

German Book Prize: Shortlist

Martina Hefter • Maren Kames • Clemens Meyer •
Ronya Othmann • Markus Thielemann • Iris Wolff



Martina Hefter

Hey guten Morgen, wie geht es dir?

Klett-Cotta Verlag, July 2024

Jury evaluation:

Juno, the protagonist, isn't young anymore. She can barely make ends meet as a performance artist and, on top of that, has to take care of her husband Jupiter, who has MS and with whom she lives in Leipzig. When a lovescammer from Nigeria who preys on older women's loneliness and money makes overtures to her on Instagram, an exchange ensues – and it soon becomes increasingly unclear where “real” life is happening and what the signs of “true” love are. Martina Hefter gives an impressive account of Juno's inner turmoil: relatable and reflective, wise and poetic, tender and unsentimental.

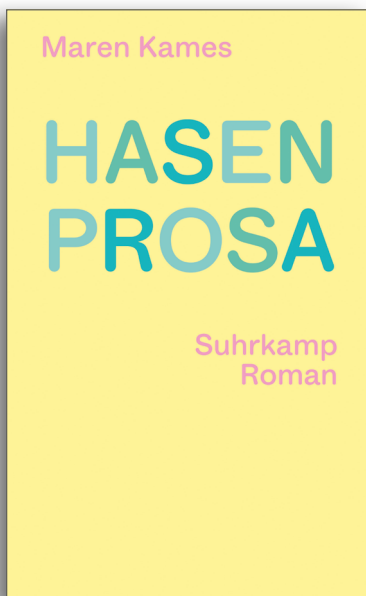


Biography:

Martina Hefter is an author and performer based in Leipzig. Her texts move between poetry, forms of scenic writing and novels. She stages many of her texts in collaboration with other artists. She has published three novels and five volumes of poetry (the latter with cookbooks Berlin). Her most recent book was “In die Wälder gehen, Holz für ein Bett klauen”, published in 2021.

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Maren Kames **Hasenprosa**

Suhrkamp Verlag, March 2024

Jury evaluation:

A journey begins, fantastic and bizarre – and there's a rabbit along for the ride. Like the companion in Alice in Wonderland, which is also how he acts: like a cross between an anarchist and a petty accountant. Maren Kames has visited Friederike Mayröcker's star kitchen – and has freed herself from it, as evidenced by her virtuoso verbal seasoning, creamy series of images, sparkling linguistic wit and laconic hard breaking. This wayward journey implants itself in the reader's mind, leaving one buoyant, ready for everyday life and delighted: it grabs us by our funny bone with both paws – and hops light-footedly away from dull realism.

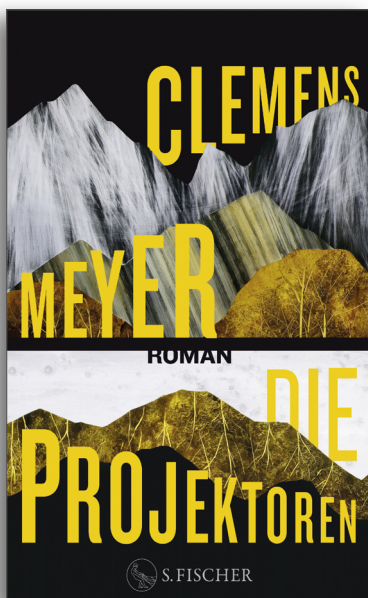


Biography:

Maren Kames, born in Überlingen on Lake Constance in 1984, is a freelance author and translator based in Berlin. Her books "Halb Taube Halb Pfau" (2016) and "Luna Luna" (2019) have won several awards. Both books were turned into audio dramas, and "Luna Luna" premiered at the opening of the 2022 season of Schauspiel Leipzig. "Hasenprosa" is her first book with Suhrkamp Verlag.

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Clemens Meyer **Die Projektoren**

S. Fischer Verlag, August 2024

Jury evaluation:

“Die Projektoren” is a novel that challenges its readers, deliberately demands too much of them and overwhelms them with its wealth of material. Meyer writes about the wars in Yugoslavia in the 1990s, about World War II in cities such as Belgrade or Novi Sad, about the Karl May films that were shot in Croatia in the 1960s, and about cinema in general – hence the title. The connections Meyer makes are impressive, with a multitude of characters who always seem to be on the move, and stories – adventure stories, love stories. Meyer pulls out many stylistic stops, from brilliant dialogues, inner monologues and dreams to breaks in time and space. In short: this book is a literary event.

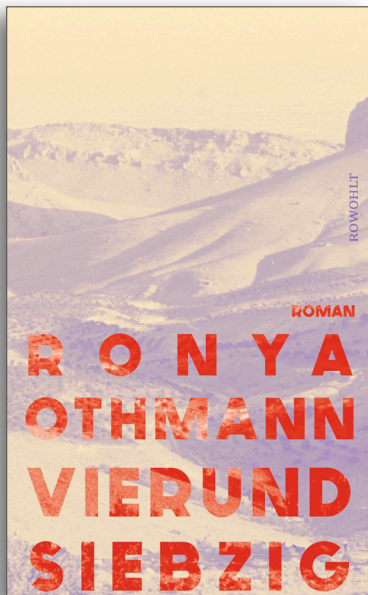


Biography:

Clemens Meyer was born in Halle/Saale in 1977 and lives in Leipzig. His debut novel “Als wir träumten” was published in 2006, followed by “Die Nacht, die Lichter. Stories” (2008), “Gewalten. Ein Tagebuch” (2010), the novel “Im Stein” (2013), the Frankfurt Poetry Lectures “Der Untergang der Äkschn GmbH” (2016) and the short story collection “Die stillen Trabanten”. He has received numerous prizes for his work, including the Leipzig Book Fair Prize. “Im Stein” was shortlisted for the German Book Prize and won the Bremen Literature Prize.

