows for side sleepers”. We picked it up in Ikea, on a trip to get Waldemar a new lamp. We discovered it on a completely geniotic diagram in the bedroom department, where, depending on your sleeping position – on your back, stomach, side, etc. – you could find out which size pillow you should be using. (Translated by Paul Russell Garrett)



ESTONIA

Meelis Friedenthal **Mesilased** *The Bees*

AS Varrak, 2012



BIOGRAPHY

Meelis Friedenthal (1973) has worked as lecturer in the faculty of theology and history and is currently working as a senior researcher in Tartu University Library. He has earned a reputation as a speculative fiction writer. His first novel *Golden Age* is about the role of history in shaping our identity. The following year, his story *Nerissa* won an Estonian science fiction prize. He has also written an extensive postscript about the historical context of the events described in the novel.

SYNOPSIS

Friedenthal describes the adventures of Laurentius Hylas, a student travelling from the University of Leiden to the Academia Gustavo-Carolina in Tartu, Livonia. Laurentius arrives in Estonia some years before the end of the 17th century, together with his parrot Clodia. The parrot's sanguine temperament is supposed to help counteract the melancholia that affects Laurentius. He hears a professor talking about the medicinal theories of Boyle and follows his advice of bloodletting to cure his condition. Unfortunately, the process does not work and Laurentius faints. Strange events are happening around him. He is unsure if it is possible to explain them naturally or supernaturally, as the competing philosophical theories he follows permit both.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Kogu aeg sadas vihma. Vihm oli mädandanud saagi põldudel, pannud hallitama majade puust seinad, muutnud vetikaligedaks laevade tekilauad. Laurentius oli juba mitu kuud söönud mädanenud leiba, elanud hallitavates majades ja viimasel nädalal ka libisenud ligedal laevatekil.

It rained all the time. Rain had rotted the crops on the fields, had covered the wooden walls of the buildings with mold, had made ships' deck boards as sopping as seaweed. For already several months' time, Laurentius had been eating rotten bread, had been living in mildewed buildings, and in the last week, had also been sliding across the soggy deck of a ship.

(Translated by Adam Cullen)



FINLAND

Katri Lipson
Jäätelökauppias
The Ice-Cream Man
 Tammi Publishers, 2012



BIOGRAPHY

Katri Lipson (1965) studied medicine in Sweden and graduated from the Medical School of Uppsala University in 1993. Her debut novel, *Cosmonaut (Kosmonautti)*, was nominated for the Finlandia Prize in 2008 and won the Helsingin Sanomat Debut Book of the Year Award in 2008. Her second novel, *The Ice-Cream Man (Jäätelökauppias)*, was published in 2012. She lives with her family in Vantaa, Finland.

SYNOPSIS

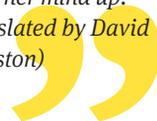
A film crew is making a new movie. The actors are making up and living the lives of their characters at the same time – but can the life of these fictional characters become more real than reality itself? When the actors start to understand the improvised lives of the characters they are playing, these main heroes start to lead lives of their own.. During the story, the city of Olomouc stays at the centre of events: the story is rooted and grows from there. The destinies of characters intertwine with each other and the imagery becomes rich with meaningful details: in this world, there are no coincidences at all.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Ohjaajasta on sanottu, että kaikki johtuu hänen äidistään. Siitä on tullut yleinen vitsi, äidin sitä ja äidin tätä; kun ohjaaja kiihtyy tai juuttuu johonkin, hänen selkensä takana kuiskitaan ”äiti haluaa näin”, ”ei auta, äiti päättää”.

People have said of the director that everything has to do with his mother. It's become something of a running joke – mother's this and mother's that. Whenever the director gets wound up or latches on to an idea, behind his back people whisper things like 'it's what Mother would have wanted' or 'it's no use, Mother has made her mind up.'
 (Translated by David Hackston)





**NORTH
MACEDONIA**

Lidija Dimkovska

**РЕЗЕРВЕН
ЖИВОТ**

Backup Life

Ili-Ili Skopje, 2012



BIOGRAPHY

Lidija Dimkovska (1971) studied Comparative Literature at the University of Skopje and took a PhD in Romanian Literature at the University of Bucharest. She has worked as a lecturer of Macedonian language and literature and as a lecturer of World Literature. Her first book *Skriena Kamera (Hidden Camera)* won the Writers' Union of Macedonia award for the best prose book of the year.

SYNOPSIS

Backup Life is about two Macedonian Siamese twins joined at the head, Srebra and Zlata, and their struggle for individuality. The novel takes in the death of a child, the heavy burden of guilt, hatred, weddings and funerals, incest, murder, passport falsification, a poverty of the soul disguised as social poverty, faith and God, holidays and traditions, masturbation, family dysfunction and acculturation. The novel is a personal, political, and historical story about the time we live in and the people we identify with.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Тоа јунско попладне пред нашата зграда на периферијата на Скопје јас, Сребра и Розе си игравме една сосема нова игра: претскажување на судбината. Со бела креда врз вжштениот бетон во удолницата што водеше кон гаражите на станарите цртавме квадрати и во нив го впишувавме бројот на годините кога сакаме да се омажине.

