

CANKARJEVA ZALOŽBA PUBLISHING HOUSE

BOOKS 2021

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CANKARJEVA ZALOŽBA PUBLISHING HOUSE

Established in 1947, Cankarjeva založba is one of the largest and most prolific publishing houses in Slovenia, publishing around fifty titles a year. In September 2004 Cankarjeva založba became part of Mladinska knjiga Publishing House Group.

Cankarjeva založba's publishing programme offers works from various fields, for example, drama, poetry, children and youth literature, travel writing, language handbooks, and monographic publications, all the while putting great focus on Slovene authors.

All work published under their name is available for purchase online at www.emka.si.

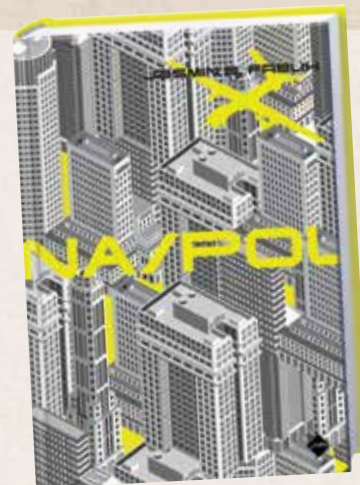
JASMIN B. FRELIH

Foto: Maj Pavček



JASMIN B. FRELIH (1986, Kranj, Slovenia) studied at the University of Ljubljana, where he co-founded the literary magazine *Idiot* and worked as its prose editor for four years, publishing the best and brightest writers of the young Slovene literary scene. His short stories, essays and translations were published in all the major Slovene literary magazines. In 2015, he published a short story collection *Ideoluzije (Tiny Ideologies)* and in 2017 an essay collection *Bleda svoboda (Pale freedom)*.

IN/HALF (*Na/pol*) is a globalist novel set in a post-globalist future. The book interweaves three distinct narrative threads: Evan, an addict theatre director in Tokyo in the future, is staging a play and lamenting the loss of the love of his life. Kras, a family patriarch and ex-war-minister, is celebrating his 50th birthday in the Slovenian part of what could nowadays be called Fortress Europe. Zoja, an anarchist poet, is getting ready to read at the Brooklyn festival Poetrylytics, attended by a motley crew of intellectuals, artists and madmen. *In/Half* uses every trick in the postmodernist playbook, while also taking the tricks seriously. Not content to push the limits of text's possibilities, the novel charges its investigations into the fate of the individual, of the family, and of society, with a solemn ontology and sends its characters hurtling through a disconnected world filled with the debris of past histories for them to find a sense of belonging. With its sharp focus on the contradictions of modernity, and with the reading experience likened to an extended surfing session on a world wide web crafted by an ingenious demiurge, *In/Half* is a powerful statement on the nature of the novel by a voice from the new generation of writers.



- › AWARD FOR THE BEST FIRST BOOK AT THE SLOVENE BOOK FAIR IN 2013.
- › ONE OF THE THREE FINALISTS FOR THE SOCIETY OF SLOVENE LITERARY CRITICS' AWARD FOR THE BEST ORIGINAL WORK OF 2013.
- › ONE OF THE FIVE FINALISTS FOR THE KRESNIK AWARD FOR THE BEST SLOVENE NOVEL.
- › SHOWCASED AS THE SLOVENE ENTRY FOR THE 2014 EUROPEAN FIRST NOVEL FESTIVAL IN BUDAPEST, HUNGARY.
- › EUROPEAN UNION LITERATURE PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

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ZORAN KNEŽEVIĆ



Foto: Saša Kovačič

ZORAN KNEŽEVIĆ was born in Serbia (1958), but has since 1995 lived in Slovenia; his experiences as an immigrant are often the subject matter of his stories. He received the first award at the literary competition organised by Radio Slovenia for his story *Soba* (Room), whilst with the stories *Polje soje* (A Field of Soya) and *Herpes zoster* he twice won the Prose Competition at the Fabula Festival. He has published in the journal *Literatura* and on Radio Študent and Radio Slovenia; he has also taken part in the Literature Artistic Society's short story workshops.

