

WIEDLING

LITERARY AGENCY

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# CATALOGUE

# 2019

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# authors

CLASSICS

## all works

Ivan Alekseyevich Bunin was born 1870 in Voronezh, Russia, and died 1953 in Paris, France. He was a poet and novelist, the first Russian to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature (1933), and one of the finest of Russian stylists. Descendant of an old noble family, Bunin spent his childhood and youth in the Russian provinces. He began publishing poems and short stories in 1887. In the mid-1890s he gradually entered the Moscow and St. Petersburg literary scenes, including the growing Symbolist movement. However, Bunin's work had more in common with the traditions of classical Russian literature of the 19th century, of which his older contemporaries Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov were models. By the beginning of the 20th century, Bunin had become one of Russia's most popular writers. His sketches and stories show Bunin's penchant for extreme precision of language, delicate description of nature, detailed psychological analysis, and masterly control of plot. While his democratic views gave rise to criticism in Russia, they did not turn him into a politically engaged writer. He perceived the Russian Revolution of 1917 as the triumph of the basest side of the Russian people. Bunin's articles and diaries of 1917–20 are a record of Russian life during its years of terror. In May 1918 he left Moscow and settled in Odessa (now in Ukraine), and at the beginning of 1920 he emigrated first to Constantinople (now Istanbul) and then to France, where he lived for the rest of his life. There he became one of the most famous Russian émigré writers. The autobiographical novel «The Life of Arsenev» which Bunin began writing during the 1920s and of which he published parts in the 1930s and 1950s was recognized by critics and Russian readers abroad as testimony of the independence of Russian émigré culture. Bunin lived in the south of France during World War II, refusing all contact with the Nazis and hiding Jews in his villa. After the end of the war, Bunin was invited to return to the Soviet Union, but he remained in France.

Hundred years after the Russian Revolution the World again finds itself at a critical and revolutionary turning point from the humanistic age towards a new era of global digitalization and artificial intelligence with yet unknown consequences. Again some are cheerfully looking forward while others are trying to preserve the best values from the past for a better future. Not talking of those whose aim is to simply turn back the wheel to the myths of the past. It is the seismographic sensitivity of Bunin's works that can help us to understand the inner logic and emotional weight of such fractures in individual lives as well as in society as a whole.



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### THE AUTHOR

#### awards

1933 Nobel Prize for Literature

Bunin died in Paris, France in 1953, so his intellectual property is continuously under international copyright protection. Due to historical circumstances during and also after the Cold War, only recently the successors of Bunin's relatives and rightful heirs could be traced completely and thus The Bunin Estate has now been legally reconstituted.

For detailed information on Bunin's biography, a bibliography of his works, a documentary as well as other resources please see the Nobel Prize website.

# Ivan Bunin

LITERARY  
FICTION

# My weird lover from the FSB

**Blog posts and stories.** AST. Moscow 2017. 220 pages

**Publishers:** Estonia - Postfactum

Incompetent, vulnerable, cheeky, paranoid, yearning, shy, but also brilliant at self-presentation, and then, embarrassingly open; for everything that happens to the heroine Beshlei has also happened to the author Olga Beshlei. Nothing is really thought out. The sheer joy, needs, worries and dreams of a young Russian woman, whose stories follow the fortune and misfortune of life, the ebb and flow of the city of Moscow. They follow love, ambition, politics, belief and superstition, and above all people – friends and strangers and lovers past, present and maybe never to be. With a good eye for the off-key, a healthy sense of humour and her heart in the right place, Beshlei wonders why it is so difficult these days for a likeable and open-minded young woman simply to be happy.

It is not at all difficult for Beshlei's heroine to find emancipated soulmates in any Western city who have suffered similarly. Except perhaps, that in Moscow the probability is higher to discover that your lover is a gangster or a FSB officer. And the panic about trying to hide a huge pink dildo before a house search by the secret service should to be considerably less outside Russia.

The novel takes the form of a colourful collection of stories, but is basically a coming-of-age novel with the heroine courageously testing the breaking point of the rules that determine the life of her generation. And she tests her own limits as well. The author's prose leads the reader to the edge of his or her comfort zone. The educational aspects of Beshlei's novel are not concerned with how hard it is to grow up, but on how hard it is to assert one's right to be accepted as a grown-up. Using her journalistic incorruptibility and literary skill, Beshlei proves herself to be a seismograph of a generation between the generations. She allows the younger readers to trip over their own half-baked principles and leads the older ones into situations where authority and experience no longer help.

"Life on the edge, where it hurts and makes one angry. The important things in life that really matter to us." *Valeria Pustovaya*

"To blast a metaphysical wind through a simple and normal life is such a skilful move that no-one has thought of before. It would appear that this literary sleight of hand is no artifice but has sprung from the depths of her talent." *Litteratura*

"Everyone in the FSB will read it and roll over laughing." *Aleksandr Lychagin*

"Life in its all-pervading garishness, making us so sentimental that one just wants to burst into tears. It is the way that Olga Beshlei writes about the common or garden things that makes them lose their banality. She has found her own, very strong style of connecting with life that simply takes my breath away." *Anna Berseneva*

Beshlei was born in Obninsk in 1989, a small research town in the district of Kaluga. After completing her schooling at the technical school for physics of the Institute of Atomic Energy, she went to Moscow to study political journalism. She became a political editor at the oppositional magazine "The New Times". After the success of her story "The FSB and my big pink Dildo" she was given the monthly column "Beshlei" on Colta.ru. In 2017 all those texts were published in book-form. At present Beshlei is editor-in-chief of Batenka.ru. Beshlei lives in Moscow.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
1 language

**samples available**  
german

# Olga Beshlei

# Description of a City

**Novel.** AST. Moscow 2012. 130 pages

**Publishers:** Macedonia - Prozart, Netherlands - Douane

Twelve repeated visits to a city not too far from Moscow and with good rail connections. Your average industrial city with a slight Soviet patina, very few sight-seeing attractions. People go shopping, stay in hotels, travel by bus, taxi, tram. But this description of a city has nothing to do with sightseeing tours with the names, addresses, opening hours of museums, hotels, restaurants and the like. There is seemingly nothing special to see, to experience, to notice or to remark on in this city. It is precisely because Danilov is interested not in what is special but in the usual that this city became his choice. The city is walked, researched, described so that it becomes "flesh and blood" in the end, in the words of Danilov's narrator. And this at two levels: the narrator in the midst and the reader faraway from the city that remains nameless. Both seem to switch roles in a bizarre mimicry. In the end, as the reader you no longer have the feeling of having accompanied the narrator on his walks through the city, it instead feels as though your own stroll through the city has been accompanied by the first person narrator. This description of a city teaches you to explore spaces and to rediscover yourself therein.

It could be any city in the world. Danilov's city, however, has two levels because it is the home city of the author who accorded its cult status amongst Russian literature aficionados with the novel "City N." by Leonid Dobychin. The building where he lived – now disappeared. He himself – disappeared in March 1936, after his novel "City N." was torn apart by Stalinist critics. The theme of absence has three constants in Danilov's city and book: silence, emptiness and greyness – little dialogue, few characters and the lack of action. And the more absence, the more that is missing, the more this city, this book gets under your skin.

On top of that, Danilov's ironically enjoyable, at times hilarious and very down-to-earth attempt to feel at home in a strange place is also a real treat for those who prefer to explore cities on trams. Football fans don't do too badly either.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
3 languages

**awards**  
Premio Letterare Internazionale  
Citta di Cattolica 2016  
Novy Mir Award 2012  
Big Book Award shortlist 2011  
Andrei Bely Award shortlist 2010

**samples available**  
english

**other work**  
Description of a City

"Buster Keaton humour with a deadpan expression." *Ex Libris*

"The absence of subject, events, psychology makes Danilov's prose a transparent glass disc through which we see nothing but our own experience... Danilov focuses attention on what we see without seeing it, what we hear without hearing it, what we do without noticing." *Kommersant*

"We are faced with a consummate, unconventional prose writer." *Kultura*

Danilov was born in Moscow in 1969. He has published four books to date, mainly short stories and novels. His texts have been published in magazines in the USA, Holland, Belgium and Italy. He is editor-in-chief of the official blog of a large car manufacturer. Danilov lives in Moscow.

# Dmitri Danilov

# Mebet

**Novel.** Arsis Publishers. Moscow 2011. 229 pages

**Publishers:** Bulgaria - Labyrinth, China - Taijialinren/ Mingyun, UK - Glagoslav

Mebet, of the Nentsy people in North Western Siberia, is known to his fellow tribesmen as "God's Favourite". Like the midnight sun, his luck never seems to sink below the horizon. He knows nothing of discomfort, illness or aging, and the same applies to weakness or emotion. It is only when he becomes a grandfather that the tough warrior softens. And when his own son dies, Mebet begs the gods for a few extra years in order to be able to bring up his orphaned grandson. That is when the messenger of death pays him, too, a visit and takes him to the limit between the realm of the living and of the dead. It is at this point that God's Favourite learns that it has not been his own life that he has lived and that his never fading luck was merely a whim of the gods. In order to return to the realm of humans and to reconcile himself with his true self, Mebet has to set off on a shamanic journey into the beyond and endure the scourge of the Taiga for each year begged. The tale of Mebet's destiny becomes a message of salvation for mankind.

The first part seems to take the reader off into an ethnic epic about a great hunter and warrior with all the myths of the Taiga: witches, talking dogs, huge bears, hoards of spirits. Yet the second part reveals itself as a grandiose literary reflection of the first and we realise that this no folklore novel, but a timeless novel about destiny and humanity, culminating in a powerful, universal catharsis.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
3 languages

## awards

Yasnaya Polyana Award 2016  
Big Book Award shortlist 2014  
NOS Award shortlist 2013

## other works

Ilget

"One of the best books of the year ... Basically a 'Lord of the Rings' about the Nentsy ... it is not about the Taiga, stylisation or ethnography at all. This book is about human destiny and the fact that every one of us has to look death in the face one day."  
*Sergei Kuznetsov*

"The Nentsy can indeed talk of luck. They now have the own real epic – profound, touching and illuminating."  
*Galina Yuzefovich*

Grigorenko was born in Novocherkassk, south of Moscow but has spent practically his whole life in the depths of Siberia. Since completing his studies at the Kemerovo University of Cinema and Photography he has worked as a journalist for the East Siberian bureau of Rossiyskaya Gazeta. Grigorenko lives in the Krasnoyarsk area.

