

German Book Prize 2014

The Novel of the Year

Shortlist- Nominee



Thomas Hettche
Pfaueninsel (Peacock Island)
Kiepenheuer & Witsch

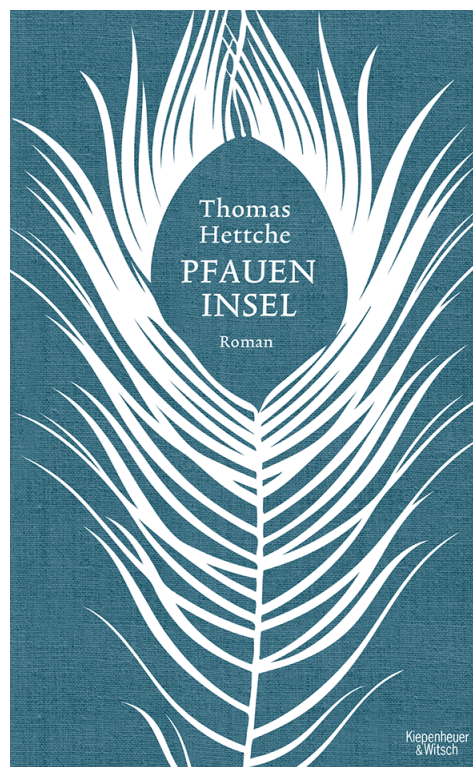
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Thomas Andenmatten

Jury evaluation

Thomas Hettche, whose 1989 debut “Ludwig muß sterben” was hailed as avant- garde, has once again proven himself to be one of the most elegant and refined stylists of contemporary German literature with his novel “Pfaueninsel”. Maria Dorothea Strakon is a Prussian palace damsel rooted in historic tradition who calls the Pfaueninsel near Berlin home. Just as she delights in donning her festive robes, so too does Hettche slip into a consummate cloak of 19th century language. Through the touching life story of the diminutive Marie, he recalls an entire century, from the fading Rococo movement to the invention of the railroad, from Hegel to Darwin to Lenné. “Pfaueninsel” combines botany and sentiment, theory and sensuality to reflect the modern day in unexpected ways and expose the reader to an unparalleled level of literary osmosis.

Biography

Thomas Hettche was born in Treis and studied German literature, philosophy and film studies at the Goethe University Frankfurt, where he received his doctorate in 1999. He has two daughters and lives and works as a freelance writer in Berlin and Switzerland. In addition to his work as an author, Hettche has also published reviews, reports and essays since 1988, primarily in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and the Neue Zürcher Zeitung.



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Angelika Klüssendorf
April (April)
Kiepenheuer & Witsch

Jury evaluation

Finally the story continues of the girl who now calls herself April (after the Deep Purple song). The late 1970s in Leipzig and the early 1980s in West Berlin leave April stumbling between state- owned enterprise, psychiatry, the possibility of leaving and life itself, perpetually caught between tender happiness and total failure, driven from a desolate childhood into an uncertain future. Angelika Klüssendorf does a splendid job of drawing us into April's undertow. Nearly 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a masterpiece that is full of life and sombre, sobering and clear, unsentimental, precise and very laconic.

Biography

Angelika Klüssendorf was born in 1958 in Ahrensburg and lived in Leipzig from 1961 to 1985. She currently lives in Berlin. Her publications include the stories *Sehnsüchte* and *Anfall von Glück*, the novel *Alle leben so*, the story collections *Aus allen Himmeln* and *Amateure* and, most recently, the novel *Das Mädchen*.



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Gertrud Leutenegger
Panischer Frühling (Panicked
Spring)
Suhrkamp Verlag

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www.peitschphoto.com

Jury evaluation

There's a bright spring sky over London. On a bridge spanning the Thames, the narrator of Gertrud Leutenegger's novel "Panischer Frühling" encounters a young newspaper seller with a port- wine stain on his face. Despite their many differences, the two meet daily, entrusting each other with their stories, and their secrets, too. A profound book that soars, an urban novel and a chamber play in one, sustained by language that is as precise as it is musical.

Biography

Gertrud Leutenegger was born in 1948 in Schwyz and studied directing at Zurich's Theatre Academy. She spent many years in the French and Italian- speaking parts of Switzerland and currently lives in Zurich.