That June afternoon in front of our block of flats on the outskirts of Skopje, Srebra, Roza and I played a completely new game: fortune telling. On the hot concrete of the sloping driveway leading to the residents' garages, we used white chalk to draw squares then wrote in them the age at which we wanted to get married.

(Translated by Ljubica Arsovska and Peggy Reid)



GERMANY

Marica Bodrožić
Kirschholz und
alte Gefühle
A Cherrywood Table

 Luchterhand
 Literaturverlag, 2012

BIOGRAPHY

Marica Bodrožić (1973) writes essays, novels, poems, and stories; works as a literary translator; teaches creative writing and has made a documentary film. She received many prizes and awards, including the Hermann Lenz Award in 2001, the 2008 Initiative Prize, the 2009 Special Prize for Outstanding Emerging Artists awarded by the Bruno Heck Prize Scholarship, the 2011 Liechtenstein Prize for Literature, and the 2013 LiteraTour Nord Prize.

SYNOPSIS

The civil war in the former Yugoslavia has robbed Arjeta Filipo of her homeland. When she finds some old photographs, she suddenly understands much of her own life story that had long seemed obscure. There's the besieged city, Istria, the sea of her childhood and youth, and her escapes at the beginning of the 90s that changed everything. But mostly it is about the time in Paris where she started a new life — together with Arik, a painter she fell in love with. Misha Weisband, an ornithologist, became her confidant, while Nadezhda, a physicist, is her closest friend. There is a secret that ties the two women together, but also separates them — a secret that only Arik knows and keeps for many years. Not until they both confront the blind spots in their inner lives do they manage to find their way to the truth.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Heute habe ich fast alle Kisten ausgeräumt. In der Leere meiner neuen Wohnung ist noch nicht viel gesprochen worden. Die von Erinnerung freie Luft aus dem Vögelchenzimmer macht sich auch in den anderen Räumen breit. Manchmal scheinen sich meine Zimmer zu weiten. Seitdem ich hier wohne, denke ich immer wieder an das Meer.

I unpacked nearly all the moving boxes today. There hasn't been much talk yet in the emptiness of my new apartment. The memory-filled air from my tiniest room—I imagine it to be like a wee bird—suffuses all the other rooms. Sometimes my rooms seem to expand.

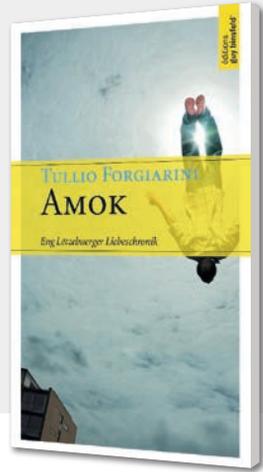
(Translated by Gerald Chapple)



LUXEMBOURG

Tullio Forgiarini
Amok – Eng
Lëtzebuenger
Liebeschronik
Amok – A Luxembourg
Love Story

Editions Guy Binsfeld, 2011



BIOGRAPHY

Tullio Forgiarini was born in 1966 in Neudorf. He studied history in Luxembourg and Strasbourg. Since 1989, he has been teaching history, Latin and geography at the Lycée du Nord in Wiltz, Luxembourg. Forgiarini writes dark stories, mostly in French and inspired by *série noire* crime novels and genre films.

SYNOPSIS

In 17 short chapters, *Amok* tells the story of an adolescent's search for love, recognition, happiness and a place in today's society. Via the use of often crude language, Tullio Forgiarini convincingly reflects the prevailing problems of social isolation, neglect, lack of perspective, behavioural disorders and senseless violence. Sharp dialogue, realistic depictions and a poetic economy in the carefully placed dream sequences distinguish *Amok* as a decidedly contemporary novel in both form and content.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

... Mir sinn ze fréi. Méi wéi eng hallef Stonn. Mir sinn awer net déi éischt. E puer Autoe sti schonns um Parking. An och e Bus. An och Kanner. Esou fënneft, sechst Schouljoer. Si spille Fussball.

... *We're too early. More than half an hour. Still, we're not the first ones. A few cars are already at the car park. And a bus. And also kids. Probably 5th, 6th school year. They're playing football.*
(Translated by Tom Johanns)



ROMANIA

Ioana Pârvulescu
Viața începe vineri
Life Begins on Friday
 Humanitas, 2009


BIOGRAPHY

Ioana Pârvulescu was born in Brașov in 1960. She graduated from the Faculty of Letters at the University of Bucharest, establishing herself as a distinct voice within literary circles. She has coordinated the series *Cartea de pe noptieră (Bedside Book)*, worked as an editor and translator. She is a member of the Romanian Writers' Union and a founder member of the Comparative Literature Society in Romania.

SYNOPSIS

Life Begins on Friday is a journey into the amazing world of times gone by – a world more than 100 years distant, but very similar to our own in its core features. A young man is found lying unconscious on the outskirts of Bucharest. No one knows who he is and everyone has a different theory about how he got there. The stories of the various characters unfold, each closely interwoven with the next, and outlining the features of what ultimately turns out to be the most important and most powerful character of all: the city of Bucharest itself. The novel covers the last 13 days of 1897 and culminates in a beautiful tableau of the future as imagined by the different characters. We might, in fact, say that it is we who inhabit their future.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Îmi place să citesc în trăsură. Mama mă ia la rost, papă, care nu uită nici în familie că-i Domnul doctor Leon Margulis, medic primar cu cabinet în dosul Teatrului Național, zice că-mi stric ochii și-o să nasc copii cu vederea slabă. Însă eu sunt încăpățânată și tot îmi iau cartea cu mine.