# Aleksandr Grigorenko



# A...a

**Novel.** Makhaon. Moscow 2010. 254 pages

Have you ever been to America? Even if not – the space „...“ between the „A“ and the „a“ has been filled with innumerable imagined details by each of us since childhood. And even if the answer is yes – our own mental pictures of America often feel more real and intimate than the actual America. Not that the author would think of refusing to go to America. The whole world wants to go to America. Columbus wanted to go there, even before America was discovered. Even extraterrestrials, should they ever travel to earth, would first aim to land in America. One believes the author immediately. One nods, grins, laughs, shakes one's head, feels understood and caught out, all the while following the author on his unconventional journey to discover America.

Dressing up as a cowboy for the kindergarten carnival. Finding a Colorado beetle in grandmother's vegetable patch. Proudly wearing the jeans with the stitched-on „Montana“ badge. Superman or Spiderman zooming between the skyscrapers of New York. And Marilyn and Elvis could never have existed anywhere other than America. The expanse of the plains, the torrential rivers and the unending forests, all mastered by the heroes in the novels by James Fenimore Cooper, always searching for gold and a happy life. Russia is bigger, the earth is also hard and there are uncharted regions and torrential rivers. But in Russian films and books, the men are emaciated and bearded, the women unhappy and silent, the children hungry and scared. It is not surprising that the long-distance lorry drivers have pin-up girls from Playboy and Penthouse magazines in their cabs and that they, when they take a break while on the highways in Ural, Siberia, Karelia and the furthest East, stop off at service areas called Ranch, Montana, Sheriff Bar, Café Elvis, Hollywood or Chicago. And it is not only since Donald Trump that everyone in the world, even in the remotest backwoods of Russia, knows the name of the American president as well as that of his or her own head of government.

Written before Trump was elected president, Grishkovets shows us with his humorous, ironic, cheeky tribute to cultural kinship just what is now really at stake. Currently Russia and the USA are once again at odds with each other and yet they are so similar – both had great dreams and are now well on their way to destroying them and also the world as we know it. Grishkovets finishes the novel with the words: „Should I ever, or better, when I travel to the real America and should it attempt to destroy mine, then I will fight and defend mine.“

“There only are two kinds of readers: those who like Grishkovetz, and those who have not read him yet.” *Echo Moskv*

“Exactly what was needed: Literature for an intelligent, educated reader, which combines a refined sense of irony with a positive view of the world.” *Knizhnoe Obozrenie*



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
13 languages

**awards**  
Big Book shortlist 2018

**sample available**  
english

**other works**  
The Shirt  
The Rivers  
Asphalt

Grishkovets was born in 1967 in Kemerovo. He became famous in Russia for his plays, which he writes, directs and acts in. He has been awarded two major Russian theatrical prizes for his plays which have also been performed in Germany, France and Poland. His first novel, "The Shirt" (2004), was an event in the literary life of Russia and brought him a prize for the Best Debut, and the Anti-Booker prize. Grishkovets lives in Kaliningrad.

# Evgeni Grishkovets



# Dyatlov Pass

**Novel.** AST Publishers. Moscow 2005. 286 pages

**Publishers:** China - Inner Mongolian University, Czech Republic - Akropolis, France - Belfont

Matveeva's novel is dedicated to the true story of a group of young students who died under mysterious circumstances as ski tourists on the Dyatlov Pass in the northern Ural mountains in 1959. The exact circumstances of the mysterious deaths on Dyatlov Pass remain unexplained to this day. Following on from the series of earlier books on the subject, Matveeva's novel is the first attempt to see the story of Dyatlov Pass, comprising documented facts on the one hand and largely probable, albeit mysterious interpretations on the other, as an overall phenomenon in which the fates of victims and the investigators have become linked in fiction. Accompanying Matveeva's heroine on her quest for the truth, therefore, the reader returns not only to a brutal past but is also drawn into discovering the truth behind his/her own life.

In 2000, a regional Ural TV company produced a documentary film about the mystery of Dyatlov Pass. Cooperating with the film crew, Anna Matveyeva published her short novel of the same name, a large part of the book including broad quotations from the official case, diaries of victims, interviews with searchers and other documentaries collected by the film-makers.

A Hollywood feature film has been released 2013 with Renny Harlin as director (Nightmare on Elm Street 1988/ Die Hard 2 1990/ Cliffhanger 1993/ Deep Blue Sea 1999/ Exorist Beginning 2004/ The Covenant 2006/ 5 Days of War 2011) and Richard Reid (Love, Wedding Marriage 2011/ William&Kate 2011/ Navy CIS/ Hangover) and Matt Stokoe (Hollow 2011/ Misfits 2009) in main roles.

"The Dyatlov Pass could signal the start of a new literature just as In Cold Blood by Truman Capote once was for American prose... What I value in Matveeva's novel is... that she displays affection for the nine victims, lives with them and thus forces me to see one of them in the youngster sitting next to me in the cafe or in the underground... What I like most about reading this book, however, is the feeling of living through someone else's tragedy because it is built into and woven into our own lives." *Dmitri Bykov*

"Force and brutality are very finely nuanced here against the „feminine“, „contemporary“ part of the novel that forms the „vessel“ containing the opposites „brutal - tender“, „male - female“, „past - present“... a remarkable book!" *Aleksei Ivanov*

Matveeva was born in Sverdlovsk, now Yekaterinburg, in 1972. She comes from a family of linguists and, after completing her studies at the State Ural University, she worked as a journalist for newspapers and magazines. She has since published several books and writes for all of the leading Russian media. Matveeva has three children and lives in Yekaterinburg.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
3 languages

## awards

Bazhov Prize 2017  
Big Book Award shortlist 2016  
Big Book Award public vote #2 2015  
Big Book Award shortlist 2013  
Kazakov Prize shortlist 2011  
Lo Stellato Prize, Italy 2004

## samples available

english  
full french

## other works

Vera Stenina's Envy  
Nine from the Nineties  
Wait, I will die and then - come

# Anna Matveeva

# Tales from the Last Days

Captain of the Steppe – The Matiushin Case – Requiem for a Soldier

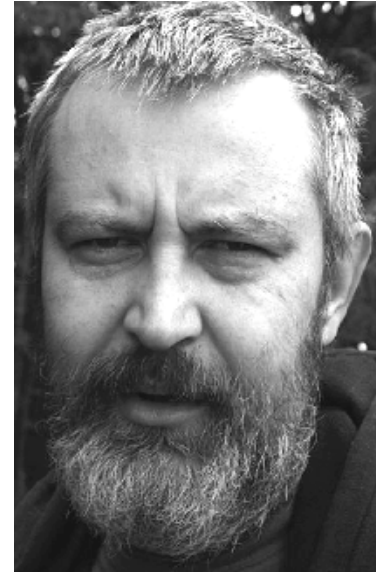
**Trilogy.** Moscow 2001. 550 pages

**Publishers:** China - People's Literature, Croatia - Fraktura, France - Noir sur Blanc, Hungary - Magveto, Italy - Odoya, Macedonia - Ars Lamina, Netherlands - Cossee, Poland - Literackie, UK - Andotherstories

The settings of the three "Tales from the last Days" are military posts in the Kazakhstan steppe, which Pavlov knows from his own experience. Using the fates and fortunes of his heroes – unimportant and humiliated soldiers – and with great linguistic intensity and an expertly crafted composition, he demonstrates the eternal struggle for physical and mental survival under the hardest of conditions. The view from inside the penal camps has produced many famous books: Solzhenitsyn, Shalamov, Platonov, to name but a few. However, the desolate situation of Russian soldiers in general, especially of the soldiers with simple guard duties, has never before been so grippingly and poignantly expressed.

Although Pavlov's "Tales" are set at the end of the era of the Soviet Union, they do paint a fundamental picture of the situation in the Russian army, a situation that has scarcely improved since the time of the Soviet Union.

Death is ever present, and in the places of death life prevails. Anarchy and chance are the only means by which the individual can survive inside the strictly hierarchical structure. Those caught in this system are all weak and dejected, cruel and immune to suffering. The few moments of human warmth are seen as sheer happiness.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
10 languages

**awards**  
Solzhenitsyn Prize 2012  
Znamya Award 2009  
Russian Booker Prize 2002

**samples available**  
full english

"His tales delve into the world of soldiers sent to the bleakest regions of central Asia, where their hopelessness ends up matching that of their prisoners, whose absurd routine, hunger and boredom they share. This is Berg's Wozzek set in Buzzati's Tartar Steppe." *La Libre*

"An extraordinary portraitist, with a nose for trenchant, black humour, Oleg Pavlov delves into the shadowy outer edges of existence." *France Culture*

"Poetry, sensuality, humour, metaphoric genius." *L'Express Culture*

## other work

Notes of a Hospital Receptionist

Pavlov was born in Moscow in 1970. He served in Karaganda as a prison guard. After leaving the army at the age of twenty, diagnosed for with 'mental instability', he went on to study at the Institute of Literature in Moscow. He published his first novel at the age of twenty-four. Working as a literary critic he continued to publish novels, short stories as well as essays. Pavlov has passed away in 2018.

# Oleg Pavlov

# Free and Wild

**Novel.** AST. Moscow 2014. 412 pages

**Publishers:** Estonia - Kunst, France - Belfont, Germany - dtv, Lebanon - Arab Scientific, Macedonia - Ars Lamina, Romania - Polirom

A village in the boundless hunting and fishing grounds of Siberia. In this wilderness, so far off from Moscow, everyone depends on each other and everyone depends on mother nature. Live and let live is a firm byword. And because the fishermen can barely make a living keeping to the fixed fishing quotas dictated by Moscow, the militia looks the other way when caviar is sold under the table – especially as they receive their share of the profit. The social stability begins to crumble, when an ambitious militiaman sees an opportunity to advance his career. Freedom-loving Stepan Kobayakov on attempting to evade a control-point, shoots his way out of the situation and disappears into the vastness of the taiga. This rekindles the old conflict in the village between those who would rather leave things as they are and muddle on through and those in whom the desire for freedom sits deeper. A group of hunting friends set off to search for Stepan in order to sort things out before Moscow sends a search-helicopter and reinforcements for the militia. But it is too late. And as the ambitious militiaman begins to teach the villagers a lesson, the situation gets completely out of hand - a dramatic conflict escalates in the snow-covered forests. The hunters become the hunted, humans become fair prey.

Taciturn men, harsh living conditions, breath-taking landscapes, gripping scenes of hunting and social conflict – authentically and thrillingly Viktor Remizov tells of life in the Siberian taiga and of the precarious value of freedom in an unfree society. It is a mercilessly human novel.

