

German Book Prize 2017

The Novel of the Year

Shortlist-Nominee



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Gerhard Falkner
Romeo oder Julia
(Romeo or Julia)
Berlin Verlag

Jury evaluation

"Romeo oder Julia" ("Romeo or Juliet") is composed of three parts, and in fact the novel calls to mind a triptych. Every word is painted with a delicate brush, every sentence sharpened to the finest point. On the surface, the novel concerns the adventures of a writer, but what it is really about is the adventure of language, the adventure of writing and how a world is created through language, a decision reached with every word – case in point: "Romeo OR Juliet".

Biography

Gerhard Falkner, born in 1951, is one of the most important German contemporary poets. He published several volumes of poems such as *Hölderlin Reparatur* (*Hölderlin Repair*) for which he received the Peter-Huchel-Prize in 2009. He has received numerous other awards and prizes. His novel *Apollokalypse* was nominated for the German Book Prize 2016.



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www.piper.de/berlin-verlag

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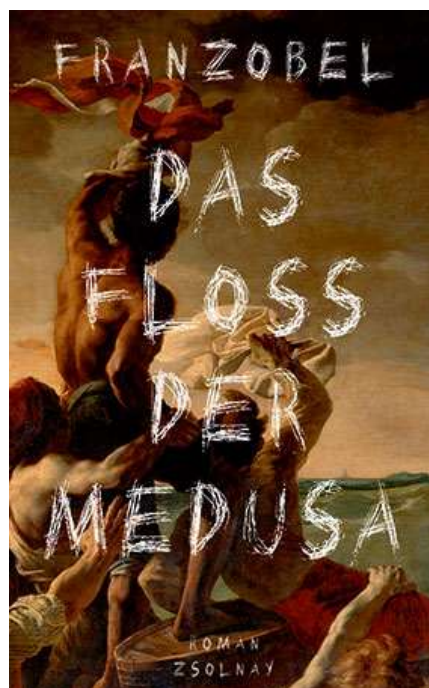
Franzobel
Das Floß der Medusa
(The Raft of the Medusa)
Paul Zsolnay Verlag

Jury evaluation

"Where there is no bread, there is no law." Such a simple sentence. And so depressingly true. With his novel, Franzobel serves up an old story that took place over 200 years ago. Why should we still read about it today? What Franzobel burns into our memory is this: We are all on board this frigate together and we are all fighting for survival on the raft of the Medusa together. After all, as we have already said: Where there is no bread, there won't be laws anymore either. This still holds true today. As a result, the novel is also a small, harrowing history of humanity on just some 600 riveting pages.

Biography

Franzobel, born 1967 in Vöcklabruck, is one of Austria's most popular and polarizing writers. He has received numerous awards, including the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize in 1995, the Arthur Schnitzler prize in 2002 and only recently the Nicolas-Born-Prize. Most recent publications by Zsolnay: Was die Männer so treiben, wenn die Frauen im Badezimmer sind (2012) and the crime novels Wiener Wunder (2014) and Groschens Grab (2015).



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Thomas Lehr

Schlafende Sonne (Sleeping Sun)

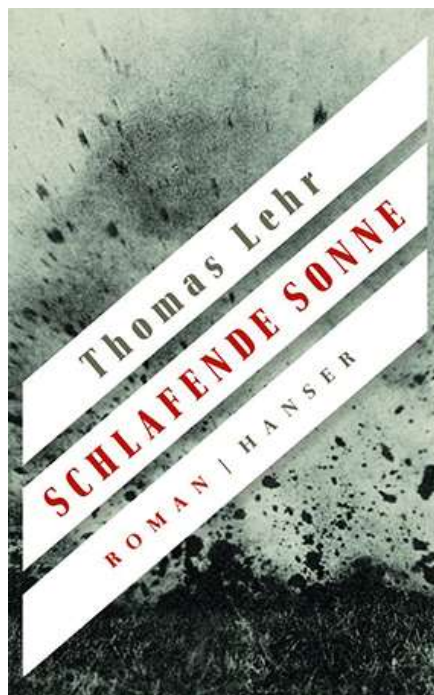
Carl Hanser Verlag

Jury evaluation

Starting from a single day, Thomas Lehr attempts to come to terms with an entire century, creating a narrative labyrinth within which he confidently situates the era's complex events and upheavals, literally giving them new expression. Through a combination of riveting storytelling, reflection and aesthetic daring, he breaks with our patterns of perception, turning literature itself into an instrument of awareness. Page after page: new views of the seemingly familiar; an archive of the senses, of consciousness and of all the overlapping realms on which (what we refer to as) our knowledge feeds.