I like to read in the carriage. Mama takes me to task; Papa, who never forgets, not even en famille, that he is Dr Leon Margulis, primary physician with a surgery behind the National Theatre, says that I will ruin my eyes and give birth to nearsighted children. But I am obstinate and still bring a book with me.

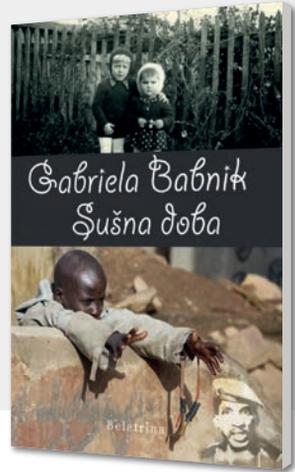
(Translated by Alistair Ian Blyth)



SLOVENIA

Gabriela Babnik Sušna doba *Dry Season*

Študentska Založba, 2012



BIOGRAPHY

Gabriela Babnik was born in 1979 in Göppingen. Since 2002, she has regularly contributed articles to all major daily and weekly publications in Slovenia. Her first novel *Koža iz bombaža (Cotton Skin)* was published in 2007 and was awarded the Best Debut Novel by the Union of Slovenian Publishers. In 2009, her second novel *V visoki travi (In the Tall Grass)* was published, which was shortlisted for the Kresnik Award in 2010.

SYNOPSIS

Anna is a 62-year-old designer from Central Europe and Ismael is a 27-year-old African who was brought up on the street, where he was often the victim of abuse. What unites them is the loneliness of their bodies, a tragic childhood and the dry season or Harmattan, during which neither nature nor love is able to flourish. She soon realizes that the emptiness between them is not really caused by their skin colour and age difference, but predominantly by her belonging to the Western culture in which she has lost or abandoned all the preordained roles of daughter, wife and mother.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

»Spiš?« je rekel in premaknil svoje božansko telo. Bil je iz zlate dobe, kjer se ljubimci niso držali za roke, še skozi lase so si komaj šli. »Ne, ne morem.« Hotela sem reči »ne znam spati kot ti«, vendar ni imelo smisla, ne bi razumel.

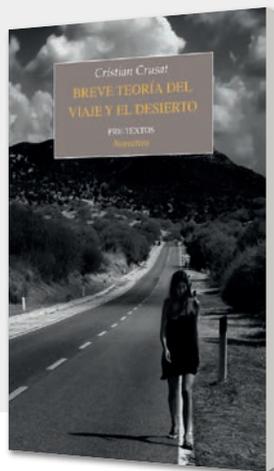
“Are you sleeping?” he said, moving his divine body. He was from a golden age, where lovers didn’t hold hands; they barely ran their fingers through each others’ hair. “No, I can’t.” I wanted to say “I don’t know how to sleep like you”, but there was no point; he wouldn’t understand.

(Translated by Olivia Hellewell)



SPAIN

Cristian Crusat
Breve teoría del viaje y el desierto
A Brief Theory of Travel and the Desert
 Editorial Pre-Textos, 2011

**BIOGRAPHY**

Cristian Crusat (1983) is the author of *Estatuas* (2006), *Tranquilos en tiempo de guerra* (2010) and *Breve teoría del viaje y el desierto* (2011). In 2010, Crusat was awarded the Manuel Llano International Prize. He has seen his essays, translations and articles on comparative literature published in a wide range of Spanish and Latin American journals. He teaches Spanish language and literature abroad.

SYNOPSIS

The six stories of *Breve teoría del viaje y el desierto* contemplate the full range of human experience. All the characters are waiting for, searching for, or exploring the possibility of a revelation which never appears in their numbed here-and-now. And yet, paradoxically, they seem incapable of taking any kind of effective action. Thanks to an extraordinarily versatile prose, a nomadic style, which adapts to the different spiritual, physical or imaginary locations of each story and to the fragile individuality of their inhabitants, Crusat guides these buffeted characters through the abyss of fears, self-doubt and desires which make up the modern world.

**ORIGINAL EXCERPT**

El mundo acaba de dar una vuelta completa. Ahora gira en torno a un coche del que se acaba de bajar un autostopista ruso. —No me gusta Almería —gruñe con tosquedad Ben desde el asiento del copiloto, con un regusto a gasolina bajo su lengua—. El coche de mi padre tenía matrícula de Almería. Siempre me pareció una mierda.

The world has turned full circle. Now it revolves around a car that has just dropped off a Russian hitchhiker. “I don’t like Almería”, Ben grumbles from the front passenger seat, aware of the lingering taste of petrol in his mouth. “My father’s car had an Almería number-plate. I always thought it was crap.”