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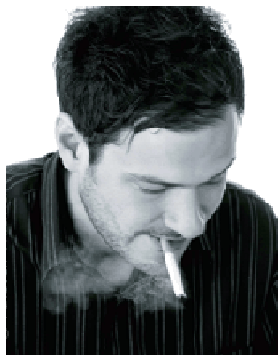
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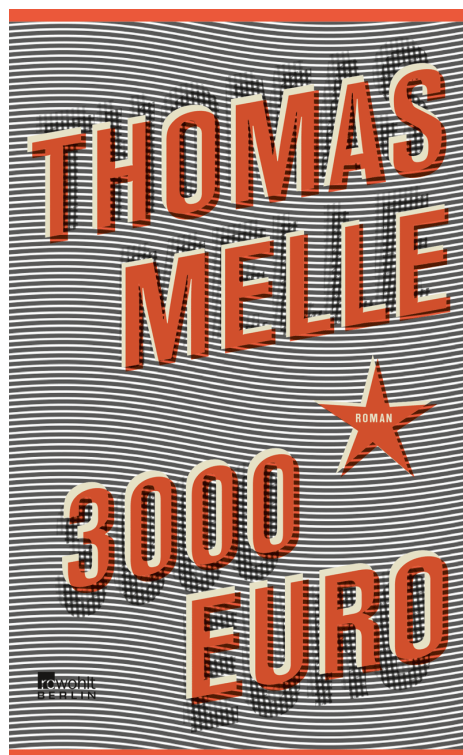
Thomas Melle
3000 Euro (3000 Euros)
Rowohlt.Berlin Verlag

Jury evaluation

Thomas Melle writes a story about love in the big city that is as dynamic as it is tender. In their search for an escape from their forsaken existence, Anton, who is heavily in debt, and the cashier Denise attempt to get close to each other. "3000 Euro" is a novel about characters everyone has seen at some point, but whom very few people really know. With strict construction and virtuosic rhythm, the author manages to achieve a new tone of poetic objectivity that is simultaneously strong, musing, indignant and serene.

Biography

Thomas Melle was born in 1975 in Bonn and studied comparative literature and philosophy in Tübingen, Austin (Texas) and Berlin. He is the author of oft-performed plays and a translator. Thomas Melle received the Bremen Literature Prize for promising writers for his story collection Raumforderung (2007). His debut novel Sickster (2011) was nominated for the German Book Prize and awarded the Franz Hessel Prize. Thomas Melle lives in Berlin.



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Lutz Seiler
Kruso (Kruso)
Suhrkamp Verlag

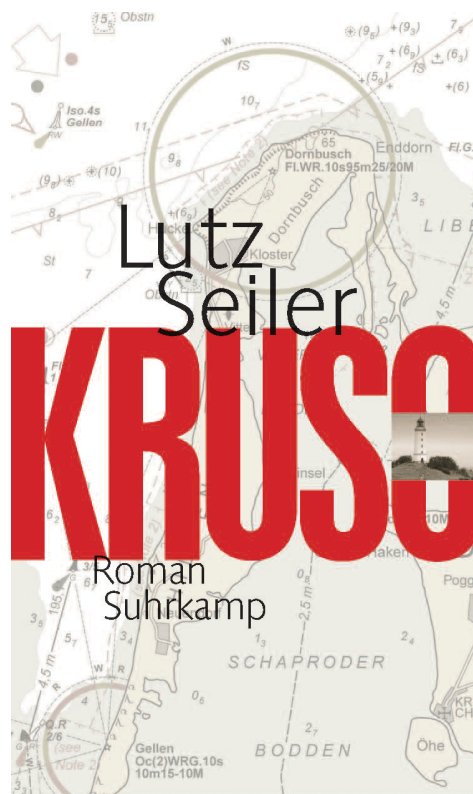
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Jury evaluation

In "Kruso" Lutz Seiler describes the summer of 1989 on the island of Hiddensee in incredibly compact and elegant language. The 24-year-old German student Ed from Halle lands on the "Island of Dropouts" and is hired by a destination restaurant where he meets Alexander Krusowitsch – Kruso. The complex friendship that develops between them is interrupted suddenly by Kruso's disappearance. In addition to the looming fall of the GDR in the background and the many original experiences of island residents, Seiler creates a literary monument to the Baltic Sea refugees. A clever, melancholic, yet highly enjoyable novel that will stand the test of time.

Biography

Lutz Seiler was born in 1963 in Gera, Thuringia, and now lives in Wilhelmshorst near Berlin and in Stockholm. He trained and worked as a carpenter and mason. Seiler completed his studies in German literature in 1990. Since 1997, he has run the literary programme of the Peter Huchel Museum. He has travelled to Central Asia and Eastern Europe and was a writer in residence in Los Angeles and a fellow in Rome. He's received many awards for his work, including the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize, the Bremen Literature Prize and the Fontane Prize.



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Heinrich Steinfest
Der Allesforscher (The
Pantologist)
Piper Verlag

Jury evaluation

A witty novel that bubbles over with bizarre, hilarious ideas and reflects our global society with stylistic elegance. We witness a man who is constantly reinventing himself and his life. A modern-day Munchausen. We follow him around the world until he ends up in Stuttgart working as a lifeguard. "Der Allesforscher" shows an interest in nearly everything, from the phenomenon of blinking eyes to tips for surviving at sea – and it's all described with depth, spirit and captivating ease.

Biography

Heinrich Steinfest was born in 1961. Albury, Vienna, Stuttgart – these are some of the places this self-declared boomerang kid and award-winning author has called home. He's received many awards for his crime novels and was also the recipient of the Heimito von Doderer Prize. His novel *Ein dickes Fell* was nominated for the German Book Prize in 2006.



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