Biography

Thomas Lehr, born in Speyer in 1957, lives in Berlin. He has been awarded several times over for his work, most recently with the Joseph Breitbach Prize in 2015. Publications by Hanser are: Größenwahn passt in die kleinste Hütte (Kurze Prozesse, 2012) as well as the novels September. Fata Morgana (2010), 42 (2013), Zweiwasser (2014) and Nabokovs Katze (2016).



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Robert Menasse
Die Hauptstadt (The Capital)
Suhrkamp Verlag

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Suhrkamp Verlag

Jury evaluation

Robert Menasse weaves together eras, nations and institutions into a unique panoramic view of Europe – criminally driven, steeped in philosophy yet always fundamentally ironic. Very much in the tradition of Balzac's idea of a critical approach to the present, "Die Hauptstadt" ("The Capital") is a novel that contains everything about our era without ever becoming zeitgeisty.

Biography

Born in 1954 in Vienna, Menasse studied German language and literature, philosophy and political science in Vienna, Salzburg and Messina. Today he lives in Vienna and Amsterdam as a novelist and essayist.



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German Book Prize 2017

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© Heike Steinweg /
Suhrkamp Verlag

Marion Poschmann
Die Kieferninsel (The Pine Islands)
Suhrkamp Verlag

Jury evaluation

With the intensity of a haiku, Marion Poschmann deposits an unforgettable pair of characters in the literary landscape. Following the two of them as they roam through the hustle and bustle of the big city and mythical realms with Matsuo Bashō and a suicide manual is pure reading pleasure! The novel is a journey through life in which two contrasting characters with opposing aims unfold their inner selves and rush toward their vocations. Every detail, no matter how seemingly insignificant, becomes poetry. The way Poschmann shifts perspective from wide angle to zoom, from inner to outer world, gives the book its pace and subtle suspense. By tracing Bashō's footsteps, she builds a bridge across eras. Skilful, refreshing and light, and with great depth of field.

Biography

Marion Poschmann, born in 1969 in Essen, studied German Studies, Philosophy and Slavic Studies and currently lives in Berlin. She has been recognized for her poetry and prose many times, and she was most recently awarded the 2011 Peter Huchel Prize and the 2011 Ernst Meister Prize for poetry.



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Sasha Marianna Salzmann
Außer sich (Beside Yourself)
Suhrkamp Verlag

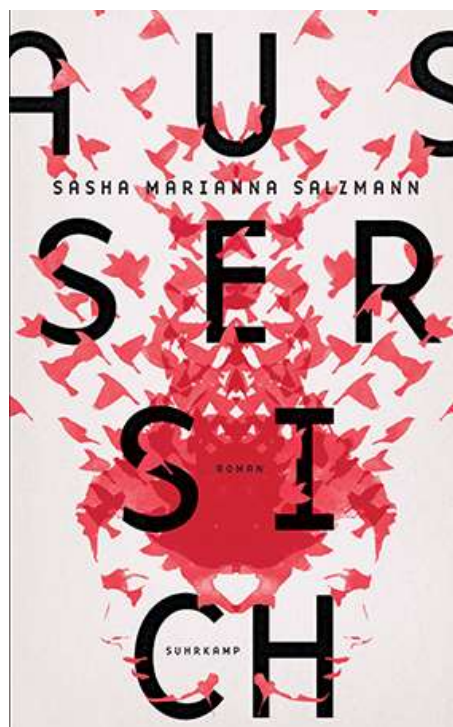
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Suhrkamp Verlag

Jury evaluation

A debut novel of great linguistic and dramaturgical power: From post-Soviet Moscow via refugee centre in provincial West Germany to present-day Istanbul, Sasha Marianna Salzmann writes about the upheavals and solidarity of the Tschepanows, a refugee family. Yet, above all, she writes with confidence, a wealth of perspectives, humour and great focus about the young generation of these "homeland wanderers", fighting for its identity – linguistic, political and sexual. With a fascinating tone all her own, she describes anew the many ways reality has of thwarting the personal dreams of this globe-spanning generation. Europe grows larger in this book, but doesn't quite become home.

Biography

Sasha Marianna Salzmann was born in Volgograd in 1985 and grew up in Moscow. In 1995, she emigrated with her family to Germany, studied Literature, Theatre and Media at the University of Hildesheim, and Creative Writing for the Stage at the Berlin University of the Arts. During her stay in Istanbul as fellow of the Tarabya Cultural Academy 2012/13, Sasha Marianna Salzmann began writing her debut novel *Beside Yourself*, which she completed in the following years and during her regular stays in Turkey.



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