(Translated by Jacqueline Minett)

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ALBANIA

Ben Blushi

Otello, Arapi i Vlorës

Othello, the Moor of Vlora

Mapo editions, 2009



BIOGRAPHY

In April 2008, Blushi's first novel *Të jetosh në ishull* (*Living on an Island*) was published. Within a couple of months, the book had sold over 30,000 copies, a record for the Albanian market. His second novel *Otello, Arapi i Vlorës* (*Othello, the Moor of Vlora*) appeared one year later, followed in 2011 by his third novel *Shqipëria* (*Albania*). In April 2014, Blushi had a book of essays published, *Hëna e Shqipërisë* (*The Moon of Albania*).

SYNOPSIS

The book is set in the years 1300-1400, in two well-known urban centres of the Middle Ages, Venice and Vlora. One of the most intriguing elements of the book are the characterisations, which have been adapted from one of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies (*Othello, the Moor of Venice*). It is impossible to have Othello, Desdemona and Iago without jealousy, betrayal, intrigue, wickedness, suffering and murder, in a society immersed in unscrupulous habits and interests. But, above all, *Otello, Arapi i Vlorës* is a novel about love: the way it can determine fate and change the course of events, often for entire societies and eras.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Megjithëse Otello nuk e njihnte dashurinë, zemra e tij kishte masën e duhur për ta mbajtur dhe durimin e mjaftueshëm për ta pritur. Kur jetonte në shkretëtirë, ishte i vogël, kur erdhi në Venedik, ishte i vetmuar, ndërsa në Vlorë ishte i frikësuar.

Othello ne connaissait pas l'amour, cependant son coeur était assez grand pour le porter et assez patient pour l'attendre. Lorsqu'il habitait le désert, il était petit, arrivé à la Sérénissime il était esseulé, alors qu'à Vlora il était apeuré.

(Traduit par Saverina Pasho)





BULGARIA

Milen Ruskov **Възвишение** *Summit*

Janet 45, 2011



BIOGRAPHY

Milen Ruskov (1966) is a Bulgarian writer and translator living in Sofia. He graduated in Bulgarian philology at Sofia University in 1995. After that, he was a PhD student in linguistics at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. He has written three novels: *Summit* (2011), *Thrown into Nature* (2008) and *Little Encyclopaedia of Mysteries* (2004).

SYNOPSIS

In Turkish-ruled Bulgaria, year 1872, a feverish period of revolutionary committees known in history as the Bulgarian Revival. The pretentious pomp of revolutionary ideals is filtered through the consciousness of two lads, the earnest semi-educated Gicho and his credulous kleptomaniac companion Assen. They set out armed with guns and books from the town of Kotel to join a band of brigand-revolutionaries in the mountains. The narrative is conveyed in Gicho's words, a rich, crude Renaissance language which demands to be read out loud. His character combines a modern curiosity about the wider world with traditional peasant instincts. The resulting internal conflict is comic and revelatory in turns. The novel daringly blows away all the patriotic cliches normally associated with this serious subject, without underestimating the desperate heroism of the times.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

“ На следващия ден в град К. отседнахме в хана да ся наспим. А там, брате, един френец. Кой го знай тоз френец какъв вятър го е запилял насам. Ханджията разправя, че бил някой си инджинерин.

Next day in the town of K. we were stopping at an inn to sleep. And there's a Frenchie there, boys. Who can tell what wind has blown him here? The innkeeper makes out he's some kind of engineer. (Translated by Christopher Buxton) ”



CZECH REPUBLIC

Jan Němec
Dějiny světla
A History of Light
 Host, 2013


BIOGRAPHY

Jan Němec, born in 1981 in Brno, wrote a book of poems *První život* (*First Life*, 2007), followed by a book of short-stories *Hra pro čtyři ruce* (*Playing Four Hands*, 2009) and a biographical novel about renowned photographer František Drtikol, called *Dějiny světla* (*A History of Light*, 2013). Němec works as an editor for the monthly literary magazine *Host*, and as a dramaturgist for the ČT Art TV channel.

SYNOPSIS

Dějiny světla (*A History of Light*), is a novel about the photographer František Drtikol. Have you ever wondered what a story written by a beam of light would be like? Firstly, the story would be ordinary but the course of events extraordinary; secondly, its hero would be a photographer, a guardian of light; thirdly, naturally, it would be full of shadow. So who was František Drtikol? A dandy from a small mining town, a world-famous photographer whose business went bankrupt, a master of the nude who never had much luck with women, a mystic and a Buddhist who believed in communism, a man of many contradictions.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

“ Muž s kulatým obličejem a krátkými vlasy se dotkne středu brýlí nad kořenem nosu a rozhlédne se po skupině devíti chlapců. Pak říká: Mé jméno je Georg Heinrich Emmerich a vítám vás v Učebním a výzkumném ústavu pro fotografii.