"Victor Remizov is not just a traditional prose writer, he is a traditional writer par excellence: intelligent, calculating, comprehensive, slow-paced as a taiga fisherman... Remizov's novel is social and analytical. Victor Remizov did not show us a full-fledged Russian revolt, but he showed us a very Russian clamour and outcry. And the coercive justice that always follows the clamour. This already suffices." Svobodnaya Pressa

"This first novel by Viktor Remizov crackles with suspense fit for a movie, complemented by solid characters, spectacular descriptions of nature and perceptive observations on the state of modern Russia." WDR

"A raw book about a raw Russian region." Frankfurter Rundschau

"A excellently written novel, completely in the tradition of classic Russian literature with descriptions of nature and exceptional characters just waiting to be turned into a movie." Buchprofile

Remizov was born in Saratov in 1958, where he studied geological prospecting at college. After serving in the army Remizov studied languages at Moscow State University. He worked as a surveyor in the taiga, a school teacher of Russian literature and – for the longest time of his professional career – as a journalist. Viktor Remizov lives with his family near Moscow.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
6 languages

**awards**  
Big Book Award shortlist 2014  
Russian Booker Prize shortlist 2014  
NOS Award shortlist 2014

**samples available**  
full french

**other works**  
Temptation

# Viktor Remizov

literary fiction

# Flood Plains

**Novel.** AST. Moscow 2015. 280 pages

Big Book Award 2nd Prize 2015

**Publishers:** Finland - Peace Committee, France - Noir sur Blanc, Serbia - Samizdat

A private investor completes the construction of a half-finished, forgotten hydroelectric power station. It is a matter of electric power for China. The money for the construction comes from Russian public-sector loans, from offshore accounts. A huge area will have to be flooded. Individual profit verses public welfare. It is a simple story that can be found everywhere in the world. And one that is often told: Naomi Klein tells the story in her non-fictional analysis "This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate". Andrey Zvyagintsev in his Oscar-nominee cinematic drama "Leviathan". And Roman Senchin tells it in a novel.

No pent-up anger. No scandals. Senchin, who for good reasons is ranked among the "new realists", does not need a fictitious plot to transport facts with fabricated emotions. His story almost tells itself. Coolly and calmly. And possibly because of this it affects the reader all the more deeply. The undercurrent of the novel is like the Siberian river that once flowed freely: crystal-clear, fast and full of fish. Now a dam has been erected. Infection spreads. Occasionally the rowing boats of the locals get tangled in the tree-tops of the drowned forests, as if the trees wanted to drag all remaining life down into the depths. But below the foul surface that positive current reappears again and again. With the emotional forcefulness of an irrevocable farewell Senchin describes the life in the doomed villages in the centre of the fertile and nourishing countryside while the water inexorably rises. The resettled villagers had loved their river, their life-blood. At the end there is only remembrance, a fond memory. The morass of bureaucracy, nepotism and corruption has become impenetrable. Even for the journalist Olga who, following the entries in the social networks, observes the complaints about injustices, illegal practices and even of forced relocations and as a consequence begins researching the situation of the helpless victims. Olga's requests for information from the authorities are ignored. Relocated villagers who regularly discuss their situation are separated and dispersed by the militia. Old Ignati manages to gain the attention of his grandson Nikita. Despite the distractions of his smartphone, Nikita listens to Ignati's descriptions of the former life and of the old customs. At Easter they visit the new cemetery where the villagers' dead have been reinterred and Nikita suddenly notices the water rising higher than planned. Even the new cemetery will soon be flooded. Nikita has listened and now he begins to see and to understand.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
11 languages

**awards**  
Big Book Awards 2nd Prize 2015  
National Bestseller shortlist 2010  
Big Book Award shortlist 2010  
Russian Booker Prize shortlist 2009

**sample translation available**  
full english, full french

**other works**  
What do you want?  
The Eltyshes  
Rain in Paris

Senchin was born in Siberia in 1971 where he subsequently grew up. Having completed his engineering studies he then went on to study at a Moscow literature institute where he still lectures today. His prose has made him one of the most prominent exponents of "New Realism". His works have so far been translated into German, French and a number of other languages. Senchin lives in Ekaterinburg.

# Roman Senchin

# Rehearsals

**Novel.** Neva. St. Petersburg 1992/ Arsis. Moscow 2009. 426 pages

**Publishers:** Bulgaria - Fakel, France - Actes Sud, Serbia - Utopia, Slovenia - Druzina, UK - Dedalus

The novel recounts the failure of the human race to produce God's great play on the stage of the world. Rehearsing means repeating, to perpetually review the play and to try again and again, thereby immortalizing the play throughout the ages. And in this, the theme of the novel evokes the memory of that most infamous rubber stamp „Khranit' vechno" (to be preserved forever) on KGB files. Rehearsals should lead to a premiere, but this does not happen in the novel.

In the 17th century theatre is considered by the church to be the work of the devil. However, in Siberia a bishop campaigns to stage a play about the second coming of Christ. The French director struggles with the illiterate Siberian villagers over the final version of the play and, similar to the passion play at Oberammergau, the chastity and suitability of the inhabitants for the roles of Jews, Romans and Apostles, and above all for that of Judas. A decree demands that the role of Jesus must not be filled, for unlike in Oberammergau, the Siberian village is not rehearsing the Passion, but the incarnate return of the Redeemer. The urgency to stage the play is increased by the fact that the end of the world is prophesied for 1666 and this turns the play into both an invocation and a prerequisite for the second coming of Christ. But, as the end of the world is repeatedly postponed and, for the villagers, takes on multifaceted changeable forms - schism, war, enlightenment, anti-Jewish pogroms, revolution, Stalin's terror, GULAG -, so the premiere is deferred by years, decades, centuries without those involved ever losing their hope or determination. On the contrary, the protagonists manage to pass on trust and confidence from generation to generation. The self-imposed task becomes the justification for existence, the rehearsals become the reason for living.

It is not without reason that, in this secular age, Sharov has set the plot in one of those Old-Orthodox communities that considers itself to be God's last chosen people and believes that their village is the New Jerusalem. With unbelievably realistic attention to detail the novel presents reports of historical witnesses, archive sources, verbal and written memories as if discovered by a contemporary reporter who has analyzed, researched, queried and interpreted them.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
10 languages

**awards**  
Read Russia translation award  
2015  
Big Book Award 2014  
Russian Booker Prize 2014  
Proze of the Year 2008  
Znamya Prize 2002

**samples available**  
full english

**other works**  
Before and During  
Be like the Children

Sharov was born in Moscow in 1952. After graduating from Voronezh University he obtained his PhD in history with a thesis on the 17th century in Russia. His novel „Before and During" published in 1993 evoked heavy polemic responses due to the provoking discussion of the entanglement of communism and religion. In addition to writing Sharov gives guest lectures on Russian history, literature and culture at international universities such as Harvard, Lexington, Cologne, Rome, Zurich, Basle as well as Oxford and Cambridge. He is a member of PEN International. Sharov has passed away in summer 2018.

# Vladimir Sharov



# The Unknown

**Novel.** AST. Moscow 2017. 500 pages

Big Book shortlist 2017

**Publishers:** Slovak Republic - Slovart

The subtitle of Slapovski's most recent book is: "Novel of a Century 1917 to 2017". And indeed, the story begins with Nikolai Smirnov's entry into his diary on the 17th December 1917 and ends with a letter from Gleb Smirnov to his father Victor in 2017. Thus the novel is also a family saga spanning five generations, but not in the usual way as there is neither a clear picture of the family Smirnov nor of 20th century Russia. The family-tree is shown in the appendix and only a few of the members of family are given a chance to speak. Two separate branches of the family are presented, whose narratives either overlap or leave gaps in time.

What may appear to be a design error in the novel, is intentionally so composed with style and content consistently applied. Noteworthy are the gaps in the family mosaic which automatically bring the fissures of the previous Russian century to the fore. Slapovski holds the family together over a century merely by story-telling, which in hindsight, does not yield any final truths. Every character is influenced by their own epoch and narrates in their own particular style - diaries, letters, interviews, short stories, emails - thereby mirroring the time in which they live. It is only in a judicial report that we learn of Anton Smirnov's career as an unwitting crook, for which he was sentenced to death in 1962. The only common thread in all these different lives is the presence and influence of the Russian secret service.

In THE UNKNOWN Slapovski's well-known ability of remaining authentic over the whole stylistic bandwidth as well as his much-vaunted empathy with each of his insignificant and bungling protagonists, which were recently reviled as "too soft" by patriotically disposed critics, come together creating a magnificent multi-faceted novel. There is no single style that smooths the image of the century. No hubristic judgment of the individual fate. Many members of the family recognize that they are on their way into the unknown. Significantly, the succession stops for those who react with a closed life-plan because they fear the unknown future too much. THE UNKNOWN is thus a courageous response to new and old political reflexives in Russia: the rising self-emancipating and self-opening society being harassed from above and isolated from the world.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
8 languages

**awards**  
Big Book shortlist 2017  
Penne Award (Italy) 2009

**other work**  
Genii

Slapovski was born in 1957 in Saratov. He holds a degree in philology from the university of Saratov. He worked as a school teacher, truck driver and journalist. His writing debut was a theater piece in 1985. He won several awards (Eugén O'Neill Drama Festival/USA, European Theater Festival/D-Kassel, Moscow Theater Competition). He has successfully written several novels and TV-series and has been nominated four times for the Russian Booker and two times for Big Book Award. His works are translated into many languages. Slapovski lives in Moscow.

# Aleksei Slapovski

# The Jump

**Novel.** AST. Moscow 2017. Shortened version approx. 320 pages

**Publishers:** Serbia - Russika

Young Vedernikov is a natural talent. He hops, skips and jumps and nothing can keep him on the ground. Defying gravity is his thing. He wins all competitions in the long-jump and is the next great hope for the European championships. One day on his way to his training session he notices how a young boy inattentively wanders in front of a car. Vedernikov sprints and jumps. He saves the child. His life-saving jump is a new record. But in the process he is run over by the car and loses both his legs.

Contrary to expectations, the novel is neither empathic nor critical about the difficulty of being disabled in Russian society. Vedernikov spurns the attempts of his trainer who wants him to enter in the Paralympics. He spurns his affluent and pragmatic mother who, instead of really looking after him, provides him with money and the latest artificial limbs. He lacks nothing except a meaning of life. And what follows is a merciless parable about good and evil based on a twist of fate that has evidently spared the wrong person.