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Ronya Othmann **Vierundsiebzig**

Rowohlt Verlag, March 2024

Jury evaluation:

Ten years ago, the "Islamic State" terrorist militia committed genocide against the Yazidis in the northern Iraqi region of Sinjar. Following the traces of this mass crime, Ronya Othmann visits the sites of the massacres, the refugee camps and the memorials. She gives a voice to those who only just managed to escape the bloodthirstiness of the IS. Othmann impressively mixes genres and narrative forms – travel reportage, court records, historical digressions, autobiographical elements. Time and again, she engages in poetological soul-searching: how can the horror be adequately described without narratively exploiting the victims? A unique documentary novel about a contemporary genocide and the question of how it can be told in writing.



Biography:

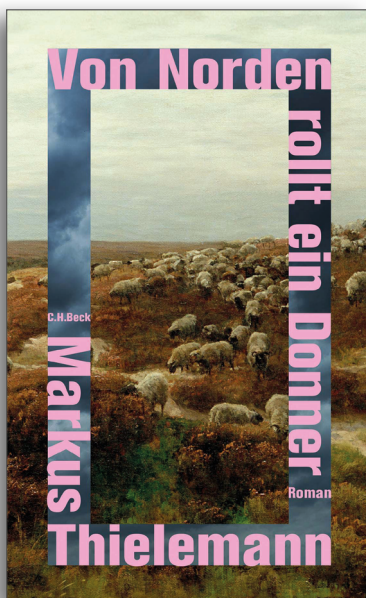
Ronya Othmann, born in Munich in 1993 to a German mother and a Kurdish-Yazidi father, writes poetry, prose and essays and works as a journalist. She has won the Open Mike Poetry Prize, MDR Literature Prize and Caroline Schlegel Prize for essay writing, among other awards. She received the Mara Cassens Prize in 2020 for her first novel, "Die Sommer", and the Orphil Debut Prize, Horst Bienek Prize and 2022 Horst Bingle Prize for her poetry collection "die verbrechen" (2021).

Foreign Rights:

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Markus Thielemann

Von Norden rollt ein Donner

Verlag C.H.Beck, July 2024

Jury evaluation:

Nineteen-year-old Jannes's path in life seems predetermined: Just like his father and grandfather have done for decades, every day he drives his family's flock of sheep across the countryside. Then as now, the wolf is not the only threat to the shepherds' way of life. Markus Thielemann has written a densely atmospheric and linguistically powerful anti-regional novel in which the archaic and the modern collide and the ghosts of the past haunt the deceptive idyll of the Lüneburg Heath. He tells the story slowly and carefully, with subtle, detailed observations of the landscapes and ways of life, writing about the entanglements between idyll and ideologies and about the dangers inherent in silence, repression and the glorification of the old.

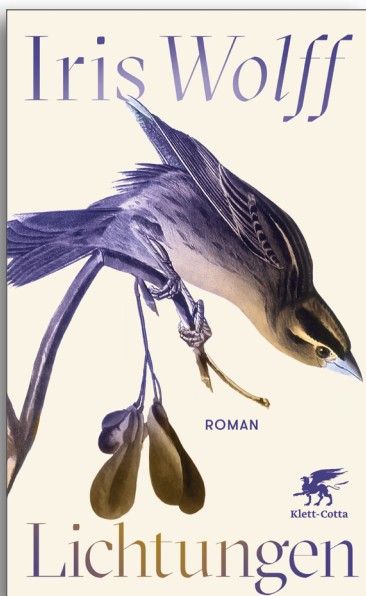


Biography:

Markus Thielemann, born in 1992, grew up in Lower Saxony. During his school and university holidays he worked in factories and agriculture. He studied geography and philosophy in Osnabrück and literary writing at the Literaturinstitut Hildesheim and lives in Hanover. "Von Norden rollt ein Donner" is his second novel.

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Iris Wolff **Lichtungen**

Klett-Cotta Verlag, January 2024

Jury evaluation:

In "Lichtungen", Iris Wolff succeeds in embedding the biography of her two protagonists deeply in late 20th-century European history. The two characters, who, like the author, come from Transylvania in Romania, meet in Zurich after the fall of the Iron Curtain. While she, Kato, had already left for the West earlier, he, Lev, experiences the fall of the Ceausescu regime first-hand. With great sensitivity and sophistication, the author tells this coming-of-age/love story in retrogression, emphasizing the fractures in the two life paths and anchoring the characters in very specific places and landscapes.



Biography:

Iris Wolff, born in Sibiu, Transylvania, has received numerous awards for her literary work, including the Marieluise Fleißer Prize and Marie Luise Kaschnitz Prize for her complete works. Most recently, her novel "Die Unschärfe der Welt" was published in 2020. In addition to winning the Evangelischer Buchpreis (Protestant Book Prize), Eichendorff Literature Prize, LiteraTour Nord Prize and Solothurn Literature Prize, it was voted one of the five favourite books of both the German and Swiss-German book trade. Iris Wolff lives in Freiburg im Breisgau.