The man with the round face and the short hair touches the mid-point of his spectacles above the bridge of his nose and looks around a group of nine boys. Then he says: My name is Georg Heinrich Emmerich. Welcome to the Photography Training and Research Institute.
 (Translated by Melvyn Clarke)

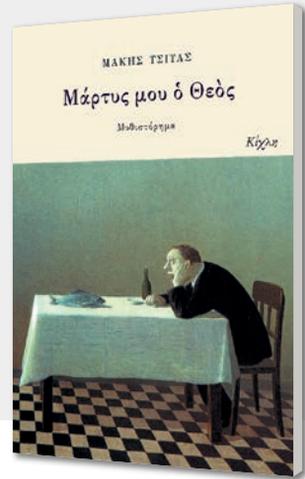


GREECE

Makis Tsitas

Μάρτυς μου ο Θεός *God Is My Witness*

Kichli, 2013



BIOGRAPHY

Makis Tsitas was born in 1971 in Giannitsa, Greece. He studied journalism in Thessaloniki. Since 1994 he has lived in Athens and works in publishing. His work has been included in anthologies and published in journals and newspapers in Greece and abroad. His short stories have been translated into German, Spanish, English, Hebrew, Swedish and Finnish. His published work includes a novel (*God is my witness*, 2013), a collection of short stories (*Patty from Petroula*, 1996) and many books for children.

SYNOPSIS

An anti-hero of our time who wants nothing more than to live with dignity narrates the trials and betrayals he has suffered from employers, from the women he meets, and from his own family. Through his torrential monologue, replete with everyday occurrences and ebullient fantasies, we follow a simple man's struggle to remain upstanding. As his story veers from wildly humorous to unconsciously self-mocking or even disturbing, Makis Tsitas' hero becomes representative of the enmity a human being must withstand. His child-like naivety becomes the deformed and deforming mirror of a cynical and vicious society which, despite its apparent tolerance and prosperity, is fading towards decadence, intolerance and racism. The novel's anti-hero comes to reflect the monstrosity of a society that must inevitably exclude him.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Υπάρχουν τεσσάρων ειδών αφεντικά: οί πετυχημένοι, οί χρωμένοι, τὰ καθίκια καί οί τρελοί. Ἐγὼ ἔπεσα στὸ τέταρτο.

There are four kinds of employer: successful ones, debtors, losers, and the insane. I got the fourth. (Translated by Irene Noel-Baker)



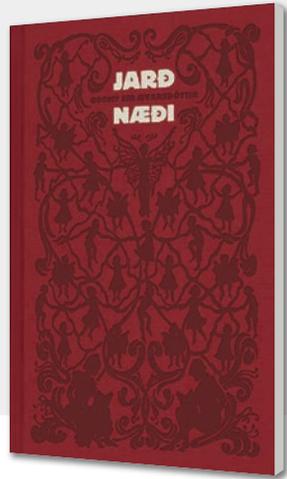
ICELAND

Oddný Eir Ævarsdóttir

Jarðnæði

*Land of Love,
Plan of Ruins*

Bjartur, 2011



BIOGRAPHY

Oddný Eir Ævarsdóttir (1972) has written three autobiographical novels, translated and edited literary works, organised visual arts events and ran a visual arts space in New York and Reykjavik in collaboration with her brother. Together they run the publishing company *Apaflasa* (Monkey Dandruff). *Heim til míns hjarta* was nominated for the cultural prize of the newspaper DV in 2009. *Jarðnæði* was nominated for the Icelandic Literary Award in 2011 and won the Icelandic Women's Literature Prize in 2012.

SYNOPSIS

Land of Love, Plan of Ruins is written in the form of a diary, describing a period in the narrator's life where she is preoccupied by the search for a place to belong and an urge to settle down. Paradoxically enough, this drives her to embark on all kinds of journeys to find answers to questions that not only concern her personally but also the whole of mankind.. As in her two earlier novels, Oddný Eir's text verges on the autobiographical and is thus highly personal. At the same time it is philosophical in nature, even scholarly at times. Furthermore, her inclination towards fantasy always shines through, as she creates her own version of the reality around us, making her descriptions of the dilemmas of daily life first and foremost an inner journey of a vivid imagination.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Basel, blöðruselsdagur, stórstreymi, fullt tungl. Við sátum inni í eldhúsi fram undir hádegi og ræddum um rými og hús. Ég sagðist halda að ég vildi eiga eitt hús við sjó og annað inni í landi.

Basel, Hooded Seal Day, spring tide, full moon. We sat in the kitchen until midday talking about space and housing. I said I thought I'd like to have one place by the sea and another inland.

(Translated by Jane Appleton)



LATVIA

Janis Jonevs

Jelgava '94
Mansards Publishers,
2013


BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1980 in Jelgava, Latvia, Janis Jonevs was educated at the Jelgava State Gymnasium and the Latvian Academy of Culture where he was awarded a Master's Degree. Jonevs works as a copywriter and, since 2002, he has also worked as a reviewer and translator from French.

SYNOPSIS

The story is set in the 1990s in the Latvian city of Jelgava and looks at the craze for the alternative culture of heavy metal music. Jonevs takes the reader deep inside the world described in the novel: combining the intimate diary of a youngster trying to find himself by joining a subculture, as well as a skilful, detailed and almost documentary-like depiction of the beginnings of the second independence of Latvia. *Jelgava '94* is a portrait of a generation in the 1990s who are searching for their own identity and are fans of alternative culture. This is a touching story about us as youngsters, when everybody is against the whole world and tries not to become 'one of them'. But is it for real? Can one keep the promise?