His carer Lida looks after all of Vedernikov needs. And she eagerly takes on the role of a surrogate mother for Zhenya, the boy Vedernikov saved, whose parents neglect him and who Vedernikov has taken under his wing. By bringing Zhenya up, Vedernikov wants at least to give this young life a reason for living, a reason he cannot give himself. But as Zhenya grows up it becomes more and more apparent that the young ward is a good-for-nothing and a monster. And Vedernikov's evil shadow. And even Vedernikov was never really thoroughly decent. To give life some meaning, he plans to murder his ward. But it all ends with another long-jump of destiny and a completely unexpected twist of fate.

Slavnikova's cutting analysis does not miss an opportunity to expose, with irony and detachment, but without illusion, her protagonists' intersecting motives and relationships whether they be between Vedernikov, his mother, the carer Lida, her husband Aslan who does not want to have a child with her, the ward Zhenya and his parents or Vedernikov's trainer. THE JUMP is neither idyllic nor tragic, it has no contradicting truth and lies, but instead illustrates the clash of many different truths meeting on the solid ground of harsh reality.

"An angry Nabokov." *Literturnaya Gazeta*

"Probably the best novel of the year." – *Litteratura*

"... no naive babbling about Russia. From the passings of time and fates Slavnikova weaves such a dense tapestry of characters that the reader feels drawn into a powerfully dramatic space, which is immediately recognizable as common or garden, consisting only of the too well-known." *Tatyana Moskvina*

Slavnikova was born in 1957 near Ekaterinburg. She writes reviews and essays for *Novy mir*, *Znamya*, *Oktyabr*. She was a member of the Russian booker prize jury in 1999. In 2000 she was part of the board for the *Novy mir* Prize for short stories and now organizes the Debut Prize of the *Pokolenie* fund. Her novel "Strekoza, uvelichennaya do razmerov sobaki" was shortlisted for the booker prize in 1997. "Odin v zerkale" won the Bazgov Prize and was nominated for the Booker Prize in 2000. Slavnikova lives in Moscow.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
20 languages

**awards**  
National Bestseller shortlist 2018  
Gorky Award Italy 2012  
Gjenima Prize (US) 2006-2007  
Russian Booker Prize 2006

**sample translation available**  
full english, french, german

**other works**  
Lighthouse  
The Immortal  
2017  
Love in the 7th Train

# Olga Slavnikova



# Cranes and Pygmies

**Novel.** AST. Moscow 2010. 474 pages

Big Book Award 2009

At the base of Yuzefovich's latest masterpiece, CRANES AND PYGMIES, lies the myth, known from Homer's Iliad, of the eternal war between cranes and pygmies, who "fight via human beings not for life but for death". In this adventure novel, reflecting one another as in a mirror, unfold the fates of four imposters – a young Mongolian living in the present; a forty-year-old geologist from Perestroika-era Moscow; an adventurer from the days of the seventeenth-century Ottoman empire; and the latest Tsarevich Alexis, who "miraculously survived" and turned up in the lands east of Lake Baikal during the Russian Civil War.

It is 1993 and the Soviet Union is no more. Zhokhov, once a geologist, has been forced by Russia's Wild West form of capitalism to reforge his identity. He has become a petty trader – not to say profiteer, a common figure in times like these. When a deal to sell sugar goes bad, he moves on to trading a rare strategic metal stolen from a military factory, and when that deal goes bad as well he has to face the consequences – not society and its laws, but the anti-social, sadistic criminal gang with which he's tried to do business. This soft but educated man has no choice but to toughen up. Society and the State have disintegrated. Zhokhov wanders around Moscow and finds himself in the middle of an excited crowd, hears shooting, sees men falling, and realizes that he is in the middle of a revolution. (This episode is based on the events of October 1993 in Moscow.) The government is gunning down a demonstration, as well as its own parliament.

Zhokhov's acquaintance, Shubin, a historian and a writer, is also trying to make some money and is lucky enough to hit upon a scheme that is both very timely and very Russian: he writes about impostors. Yuzefovich also offers his readers bits and pieces of obscure history in a fast-paced account of the life of Timofey Ankundinov, a petty Muscovite clerk who traveled throughout Europe claiming to be a son of Tsar Vasily IV Shuisky and thus the pretender to the Russian throne. Anukundinov's peregrinations yield a portrait of tumultuous early seventeenth-century Russia, allowing Yuzefovich to trace the hidden rhymes between events past and present. Zhokhov, too, becomes an impostor, bailing himself out of a dangerous spot by proclaiming himself to be the natural son of a famous Soviet architect. He ends up fleeing to Mongolia, where he is stabbed to death over a nonexistent treasure. His ultimate lot is the same as every impostor's: he is killed because he is taken for someone else.

The Mongolian episodes are of particular interest. For Russia, with its half-Asian identity, Mongolia is "fully Asian", a wild, uncivilized country. Each of the four protagonists ultimately turns up on the Mongolian stage, in the palace of the last Mongolian ruler in Ulan Bator.

As an extensive metaphor, this novel finds its place among the renowned classics of Russian fiction. Yuzefovich delves into the key problems and most critical features of modern Russian society, placing the Russian psyche and Russian lifestyle – lawless, ruthless, reckless, unpredictable, untrusting and untrustworthy – in a book so thrilling you won't be able to put it down until you turn the last page.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
9 languages

**awards**  
National Bestseller 2016  
Big Book Award 2016  
Booker Translation Grant 2016  
Russian Booker shortlist 2009  
Big Book Award 2009

**samples available**  
english

**other works**  
Winter Road  
Horsemen of the Desert  
The Putlin Series  
Kazaroza

Yuzefovich, born 1947 in Moscow, spent his childhood and youth in the Urals. He has a Doctorate in History and is known to a wide audience of readers through his historical thrillers about Ivan Putlin. Yuzefovich is capable of interweaving detailed knowledge of historical fact with masterly literary style into the plot of a thriller. L. Yuzefovich lives in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

# Leonid Yuzefovich

# Happiness is Possible

**Novel.** AST Publishers. Moscow 2009. 189 pages

Big Book Award shortlist 2010

**Publishers:** Italy, Spain, UK

A writer, living in Moscow with a small dacha on the outskirts of the city, is hard up and so hires himself out to a large publishing company. He is required to deliver a positive novel on time but he has been unable to come up with anything positive since his wife Tamara ran off. She continues to visit the dacha, however, complete with new lover, to whom he is also required to show the best fishing spots. All that the writer is able to produce is notes about the happiness of others. The country boy (a caricature of himself) who comes to Moscow to land a rich woman, for instance. Yet the writer not only observes happiness, he initiates it, too, by bringing two lonely neighbours together, by giving a new chance to a teacher and her former pupil, whose love was once mercilessly suppressed. Or is he inventing all of this just to console himself? But then happiness does seem to catch up with him, too. Instead of punching the neighbour disturbing his work with the noise of his building work in the nose, in the end he lends him a helping hand with the renovations. And Tamara suddenly starts spending the night in the Moscow flat now and again, ultimately with the news of what had not happened during all the years of marriage: she is pregnant – by him.

HAPPINESS IS POSSIBLE is not only an enjoyable and precisely detailed book about the new type of human beings to be found in the city of Moscow, it is also a mini philosophical guide to happiness. Deadened by the density of the residential tower blocks, the anonymous masses, Zaionchkovski nevertheless teaches his characters to also smell the roses growing through the city asphalt. He teaches them and us about everyday happiness.

"As if coming out of nowhere, an absolute harmony of style and drama." Time Out

"Zaionchkovski has written an astute book but one that comes from the heart..." Andrei Nemzer

"Zaionchkovski is one of those narrators with a natural charm, so at ease with themselves and so self-sufficient that they have no need of an energizing topic or a genre as a crutch, no superfluous dramatics – he simply has enough talent by himself to create something." Lev Danilkin

"The new novel from Oleg Zaionchkovski is a successful combination of everyday stories and a philosophy of patience and empathy – precisely what once characterised Russian literature." Natalya Kurchatova

Zaionchkovski was born in Kuibyshev, now Samara, in 1959. After leaving high school he worked as an inspector in an aircraft factory. He has been writing prose since his youth but it is only recently that his work has been published. His second novel "Sergeev and The Town" reached the Short List for The Booker – Open Russia Literary Prize in 2004. Zaionchkovski lives in a small town near Moscow.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
3 languages

**awards**  
Big Book Award longlist 2011  
Big Book Award shortlist 2010  
Russian Booker Prize shortlist 2004

**sample translation available**  
full english

**other works**  
Petrovich  
Walks in the Park  
Sergeev and his Town  
The Wedding Anniversary

# Oleg Zaionchkovski

# Autobiography of Iesus Christ

**Novel.** AST. Moscow 2018. 500 pages

nominated for the prestigious ALEXANDER PYATIGORSKY AWARD  
(best philosophical work outside the academic philosophy)

**Publishers:** Greece - Koukoutsis

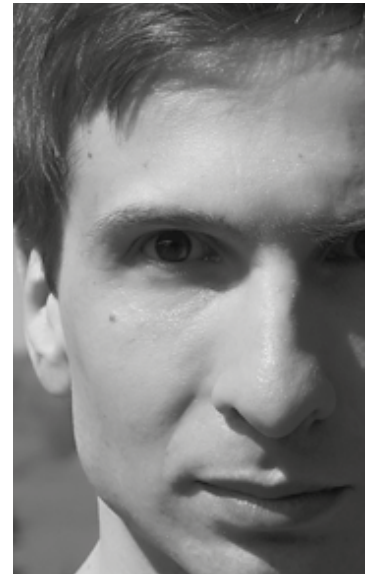
The autobiography of Iesus Christ in the guise of a fictional novel. The language is simple and clear, the depiction nothing but scandalous, the message far more than provocative. Zobern's Christ does not intend to contest or refute Christian teachings, but he presents completely different backgrounds and motives. Even though this Iesus has no objection to homosexuality, abortion or suicide, it is not the intention of the author to convert the reader to a "more liberal" Christian doctrine. We are given virtual, first-hand reality combined with a flood of details so deeply rooted in the epoch concerned, that the story can only be seen to be authentic. As authentic as it is fanciful. From today's perspective, one would certainly not be ill-advised to consider it a significant omen when Neil Armstrong, wearing his white space-suit on the moon, appears to this Iesus in a dream.

A highly intelligent, likeable philanthropist, stumbling through life as best he can. In times neither better nor worse than ours, where wheeling and dealing defines everyday life, where it is not only the poor soil and the raw climate that cause the frequent migratory movements, fanatical guardians of public morals and occupying forces make life difficult as well. This Iesus also wants to enjoy himself. Sex and drugs, albeit without rock 'n' roll. Nevertheless, this Iesus does acknowledge his own shortcomings: he does not want to hurt anyone, just heal and be benevolent. And talk and write about it. Always with sound common sense. Simply down to earth.