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

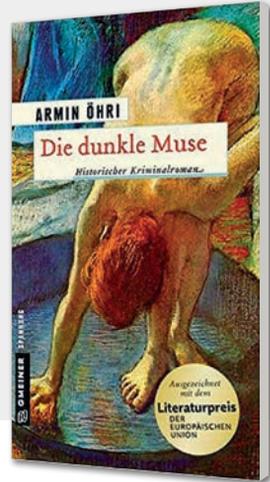
“
 ././ Tas ir neticami, viņš šo kreklu atrada humpalās. Tas bija brīnums. Mēs visi pēc tam metāmies pārmeklēt humpalu kaudzes. Es arī uzrakstīju mammai sarakstu, kādi krekli jāņem, tikko tos ierauga: Death, Cannibal Corpse, Anal Count, Brutal Truth, Carcass, Hypocrisy.

“
 ././ Incredible, I know, but he found that shirt in a used clothing shop. A real miracle. The rest of us rushed to dig through the piles. I even made a list for Mum of shirts that she should buy as soon as she sees them: Death, Cannibal Corpse, Anal Cunt, Brutal Truth, Carcass, Hypocrisy.
 (Translated by Ieva Lešinska)



LIECHTENSTEIN

Armin Öhri
Die dunkle Muse
The Dark Muse
 Gmeiner-Verlag, 2012


BIOGRAPHY

Armin Öhri, born in 1978, studied history, philosophy and German linguistics and literature. Since 2009, he has published a variety of stories and novels. His works tend to be set against a historical backdrop and are based primarily on literary examples of the 19th century, such as entertaining feuilleton novels that fall into the crime genre. Öhri works in the education field at a business school in Switzerland.

SYNOPSIS

The Dark Muse – the first part of a chronological series of linked novels – is a complex historical crime story that turns the established formula upside-down: on the very first pages the reader already gets to know the murderer. Through the eyes of this protagonist, the reader follows the ambitious story through the streets and infamous sites of late 19th century Berlin. Extensive research work has been done by Öhri to portray the historical backdrop and atmospheric local colour. The handful of non-fictional characters who appear and play prominent parts in Öhri's series include Fontane, Virchow, Bismarck, Moltke, and Retcliffe.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Die Nachricht von Lene Kulm's Ermordung erreichte den Kriminalkommissar Gideon Horlitz in den frühen Morgenstunden. Als der pausbäckige Polizeiaspirant, den man mit einer Eilnotiz geschickt hatte, ihn endlich fand, war er gerade dabei, den Ort einer menschlichen Tragödie zu besichtigen.

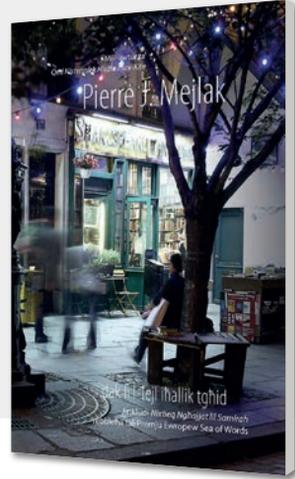
The news of Lene Kulm's murder reached Inspector Gideon Horlitz in the early morning. When the chubby-cheeked police trainee who had been entrusted with the urgent message finally found him, he was just visiting the site of a different human tragedy.
 (Translated by Jonathan Huston)



MALTA

Pierre J. Mejlak
Dak li l-Lejl
Ihallik Tghid
What the Night Lets
You Say

Merlin, 2011


BIOGRAPHY

Born in Malta in 1982, Mejlak has written books for children, adaptations, a novel for adolescents and two collections of short stories, winning numerous awards. He worked as a journalist from 1999 to 2005 as a BBC correspondent, a regular columnist for Maltese daily newspaper In-Nazzjon and produced radio shows.

SYNOPSIS

The 10 stories in this collection, just like any self-respecting collection of medieval tales, are framed by a prologue and an epilogue. The tension in many of the stories arises from the coming together of the past (or, at least, a previous way of life) and the present. Many of the narrators are travellers, moving from one point of their existence to another, trying to understand a life that they have lived but never fully comprehended, or trying to undo a part of the past that did not go according to plan. They help us readers realise, that life is still lived at different rhythms in different parts of the world. In fact, this could be read as a book about storytelling, not only as a form of pleasure that is shared between writer and reader, or narrator and listener, but more importantly as a gift that's given with love and needs love to be appreciated.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Tbaxxejt u b'ghajnejja moħbija
 fil-pali ta' jdejja – qisni tifel
 qed iħares minn tieqa mżellġa
 bix-xemx kontriħ – pespistħielu.
 “Mort naraha, pa. Mort naraha.”