"Devastating! It looks as if we have our own Salman Rushdie."  
Aleksandr Mikhailov (Lecturer at the Gorky Literature Institute)

"If we immerse ourselves too much in the text, we may identify ourselves too much with the hero, and run the risk that whenever the real Christ knocks on the door of the soul of humanity no-one will open up because His place has already been taken by this double."  
Akhilla

"The Iesus in Zobern's 'Autobiography' is an icon of the antichrist."  
Archpriest Chaplin (Former adviser to the Russian Patriarch Kirill)



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
1 language

**awards**  
Pyatigorsky Award nom. 2018  
National Bestseller shortlist 2018  
NOS Award 2017  
Debut Prize 2004

**sample translation available**  
english

Zobern was born in Moscow in 1980. After finishing the school of the Patriarch of Moscow, Oleg Zobern joined a forest monastery for a year. In 2004 he won the Russian Debut Prize with a volume of short stories and then went to the Gorky Literature Institute. He then studied at Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University. His first novel "Russian Demons" immediately won the NOS prize. His novel "Autobiography of Iesus Christ" sparked off a fierce discussion in the social networks. Orthodox Christians demanded that the book be banned and that the author be prosecuted. Members of the extreme-orthodox organization "Sorok Sorokov" (responsible, amongst other actions, for threats to the members of Pussy Riot and for campaigns against the movie "Mathilda") bought many copies of the books in order to burn them. As a result Zobern was provided with a private bodyguard by his publishers and, as the orthodox extremists obtained his address and set up pickets in front of his home, he felt obliged to change his place of residence in Russia.

# Oleg Zobern

TRUE STORY  
| MEMOIR

true story | memoir

# Sugar Child

A story of a girl from the last century as told by Stella Nudolskaya

**Memoir.** KompasGide. Moscow 2013. 160 pages with photographs

With a preface by Lyudmila Ulitskaya

What is it like to be a „public enemy“ from one day to the next, to be exposed to Stalin's repressions - the Great Terror? Stella Nudolskaja experienced it with her parents in the Soviet Union of the 1930s. Separated from their father, who was killed by the Soviet regime, mother and daughter Elia were deported from Moscow to Kyrgyzstan in 1937, where they were humiliated, marginalized, hungry and suffering. Their lives resemble an odyssey from one labour camp to the next, from one foreign environment to the next; uncertainty and fear as constant companions. Nevertheless, mother and daughter maintain an independent and dignified attitude to life. And: they take back home with storytelling and singing. Elia and her mother are released when the construction of the camp is completed. But they are then forced to stay in the region and, above all, to find work and housing on their own. When her mother coughs and gets sick ending up suffering lying on the ground near a barn, they have nothing left. Elia does not lose courage, and knocks on the door of a farm that houses a very large family headed by a good, courageous and taciturn man, Saveli Yuzhakov. He takes Elia and her mother in and treats them well. They call Elia „kant bala“ (Child of sugar in Kyrgyz), because of the whiteness of her skin. 1941, Russia enters the Second World War and her mother is forced to leave her job. She finds a job as a German teacher. 1946, Elia and her mother are allowed (thanks to a falsified document) to return to Moscow and some time later they are rehabilitated. They learned many years later that the father died at Magadan camp in 1940.

At a time of global antagonisms and differentiation of all kinds, this story shows that man is still man, when life is at stake. And that different peoples, languages, cultures are able to coexist and support each other. A story about love, and yet about dignity and freedom. As in Roberto Benigni's film „Life is Beautiful“, a father manages to get through the horror of Nazi concentration camps with a smile on his son's face, in this book a mother guides her daughter with great dignity and perspective through deportation and misery. A beautiful educational novel, a love story about the strength of the heart and freedom leaving the reader moved to tears and stronger. As Elia's mother says: „Slavery is a state of mind. Free man can't be made a slave.“

„Sugar Child“ is the documentary fact of a miracle – the education of a human personality under inhuman conditions. At the same time it is a guide through the vanished camp world, which enables us to see in detail both the anthropology of the state crime and the hidden secret of the emerging resistance.“ *Sergei Lebedev*

„This true story full of light about Stalinist oppression, seen through the eyes of a child sent into exile in Central Asia in the 1930s, makes a significant contribution to the fragile memory of contemporary Russia, where exploration of the period is increasingly marginalized.“ *Le Monde*

In 1988, Olga Gromova, active librarian and editor-in-chief of the specialized journal „Biblioteka v shkole“, met her neighbour, Stella (nicknamed Elia) Doubrova (Nudolskaya - which is her mother's maiden name), who gradually tells her her personal story. Olga Gromova turned it into a strong and tender book for young people.



Stella Nudolskaya

## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
6 languages

## awards

2015 Russian Children's Choices  
2015 Leo Tolstoy Prize short-list  
2014 V. Krapivin Prize Diploma  
2014 Children's of Saint Petersburg  
and Region choice  
2013 Knigooroo Prize Longlist

**sample available**  
full french

# Olga Gromova



true story / memoir

# Baptized with Crosses

**True story / Memoir.** Vita Nova Publishers. St. Petersburg 2009. 231 pages

National Bestseller Award 2010

**Publishers:** Czech Republic - Albatros, Estonia - Petrone, Finland - Idiootti, France - Noir sur Blanc, Germany - Aufbau, Norway - Cappelen Damm, Poland - Noir sur Blanc, UK- Glagoslav

While the mothers in Siberia wait for their soldier sons to return from the war in the west in 1945, the eight year old Eduard secretly jumps on board the trains heading in the opposite direction, heading west, towards Leningrad. Placed in a Siberian orphanage as a child because his parents were arrested as public enemies there is only one thing he wants: to go back home to Leningrad and to find his mother again. It is not only his desperate courage and his youthful agility that ensure his survival, it is also his artistic talent. With his agile fingers the boy is able to bend wire in the shape of profiles of Lenin and Stalin, as if in silhouette. He uses them to cheer up the invalid war veterans on the train stations returning from the front, who then give him a piece of bread, a bowl of soup and who, in a spirit of comradeship, warn him of the railway police and the secret service henchmen wanting to send the runaway back to the orphanage.

Eduard spends more than six years on the run, experiencing close encounters with post-war Russia where life and fate have become synonyms. He encounters other stowaways, professional beggars, soldiers returning from the war and wartime profiteers, the mothers of soldiers and war invalids, Chinese from the Ural, Cossacks dealing in hashish, Bashkir Estonians, Russian penal colony escapees and, time and again, orphanage directors. In order to survive the winter he often registered himself voluntarily in the next orphanage, each one always a little closer to the West, running away again before the servants of the Stalinist state are able to send him back to Siberia. The memoirs of an old man who, as a boy, learnt to find his way between extortionate state control and marauding banditry, the two poles that characterise Russia to this day. A story about the awakening of artistic talent under highly unusual Russian circumstances.

"The book is so easy and quick to read it gives the reader the impression that it can easily be put aside again afterwards and quickly forgotten. Wrong, for it hits you more solidly than a thriller and every single one of the companions encountered by the little 'runaway' sticks in your mind." *Dmitri Bykov*

"Kochergin's memoirs automatically recall Pasternak's definition of the ideal book – 'a rectangular block just glowing with conscience'... A book just glowing with life's truths and one that leaves even the most unsentimental of readers with a lump in the throat." *Maya Kucherskaya*

Kochergin, born 1937 at the height of Stalin's repression, was separated from his parents as a small child when they were arrested under false charges of being foreign spies. The boy was sent to Siberia to an orphanage for children of "public enemies" from where he some time later escaped. He had survived the following 6 year journey to St. Petersburg only because he could make tattoos and bend wire in the shape of Soviet leaders' profiles. It was only later, after studying at the academy of arts, that he was able to turn his artistic talent into his profession. Kochergin is an internationally acclaimed stage and set designer and is currently the head of stage design at the Bolshoi Dramaticheskii Teatr (Tovstonogov Theater) in St. Petersburg.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
8 languages

**awards**  
National Bestseller Award 2010

**sample available**  
full english

# Eduard Kochergin

NON-RUSSIAN  
LITERARY  
FICTION



Belarusian literary fiction

# Lake of Joy

**Novel.** Vremya. Belarus/Russia 2016. 328 pages

The fate of badly treated Belarus told as a moving coming of age story. Young and strong, Yasya wends her wondrous way between the sleeping Tsarina Agna and the lunar crater Lacus Gaudii, struggling to get out of her messed-up life and into a more human, even if not brighter, future.

Yasya grows up in Minsk. She is the daughter of a Belarusian oligarch and government minister. But the privileged life has a reverse effect on Yasya. Since the death of her mother, her father's only interests are looking after himself, his business and his lover. Yasya is pushed off to a boarding school where the only friendly person is a student jobbing as a door-keeper. One night he shows her the lunar crater Lacus Gaudii, the Lake of Joy, and tells her she should always think about it when she is alone, unhappy and is missing her mother.

Treated as a stranger in her father's house, Yasya has to live in a shed on the estate while studying at university as her father will not pay for her up-keep. On the surface Yasya behaves respectfully to him, but inside her rebellion is beginning to simmer. The adversity and unjustness that she is subjected to hit her very hard, based as they are on nonsensical rejections "from above". To pay off the state-sponsored university fees she is sent to work in the country where she meets the student with the Lacus Gaudii again who is now a geologist and in charge of archaeological excavations. She also visits the local museum where she sees the mummy of the so-called Sleeping Tsarina, considered to be the mother and protectress of Belarus.

And now the silent and patient Yasya explodes into an angry young woman who finally makes her opinions known. There is, however, no room for people like her in present-day Belarus and Yasya escapes to Moscow where she ends up in the red-light district. The easy freedom promised by big-brother Russia turns out to be a cliché. A scholarship for the Vilnius University seems to offer her a chance for the future, though even here her origins catch up with her. She is obliged to return to Minsk where she ends up as an insignificant sales-woman in a kiosk. No triumph, no grand finale. But on making her own way through life Yasya has found humanity in the most unlikely places and at the same time discovered her own sensitive heart.

After the staggeringly astute debut novel PARANOIA and the crazy dystopia MOVA, this is a mature work brimming with realistic life-experiences, full of empathy with the humiliated and insulted, but also with an incorruptible, sober view without illusion of the reality of a dictatorship in Europe.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
4 languages

**awards**  
Bogdanovich Literay Award  
2012  
Best European Fiction anthology  
2011 (Dalkey Archive)

**other works**  
Mova  
Paranoia  
Revolution  
Night

Martinovich was born in Oshmiany, Belarus in 1977. He is a political scientist, doctor of art history, and professor at the Vilnius University. He is a regular contributor to the German weekly DIE ZEIT. His literary works are published parallel in the Belarusian and Russian languages. Paranoia, published in Russia at the end of 2009, was immediately banned from sale in Belarus (unofficially prohibited). In 2017 he was Writer in Residence at the Literaturhaus Zürich and PWG foundation. Martinovich lives with his family in Minsk.

# Viktor Martinovich

Georgian literary fiction

# The Inflatable Angel

**Novel.** Bakur Sulakauri Publishing. Tiflis 2010. 206 pages

Best Georgian Novel of the Year 2011  
Ilia State University Award 2011

**Publishers:** France - L'Age d'Homme, Germany - Blumenbar

At exactly the same time as the eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano filled Europe's skies with ash causing airlines to cancel flights, a young married couple, Niko and his wife Nino, are holding a spiritualist session in a small apartment in Tiflis. Their aim is to call up the spirit of George Gurdjieff.

Gurdjieff was a famous esoteric, writer, choreographer and composer in the early 20th century of importance not only for Georgia, which the Turks and Persians also used to refer to as "Gurdzhistan". During the October Revolution, Gurdjieff and his followers left Russia and withdrew to the Caucasus, and then to Tiflis in the autumn of 1919, where he opened his first Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man. When the political situation in Georgia, too, began to destabilise, he set off on a lecture tour to London, Berlin, Paris, and then later to North America, too. Gurdzhiev died in France in 1949.

Now, however, in 21st-century Tiflis, Gurdjieff appears as a result of the Gorosia's invocation not only in spirit, but in flesh and blood. And because he simply will not go away again, Niko and Nino ask their Gurdjieff to help them in procuring funds. And so Gurdjieff uses all the means available to a resurrected esoteric: kidnapping, blackmail, hypnosis, metamorphosis, miracle cures.

Thanks to their miraculous godsend, the Gorosias move into their newly acquired apartment and open a bakery with a café, while all around them fantastic occurrences are taking place.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
8 languages

**awards**  
Best Georgian Novel 2011  
Ilia State University Award 2011  
Bakur Sulakauri Award 2008  
Tsinandali Literary Award 2003

**samples available**  
english, german

"Zaza Burchuladze has written a touching, amusing as well as a rather sad book."  
*Vladimir Sorokin*

"Anyone who is a fan of rather fantastic yet down-to-earth and astoundingly vivid characters will thoroughly enjoy reading this novel."  
*Evgeni Grishkovets*

"Burchuladze, contrary and absurdist, writes in the imaginary tradition of Eugene Ionesco and Venedikt Erofeev."  
*Kirill Reshetnikov*

**other works**  
Adibas  
Instant Kafka  
Mineral Jazz

Burchuladze, born 1973 in Tiflis, started writing after graduating from the Tiflis National Academy of Arts. He translates Russian authors, including Dostoevsky, Sorokin and Bitov, into Georgian. Burchuladze is considered one of the most important writers of post-Soviet Georgian literature. As an underground writer he initially provoked outrage within Georgian society with his scandal topics and language experiments and was long ignored by critics. Since the appearance of his novels he has become a leading intellectual and one of the most promising authors, and is beginning to achieve fame beyond the borders of Georgia. After aggressive press, a severe insult on the radio by former president Saakashvili, physical attacks on the street of Tiflis and ultraorthodox publicly burning his books, he emigrated to Germany. Since 2014 Burchuladze lives in Berlin.

# Zaza Burchuladze

Lithuanian literary fiction

# Devilspel

**Novel.** Tekst. Moscow 2008. 231 pages

**Publishers:** Germany - Corso, Lithuania - Tito Alba, Macedonia - Prozart, UK - Noir Press

The novel is set during the tragic few weeks in June-July 1941, when the German army in a sudden attack defeated the Red Army and within a few days occupied Lithuania. Kanovich limits the spatial horizon of his novel to a small isolated village deep in the Lithuanian heartland. After the outbreak of the war Mishkine seems to be cut off from the surrounding world with all normal connections suspended. The village is too insignificant for the Germans to maintain their presence there, and its residents are left to their own devices. Slowly and painstakingly, Kanovich investigates the spiritual depths of the characters, simple shtetl Jews and Lithuanian peasants, exposing their moral strengths and weaknesses. He lets them speak in their voices and articulate their positions, but as an omniscient narrator he guides the story the final tragic historical juncture where the age-long peaceful Jewish-Lithuanian co-existence explodes and falls apart forever. Kanovich's writing is informed by his deep native knowledge of the Lithuanian countryside where he grew up in the 1930s, but he is no less intimately familiar with the Russian and Jewish cultures. Yet his real interest as a writer is in exploring the fundamental and universal ethical conflict between good and evil, which transcends the limits of concrete space and time.

"I am no Jewish author, since I write in Russian. No Russian author, since I write about Jews. And no Lithuanian author, because it is not the Lithuanian language I engage in."

"*Devilspel* is a remarkable example of a literary work that represents a real historical situation, with all its complexities and nuances, as a philosophical parable of universal significance." *Mikhail Krutikov, Prof. of Slavic and Judaic Studies, Univ. of Michigan*

"With the publication of *Devilspel*, Grigory Kanovich will take his place amongst the great Jewish writers of eastern Europe." *Dr. Paul Socken, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of Waterloo*

Kanovich was born into a traditional Jewish family in the Lithuanian town of Jonava in 1929. Together with his parents he fled war-stricken Lithuania and spent years in exile in Kazakhstan and the Ural Mountains. In 1945 the family returned to Vilnius. Here, in 1953, Kanovich graduated from Vilnius State University with a degree in Slavic studies. He has written more than ten novels – a virtual epic saga – dealing with the vicissitudes of the history of Eastern European Jewry from the 19th century to the present day. Kanovich was declared a citizen of honor (2013) of his home-town Jonava. Between 1989 and 1993 Kanovich served as Chairman of the Jewish Community of Lithuania. Since 1993 the writer has lived in Israel. He is a member of the PEN club in both Israel and Russia. Kanovich is married and has two sons. He lives in Israel.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
5 languages

**awards**  
National Prize in Art & Culture,  
Lithuania 2014

**sample translations available**  
full english

**other works**  
*Shtetl Romance*

# Grigori Kanovich

Ukrainian literary fiction

## Your Turn (Y.T.)

**Novel.** Ad Marginem. Russia 2011. 208 pages

**Publishers:** Italy - Voland, UK - Peter Owen

Ukraine, 1984. The Soviet Union is creaking toward collapse, and a group of bored radiophysics students devise a strategy game to keep themselves entertained. But war games are no joke, and no sooner does their game get underway than the KGB pulls the students in for questioning. Eventually they're released, but they remain marked men.

The second time line of the novel starts twenty years later, capitalism is in full swing when one member of the group, Davidov, receives an e-mail with a familiar ultimatum attached. Someone has revived the game, but it's not any of his friends from the university . . . and the consequences now feel more real than ever.

ISTEMI follows an innocent-seeming game to its darkest places, and the result is a disturbing vision of war and tyranny. ISTEMI is a wildly inventive novel exploring the banality deep in the heart of a paranoid totalitarian state.



### THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
4 languages

**awards**  
National Bestseller 2014  
Russkaya Premia shortlist 2013

**other works**  
Mayong  
Victory Park

**samples available**  
full english

"The mystery plot...comes to a sublime anticlimax...a gritty, jaded depiction of post-1989 Ukraine." *Wall Street Journal*

"The story — at times hauntingly evocative... is held together by the narrator's nuanced character." *The New Yorker*

"Y.T. is gripping, sardonic and elegantly written." *BBC*

"Encapsulates a multitude of Ukraines... Y.T. questions how much change a few decades, or even centuries, of war and revolution can ever really bring... Nikitin's Kiev is a city on a hill littered with nostalgia, enjoying a tenuous, tedious peace." *Times Literary Supplement*

"[A] tense and melancholic novel of trust betrayed." *Publishers Weekly*  
„Nikitin is an incisive social critic...Stands as an indictment against corruption and false promises, wherever they occur." *Asymptote*

Nikitin was born in Kiev in 1967. After completing his course of physics at the university of Kiev and his period of conscription he established his own company in 1992 and worked on different projects for the Ukrainian oil, chemical and atomic industries. In 2000 he published his first volume of poetry, which was awarded the Korolenko prize by the Ukrainian writers association for the best poetry of the year. In 2002 Nikitin closed his business operations and worked for several years as an IT journalist. Afterwards he dedicated himself completely to his literary activities and has since published several novels. Nikitin lives in Kiev.

# Aleksei Nikitin

NARRATIVE  
NON-FICTION

narrative non-fiction

# Look at me

The secret story of Liza Dyakonova

**Biography.** AST. Moscow 2017. 435 pages

1902, Austria, the Tyrolean Alps. The young Russian, Liza Dyakonova, a student of law at the Sorbonne University in Paris, interrupted her journey from Paris to Russia to stay with her aunt in Tyrol. During her visit she set off alone for a hike in the mountains and did not return. It is only a month later that the naked body of the young woman is found by a hill farmer on the bank of a mountain stream. Is it murder or suicide? The circumstances of her death remain a mystery. Her diary, found after her death, was published and highly praised by the famous Russian philosopher Vasily Rosanov as „the best literary work written by a woman“, but ultimately it sank into oblivion. Just like Liza herself. Based on the diary and recently discovered archive material, Basinski's „documentary novel“ attempts to find an explanation for her mysterious death.

Liza Dyakonova was one of the first women, if not the very first Russian, indeed European woman, to study law. With great sensitivity, but also with great conviction, Basinski leads us closer to the psyche of this young, brave and spirited intellectual, and to her struggle with the traditionalists in society, her environment and her family. He also shows her own internal struggles. And stepping outside Liza's biography, he presents us with the social circumstances of the time, but only as far as they are relevant to Liza's fate. He describes the different social classes and reform movements, the education system, the bureaucratic administration of the Russian Empire, and the influence of Turgenev on the minds of literarily educated women. By placing her individual tragedy in the context of her time, Dyakonova's importance is not belittled, but rather it is accentuated and the exceptional and exemplary historical aspects of her situation emphasised. On the one hand brave and radically progressive, on the other tragically trapped by her own circumstances, she had the potential to become a guiding figure of European feminism, if her fate had been known or, alternatively, not completely neglected by the Russian intellectuals. The re-discovery of this exceptional woman may well correct this.