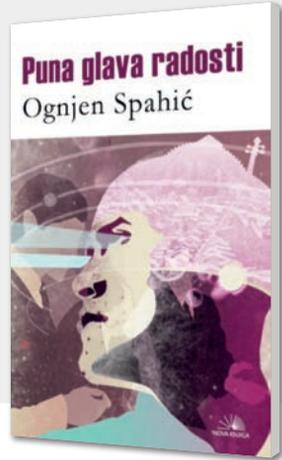
*I bent down, cupping my hand over
 my eyes, as if shielding them from the
 sun, and I whispered to him, “I went
 to see her, Pa. I went to see her.”*
 (Translated by Antoine Cassar)



MONTENEGRO

Ognjen Spahić
Puna glava radosti
Head Full of Joy

Nova knjiga, 2014


BIOGRAPHY

Ognjen Spahić was born in 1977 in Podgorica. Prior to *Puna glava radosti*, Spahić published two collections of short stories: *Sve to (All That)* in 2001, and *Zimska potraga (Winter Search)* in 2007. His novel *Hansenova djeca (Hansen's Children)*, published in 2004, won him the Meša Selimović Prize for 2005. His short story *Rejmond je mrtav. Karver je umro, rekoh (Raymond is No Longer with Us – Carver is Dead)* was included in the anthology *Best European Fiction 2011*.

SYNOPSIS

Puna glava radosti (Head Full of Joy) presents a corpus of 16 unusual tales featuring episodes from the life of each story's hero. Each story is told by an omniscient narrator or the hero himself, and they paint a picture showing the collision of the outer and inner world of modern man, providing a distinct interpretation of the universal values of life. This peculiarity of style contains a range of genres, a diversity of themes and abundant associativity, which gives much pleasure to the modern reader, making them feel like they are privileged participants in the book's events.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

“Dok gledam kroz špijunku, čini se kao da ta žena pridržava koplje, ono drveno, dugačko, nefunkcionalno i aljkavo zašiljeno koje bi jedan vitez trebao da, jašući galopom, razbije o grudi isto tako galopirajućeg konjanika.

As I watch her through the peephole in the door, it looks as though the woman is holding a lance, one of those long, wooden, non-functional, sloppily sharpened ones which a knight was supposed to use, at a gallop, to break against the breast of another similarly galloping rider.
 (Translated by Celia Hawkesworth)



THE NETHERLANDS

Marente de Moor *De Nederlandse maagd* *The Dutch Maiden*

Querido, 2010



BIOGRAPHY

Marente de Moor (1972) worked as a correspondent in Saint Petersburg and wrote a book on her experiences, *Petersburgse vertellingen* (*Petersburg Stories*, 1999). She made a successful debut as a novelist with *De overtreder* (*The Transgressor*, 2007). For her second novel, *De Nederlandse maagd* (*The Dutch Maiden*, 2010), de Moor was awarded the AKO Literature Prize 2011.

SYNOPSIS

In the summer of 1936, Dutch doctor Jacq sends his 18-year-old daughter Janna to stay with Egon von Bötticher, a German he befriended as a young man. However, *De Nederlandse maagd* is much more than just a story about love and the loss of innocence. A new, unfamiliar world opens up for Janna, full of riddles about the exact nature of the relationship between her father and Egon. Janna's initiation into the adult world is a contradictory, confusing experience. The aristocratic code of honour, with its notions of courage and heroism, has proved futile, and an era of barbarism is dawning with the arrival of the Nazis. Through Janna's experiences, de Moor evokes the unsettled atmosphere of an era as a major historical shift occurs, vividly portraying the uncertainty and tensions that preceded the Second World War.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Je zou kunnen zeggen dat Von Bötticher verminkt was, maar na een week merkte ik zijn litteken al niet meer op. Zo snel went een mens aan uiterlijke afwijkingen. Zelfs gruwelijk mismaakten kunnen gelukkig zijn in de liefde, als ze iemand vinden die op het eerste gezicht niets om symmetrie geeft.

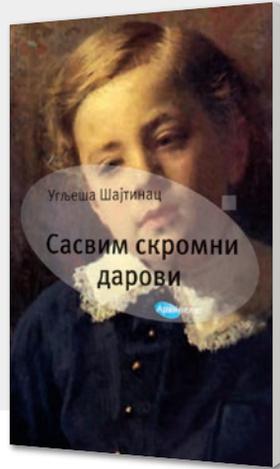
You might say that von Bötticher was disfigured, but after a week I no longer noticed his scar. How quickly one adjusts to outward flaws. Even the horribly misshapen can be lucky in love, if they find someone who from the start attaches no importance to symmetry.
(Translated by David Doherty)



SERBIA

Uglješa Šajtinac
Sasvim skromni darovi
Quite Modest Gifts

Arhipelag, 2011


BIOGRAPHY

Uglješa Šajtinac was born in 1971 in Zrenjanin. Between 2003 and 2005, he was a dramaturge for the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad. Since 2005, he has been teaching Dramaturgy at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad. He has received the Biljana Jovanović literary award, the Vital Prize, and three screenplay awards (Novi Sad, Vrnjačka Banja and Warsaw). His drama *Hadersfeld (Huddersfield)* won the Jovan Sterija Popović Award in 2005.

SYNOPSIS

Quite Modest Gifts is an epistolary novel in which two brothers exchange about their seemingly ordinary, but essentially unusual existence in Serbia and the United States. It intertwines numerous narratives about the personal experiences of individual characters, while raising several challenging questions about the world we live in. By insisting on the key importance of family as the source and the outcome, as man's elementary purpose, the author pushes to the background all other motives and problems, and reconciles all the opposites: from the generational gap to contrasts between the fervent centre, full of events, and the sleepy province; between the eastern cultural code and western mores, and between ideological differences and historical changes.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

“
 Dragi brate, negde sam na Brodveju, niže, kiša ne pada već udara u naletima. Ispod mokrih slušalica još čujem „Tri laka komada“ Džona Kejdža. Stao sam ispod tende i sad pokušavam da zapalim cigaretu.

My dear brother, I'm somewhere on Broadway, further on down, and the rain is not just falling but is rather pelting me intermittently. Even so, in my wet earphones, I can still hear 'Three Easy Pieces' by John Cage. I've stopped under an awning and I'm trying to light a cigarette. (Translated by Professor Randall Mayor)”



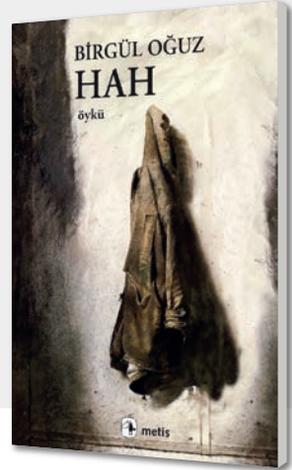
TURKEY

Birgül Oğuz

Hah

Aha

Metis, 2012



BIOGRAPHY

Birgül Oğuz (1981) received her BA in Comparative Literature and MA in Cultural Studies from İstanbul Bilgi University. She is the author of two short fiction books, *Fasulyenin Bildiği* (2007) and *Hah* (2012). Her short stories, essays, articles and translations have been published in Turkish literary magazines and newspapers. She has a PhD in English Literature at Boğaziçi University, and she lectured on text analysis and the European novel at Moda Sahnesi and Nazım Hikmet Academy in İstanbul.

SYNOPSIS

The eight and a half stories in *Hah*, a collection that reads like a novel, contemplate the psychology of mourning and melancholia, and the politics of mourning in particular. *Hah*, in search of a new literary agency to transform traumatic loss into meaningful narrative, seeks to answer these questions: how can one mourn when mourning is impossible? How can one write about mourning when it is impossible to find the means to narrate it? And how can one not write when writing is the only way to mourn? Highly intertextual, *Hah* draws upon a plethora of texts, from the Old Testament to 20th century European poetry, from 16th century ghazals to contemporary Turkish verse. It is a work that – while a product of a specific time and place – resonates with anyone who has ever experienced loss.



ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Ağırlığımı çay kaşığıyla ölçtüğüm günlerdi. Dur duraksız yağın tebeşir tozu gözkapaklarımda birikip ağırlaşırdı. Eve dönerken hiç konuşmazdım. Günün ışığı eğrilip soldukça, beni dünyayla bir arada tutan dikiş tıklar tıklar çözüldü. Bir yanım uyur, öbür yanım susardı.

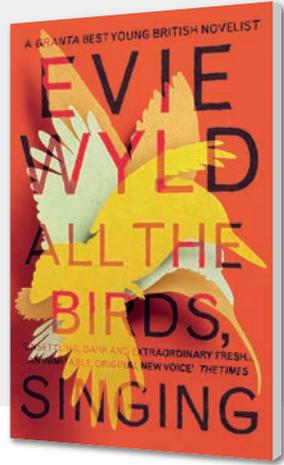
It was back in the days when I measured my weight by the teaspoon. An incessant rain of chalk dust would weigh heavy on my eyelids. I never spoke on the way home. As the light of day bent, fading away, stitch by stitch the thread binding me to the world would come undone. One half of me would fall asleep, the other, silent. (Translated by Amy Spangler)



UNITED KINGDOM

Evie Wyld
All the Birds,
Singing
Tous les oiseaux du
ciel

Vintage, 2013


BIOGRAPHY

Evie Wyld is the author of one previous novel, *After the Fire, A Still Small Voice*. In 2013, she was named as one of Granta's Best of Young British Novelists, having previously been named by the BBC as one of the 12 best new British writers. *All the Birds, Singing* was longlisted for the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction. She lives in Peckham, London, where she runs the Review Bookshop.

SYNOPSIS

Jake Whyte is the sole resident of an old farmhouse on an unnamed British island, a place of ceaseless rains and battering winds. It's just her, her untamed companion, Dog, and a flock of sheep. Which is how she wanted it to be. But something is coming for the sheep – every few nights it picks one off, leaving it in rags. It could be anything. There are foxes in the woods, a strange boy and a strange man, rumours of an obscure, formidable beast. And there is Jake's unknown past, perhaps breaking into the present, a story hidden thousands of miles away and years ago, in a landscape of different colours and sounds, a story held in the scars that stripe her back.


ORIGINAL EXCERPT

Another sheep, mangled and bled out, her innards not yet crusting and the vapours rising from her like a steamed pudding. Crows, their beaks shining, strutting and rasping, and when I waved my stick they flew to the trees and watched, flaring out their wings, singing, if you could call it that.

Une autre brebis mutilée et saignée dont les entrailles encore visqueuses dégageaient des vapeurs de pudding bouilli. Des corbeaux au bec luisant se pavanaient en croassant ; quand je brandis mon bâton, ils s'envolèrent et poursuivirent leur observation du haut des arbres en écartant les ailes et en chantant, si l'on peut parler de chanter.

(Traduit par Mireille Vignol)



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