“Basinski has written a documentary-thriller about the first Russian feminist.”  
*Rossiiskaya gazeta*

“Pavel Basinski is the only Russian non-fiction author who, in an abundance of historical facts, can detect a story in the literary sense of the word and then, without deviating from the credibly documented evidence, is able to weave it into an entertaining tale.” *Galina Yuzefovich*

“It is difficult to say whether this book is a biography, a psychological study or a magnificent essay on feminism. What is obvious is that this is no ordinary novel. Nevertheless, this book is more emotionally moving than all others.”  
*National Bestseller*

Basinski was born in 1961 in Frolovo town (Volgograd region). He studied at the Saratov University and the Maxim Gorky Literature Institute in Moscow. He has a PhD in Russian Philology. Basinski is one of the most influential and highly acclaimed literary critics in Russia. He publishes in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, *Novi Mir*, *Oktyabr*, *Znamya*, *Druzhba narodov* and others. He was a jury member of several major Russian literary prizes, such as the Russian Booker, the Alexander Solzhenitsyn Prize and the Yasnaya Polyana Prize. He works as culture editor of *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. Basinski lives in Moscow.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
18 languages

**awards**  
2010 Big Book  
2010 Book of the Year  
(Tolstoy: Escape from Paradise)  
2008 Big Book shortlist  
1998 Anti-Booker Prize

# Pavel Basinski



narrative non-fiction

# Lenin

Ruler of Sun Dust

**Biography.** Molodaya Gvardia. Moscow 2017. 480 pages

2017 Big Book Award

2017 Book of the Year

2020 is 150th anniversary of Lenin's birthday

2024 is 100th anniversary of Lenin's death

Of course, you immediately think of everything you knew about Lenin so far. And you can confidently forget it while reading this book, which is quite different and more than just another Lenin biography.

Subject – Observed, analyzed, and accompanied as a historical and human phenomenon: revolutionary, politician, journalist, economist, speaker, manager, lawyer, chess player, cyclist, travel enthusiast, sportsman. Without ideological blinkers, Danilkin tries to understand the logic behind each of Lenin's steps possible at any given time, without allowing himself to be distracted neither from the Soviet nor the anti-Soviet discourse.

Composition – The immense documentary material base of this historically accurate biography is organized in an unorthodox and original way – geographically. Instead of an old-fashioned „Portrait on the Background of the Epoch“, the reader is taken on a discovery route to the places of Lenin's active work. Danilkin models them to speaking landscapes and mood carriers for his hero.

Style – To bring Lenin closer to today's readers, Danilkin uses contemporary slang, neologisms from the world of IT and social networks, and comparisons with figures and phenomena from literature, cinema, and pop culture.

Narrator – With the trick of introducing a narrator sceptical at first but capable of learning, Danilkin biography becomes not only extremely entertaining, but makes transparent at a high intellectual level that also the historical questioner is constantly influenced and changed by the object of his investigation.

“This book is not about bringing Lenin back to the Russian Pantheon or making him the idol of youth. The aim is to infect the reader with his own passion ... This book is an injection of sound reason, justice and healthy anger.” *Dmitri Bykov*

“(Danilkin) does neither try to archaize his narrative style artificially, nor to adapt it to the material, he is not devoted to the way his hero speaks. Danilkin speaks exactly as he would talk to his contemporaries about any other person. And that undoubtedly gives this book its relevance and freshness: Not a trace of the dust and patina we're used to when dealing with Lenin.” *Galina Yuzefovich*

Danilkin was born in 1974. He is one of Russia's most advanced literary critics and had his own column in Afisha magazine for fifteen years. Since 2017 he has been an editor in the cultural section of Rossiiskaya Gazeta. He was also a jury member for the Litsei Prize, the Russian-Italian Gorky Prize and the National Bestseller Award. In addition to a collection of short prose, he has published three biographies in the famous edition ZhZL (Life of Famous People). Parallel to his Lenin biography, he published an anthology of selected works by Lenin. Danilkin has also translated Julian Barnes into Russian. Danilkin lives in Moscow.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
2 languages

## awards

2017 Big Book Award

2017 Book of the Year

2011 Alexander Nevsky Award

2007 Big Book Shortlist

# Lev Danilkin



narrative non-fiction

# The Putin System

**Socio-political analysis.** Manuscript 2016. 280 pages

Preface by Garri Kasparov and Zhanna Nemtsova

**Publishers:** Germany - Heyne

This book is an SOS from a Russian expert. He has lived through the end of democracy in his own country and he sees the need to warn readers outside Russia of the comparable risks facing their own countries. Is the whole world about to experience a long period of instability and social and political regression? Is Europe facing the threat of a major war?

From the start Eidman presents the regime in Russia as the pioneer and leader of a new far-right conservative movement. He lists Putin together with politicians such as Trump, Erdogan, Marine le Pen, Urban, Hofer, Frauke Petry, and others. The aggressive regime Putin has created in the east of Europe is contriving to reestablish its power base within the former Soviet sphere of influence. The author describes how Putin tries to influence the public opinion in western countries in order to destabilise the political status quo, how he supports far-right organisations throughout the world and how Moscow has become the command centre for a neo-conservative revolution.

Eidman analyses how Putin came to power and how, using various pretences, he has turned Russia into an autocratic regime. Authoritarian organisations in western countries are now attempting a similar procedure. Eidman's book must be seen, not only as shock-therapy for Russophiles in particular, but also as a warning for all, thereby enabling a necessary and appropriate assessment of the situation and the accompanying danger. The book provides detailed information of the source of the threat, its nature and how it could be countered. It is the author's opinion that tolerating Putin is equivalent to accepting the neo-conservative revolution, by which the liberal West is to be reduced to a model of Putin's design.

The book is easily accessible and reads like an angry political pamphlet intending to shake up a wide base of readers outside Russia. Thanks to his experience in working in elevated Russian political circles Eidman has important insider information, which he shares with the readers of this book.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
1 language

**samples available**  
german

Eidman was born in Gorky (today Nizny Novgorod) in 1968 as the son of a famous physicist. After graduating in history he began his career in the 1990s, working as journalist and editor for different media. He later became political consultant for high-ranking politicians, members of the Russian Duma and leaders of the liberal parties. The publication of his conceptual research work on theoretical sociology and social history entitled "Breakthrough to the Future. The Sociology of the Internet Revolution" brought him overnight fame. He took on the post of Communications Director with the Russian Centre for Public Opinion Research (VCIOM). However, after his support as a witness for the New Times for uncovering an in-house corruption scandal, he lost his job and, seeing himself and his family under increased pressure, he emigrated to Germany. Not many years later his cousin, the opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, was murdered in Moscow. Eidman's most recent publication is "Das System Putin" (Heyne, Germany, 2016). He writes for wellknown German-language newspapers such as SZ, FAZ, NZZ or magazines such as Focus and has his own column with the Deutsche Welle.

# Igor Eidman

narrative non-fiction

# Winter Road

**Narrative non-fiction.** AST. Moscow 2016. 426 pages

2016 National Bestseller Award  
2016 Big Book Award  
2016 Booker Prize Translation Grant

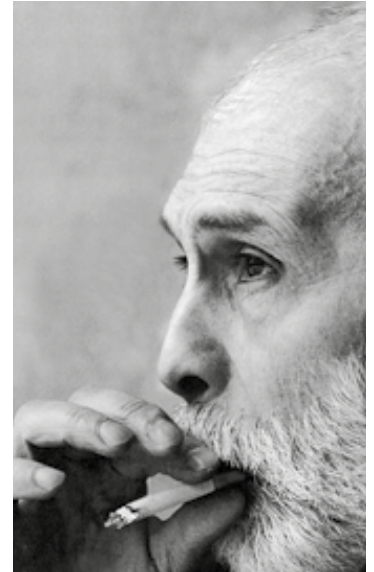
**Publishers:** Bulgaria - Ednorog, France - Noir sur Bland, Poland - Noir sur Blanc, Serbia - Russika

In St. Petersburg the Bolsheviks have already won the Civil War. But in the far east of Siberia, the Yakuts have dared to launch the final uprising against the Red Army. The scattered remains of the White Army have also withdrawn to far off Siberia. Among them is General Anatoly Pepelyaev who in 1922 hastens to the aid of the Yakuts in Vladivostok with a force of volunteers. Pepelyaev – a poet and seeker of truth, a fighter for self-

determination and the freedom of men – sees in supporting the Yakuts a last chance to defend his own political ideals.

His opponent on the other side is the commander of the Red Army: the anarchist and author-to-be Ivan Strod. He, too, is an exceptionally enigmatic character of the Revolution years. We are thus introduced to two men, who purely by coincidence have become ideological enemies, despite being driven by similar principles.

By using this hardly known episode of the Russian Revolution in his twice award-winning non-fictional novel, Yuzefovich is able to portray deeper human motives: the love, passion and individual suffering that are buried in the ideology are revealed and the characters shown to be both oppressor and victim. In the end each individual is responsible for the Russian tragedy. Thanks to his literary creativity, Yuzefovich is able to turn the strictly formalised reports of the time into realistic stories reflecting the deeply human aspects of those events.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
9 languages

## awards

National Bestseller 2016  
Big Book Award 2016  
Booker Translation Grant 2016  
Russian Booker shortlist 2009  
Big Book Award 2009

**samples available**  
english

## other works

Putilin series  
Horsemen of the Desert  
Kazaroza  
Cranes and Pygmies

"Leonid Yuzefovich's 'Winter's Road', one of the most enjoyable works of nonfiction I've read in a long time, with Civil War figures and wonderful details about people, places, and politics." *Liza Hayden*

Yuzefovich, born 1947 in Moscow, spent his childhood and youth in the Urals. He has a Doctorate in History and is known to a wide audience of readers through his historical thrillers about Ivan Putilin. Yuzefovich is capable of interweaving detailed knowledge of historical fact with masterly literary style into the plot of a thriller. L. Yuzefovich lives in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

# Leonid Yuzefovich

TRUE CRIME  
THRILLER  
DETECTIVE

thriller

# Charon Coronation of the Beast My Brother Cain

**Thriller Trilogy.** Eksmo. Moscow 2016-2017. Ca. 320 pages each

**Publishers:** Poland - Insignis

This trilogy is a masterful mix of classical American high-tension political thriller, alive with realistic characters, cinematographic in detail and scope, and of classic Russian intellectual prose, with philosophical and social tension reminiscent of Dostoyevsky's "Demons". A page turner with the plot precisely organized with dynamic pace and action in each individual novel as well as in the trilogy as a whole.

Each novel can be read separately, because in each case the first-person narrator in the centre of the plot is a different hero or heroine. Thanks to this approach three different narrators relate in each novel their perspective of the same event – albeit as perpetrator, intermediary or victim. In addition, the author manages to fictionally connect the remote political participants to the main protagonists in a personal relationship, thereby mirroring the governmental intrigues and power struggles on a personal level. In this way the characters and their motives become easily and emotionally accessible. And the psychologically and intelligently crafted protagonists never become predictable; they are neither only good nor only bad and are easily recognizable to the reader, although to prolong the suspense the author occasionally alters the points of identification.

All three novels deal with the different phases that could occur in a serious upheaval in modern Russia. Within the chronological and atmospherical composition of the trilogy, part 1 (planning and assassination) represents the calm before the storm, part 2 (power vacuum after the murder of the president) presents the unleashing of violence, and part 3 (the new regime) stands for the deceptive peace.

With great insight Bochkov reveals a provocatively straight-forward view of Russia at home in the West – skilfully presents the reader with the external western perspective, but at the same time causes the Westerner to feel directly involved and affected. The great similarity with present-day characters and events is deliberate and strengthens the breath-taking effect of experiencing the historical possibility in a seemingly live transmission.

Whether the future of Russian history is being written in these three books, or whether the reading will write a new future, only time will tell.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
1 language

**awards**  
Toronto-based Ernest  
Hemingway Award 2016  
Russian Award 2013

**samples available**  
Vol. 1 in full english

Bochkov was born in Latvia and grew up in Moscow. He studied graphic design and was creative director of a PR agency based in Moscow and New York between 1995 and 2000. He then emigrated to the USA. With his own Studio for visual communications he worked out the visual concept for popular shows on Discovery Channel or ABC. For the project Greede TV he was given the ADDY Award. As professional artist he had around a dozen personal exhibitions in Europe and the US and had been invited twice to the Edinburgh Art Festival. His first stories as a literary author were published in 2012. Besides several nominations for Russian shortlists (National best-seller, Big Book, Booker, NOS) he was awarded the Russian Prize 2013, the most prestigious literary award for writers living outside of Russia and writing in Russian. Valery Bochkov speaks Russian, English and German. Bochkov lives and works in Washington, USA.

# Valery Bochkov

thriller

# The Flight

**Thriller.** Bright Star Publishing. Kiev 2017. 430 pages

**Publishers:** Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland

Rejected by Russian publishers for distribution  
Inspired by true events, extensive research and war reporting

Sergei Alyokhin, a former corrupt Russian cop hiding under a false identity in L.A., is anxious to rejoin his beloved wife Lena and two young daughters. He hasn't seen them for three long years since he busted the cargo transport of a most powerful mafia syndicate in Russia and fled. The mafia's angry leader swore to find the fugitive, and not only get the syndicate's money back, but avenge his son's death. Finally Alyokhin believes that he has covered his track sufficiently and invites his wife and daughters to join him for the long awaited family reunion at a luxurious island resort in Thailand. Their flight London-Bangkok perishes with 298 people on board over eastern Ukraine. Alyokhin wants to find the culprits and take his personal revenge not only on the perpetrators but also on those who ordered the heinous crime.

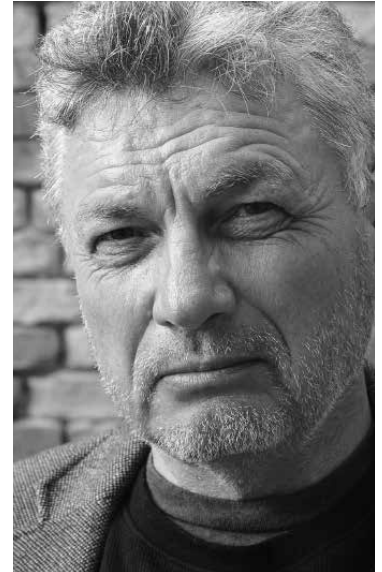
In private investigations he sides up with an ambitious and fearless US journalist Jane Ashley. They help each other to survive and uncover the truth. But their motivations are different: while Alyokhin is not much interested in politics, she wants a Pulitzer Prize which kept evading her, she wants to provide evidence and a live witness for the Hague International Tribunal trial to be. In their deadly quest amid the unfolding armed hostilities between Russia and Ukraine Alyokhin and Jane find themselves doggedly pursued by the military, special service agents, mafia syndicate professional hitmen and ... a manic serial killer, who suddenly emerges from Alyokhin's violent past to settle old scores with the former homicide investigator.

Very soon they come to realize that they are actually on a suicidal mission with no chance to survive. But against all odds they continue to follow the tracks they uncover. The tracks that ultimately lead them to the highest echelons of Russian power.

"The author has so skillfully built up the suspense that you cannot get away from it, not even for a second; you are dragged through every phase of this compact story, from the first chapter and not just to the last chapter, but to the very last line. To the very last line ... The episodes of this novel are not merely snap-shots, they are multi-layered images, like a CAT-scan. Every hero, a character; every character, a story; every story, a destiny."  
*colta.ru*

"The mainspring and quality of this novel is the human suffering and desire to discover the truth about the circumstances involved in the shooting down flight MH-17. This turns the novel into a genuine political thriller, one that we desperately need in our post-factual world to be able to penetrate the cloud of lies covering the squalid conflict in the Ukraine."  
*Sergei Medvedev, Historian*

Loiko was born in Moscow in 1953. He served in the Soviet army and was later awarded a degree in philology. For the past twenty-five years, Loiko had been the Moscow correspondent and photographer for the Los Angeles Times, specializing in wars and armed conflicts. Loiko covered the Ukrainian revolution and the subsequent war virtually nonstop from the first day until 2015. The rights of his Documentary novel AIRPORT have been sold to 9 countries. Loiko now lives in Texas, USA, and Moscow, Russia.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
9 languages

**awards**  
L.A. Times editorial award 2015  
Overseas Press Club's Bob  
Considine Award 2014

**other work**  
Airport  
(full english available)

# Sergei Loiko

historical detective novel

# Kazaroza

**Historical Detective Novel.** AST. Moscow 2002. 400 pages

Shortlist Booker Prize 2003

**Publishers:** China - Radio Film & TV Press

Set in 1920, civil war is still raging in Russia. The famous St Petersburg singer Zinaida Kazaroza arrives in a city in the Ural. The members of the local Esperanto Club invite her to sing. Then she is shot under mysterious circumstances during the concert. The journalist and revolutionary Svechnikov, a secret admirer of Kazaroza, together with the poet Vagin, undertake to trace her murderer.

A beautiful woman: one might suspect a classic motive for murder. But during the course of the novel, the investigations into the death of Kazaroza become entwined with the story of the Esperanto movement which was very active at the beginning of the 20th century. Slowly but surely, the members of rival factions amongst these revolutionary language utopians come under suspicion of murder. In the end, however, murderer and motive are quite different to what the two "investigators" and the reader are led to expect.

Kazaroza is both an historical and a philosophical detective novel in which Yuzefovich again proves the highly stylised mastery with which he weaves his factually accurate historical material into an unusually exotic and thrilling detective story. That affectionate, ironic wink that always accompanies his heroes is also there throughout.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
9 languages

**awards**  
National Bestseller 2016  
Big Book Award 2016  
Booker Translation Grant 2016  
Russian Booker shortlist 2009  
Big Book Award 2009

**samples available**  
english

"Yuzefovich writes with subtle irony, detailed historical knowledge and a great feeling for language – a literary phenomenon!" Kniznoe Obozrenie

"One cannot praise enough the simple and elegant manner in which Yuzefovich engineers his intrigues. And in the end, all of the riddles are solved so magnificently." Booker Prize Jury

"One often hears the question: we know Pelevin, Sorokin, and Akunin. Are there not any other good writers? Yes there are. Leonid Yuzefovich." Konservator

"Since the heroine of the novel is a singer there is quite a lot about records. And when one pays attention to the passages dedicated to music, one can literally hear Kazaroza singing." Vasily Varvarin

## other works

Winter Road  
Horsemen of the Desert  
The Putilin Series  
Cranes and Pygmies

Yuzefovich, born 1947 in Moscow, spent his childhood and youth in the Urals. He has a Doctorate in History and is known to a wide audience of readers through his historical thrillers about Ivan Putilin. Yuzefovich is capable of interweaving detailed knowledge of historical fact with masterly literary style into the plot of a thriller. L. Yuzefovich lives in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

# Leonid Yuzefovich



women's detective novel

# Black shelf Black dolphins In the black body

**Women's detective series.** Eksmo. Moscow 2018. approx. 350 pages each

The main character is the Moscow investigative journalist Inga Belova. Due to a scandal, she and her photographer colleague Oleg were dismissed from the glossy magazine QQ. Inga has since tried her luck as a freelance investigative video blogger. She encounters strange incidents, mostly in her immediate private environment, in which the police see no reason to investigate. Thus Inga herself begins with investigations. Among her supporters are her photographer colleague and friend Oleg, forensic scientist Kholodikver, detective Kirill Arkharov and a mysterious IT guy who hides behind the pseudonym Indiwind and makes special requests for Inga for a small fee: researching addresses, telephone numbers and personal data, cracking passwords, checking the accuracy of information, etc.

Inga herself has the rare gift of seeing spoken words as colours and thus their emotional colouring (similar to synaesthesia). As helpful as this is in her research, as disturbing is it in her private life. Since she cannot turn it off, she also analyses telephone calls with her mother or daughter in clairvoyant commentaries, which also makes subplots in the novel entertaining and funny.

With the young Inga Belova, the female author collective succeeds in creating a modern, authentic main heroine: thoroughly honest and soberly analytical, cheeky, thoughtful and reliable, willing to take risks to the brink of illegality, insistent to the point of stubbornness. As the single mother of a pubescent daughter, we also experience her from her vulnerable, self-doubting side. As a divorced single woman, she attracts the attention of men not only because of her research: ex-husband, best friend and colleague, old classmate, detective and others. Or is it Inga who gives herself a certain hope? The consistent further development of the main heroine Inga not only succeeds very convincingly as a single mother, but also as a „left alone“ woman.

In terms of content, the authors of the collective always focus on very up-to-date topics: international art trade in connection with robbery and counterfeiting, demolition of entire residential quarters in Moscow in connection with land speculation, influence of social networks on the psyche (discussion about depression), etc. Each time they prove their ability to compose the theme into an intelligently entangled plot with several unexpected twists and turns and, moreover, to very cleverly lay the wrong tracks. The main plot in all cases takes place in today's Moscow. Its streets, squares, quarters and backyards, described in detail, provide the concretely recognizable crime scenes for the series.



\* Maria Dolon is the pen name of a female collective of authors:  
Nelli Abdullina, Natalya Zvezdkina, Tatyana Lebedeva, Natalya Poroshina, Elena Rykova

# Maria Dolon\*