AMPHIBIANS DIE TWICE

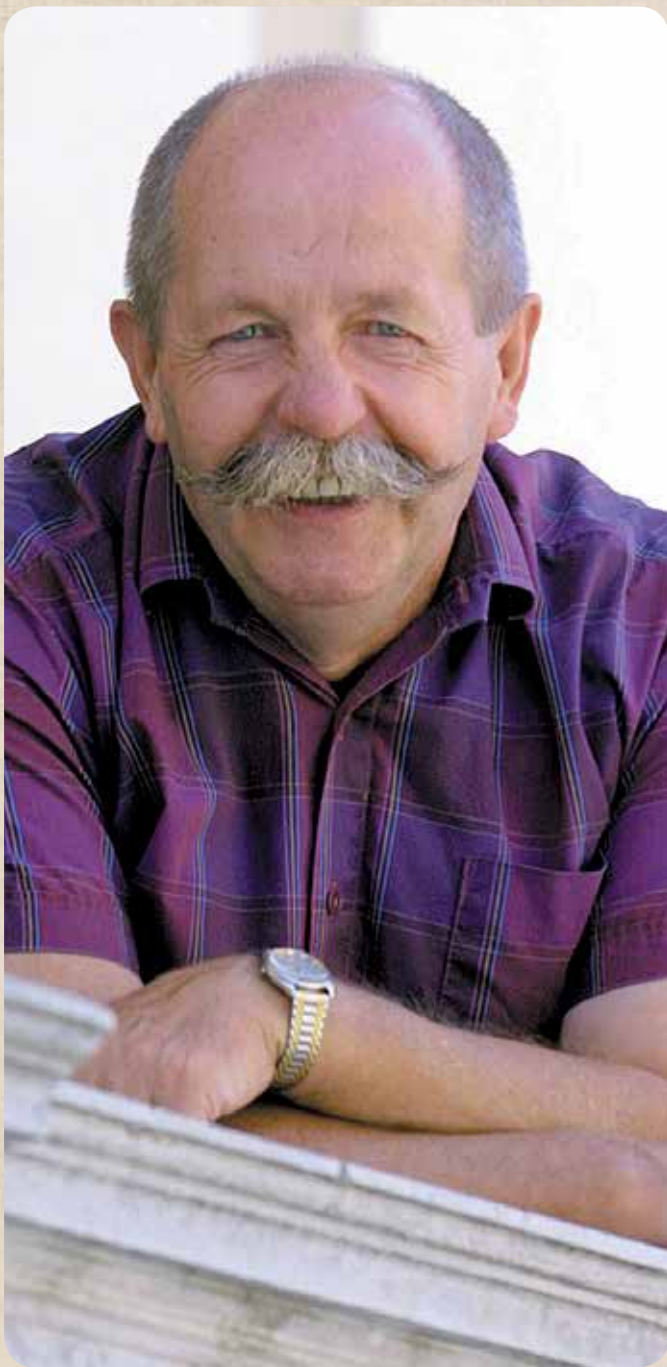
(*Dvoživke umirajo dvakrat*)

This short story collection offers a fresh insight into the life of immigrants from the former Yugoslav republics, but not stopping only there. This is a book which courageously reveals the lives of strangers living next to us, whom we know only by sight and whose stories have a great deal to tell us and which can help us achieve mutual understanding and coexistence.

Stories also talk about physical work, the body, pain and intense conflicts. They are stories of "amphibians", the protagonists torn between two poles, who feel truly at home neither here nor there. On the one hand there is Serbia: the protagonists are connected to it by their warm memories of their childhood and youth, of their home village and the heroic rock and roll era, but also by memories of the patriarchal society, the deeply rooted prejudices and the violence that later erupted into war. Slovenia as their destination offers the protagonists a more relaxed view of the world, but at the same time it is also marked by tough working conditions and life on the margins of poverty. Although there is room for humour in the stories...



MILAN DEKLEVA



MILAN DEKLEVA (1946) is the author of seven novels, two collections of short prose, three books of essays and twenty-two poetry collections. He has written a great deal for theatre, television and musical stages. He is also the author of numerous poetic, narrative and theatre works for children, and a translator.

A BODY OF LETTERS (*Telo iz črk*)

This short novel is inspired by the personality and incredible life story of the Slovene-German traveller and writer Alma Karlin (1889 – 1950), born in Celje, Slovenia. The three main themes of the novel are her passion for writing, her love for Thea Schreiber Gamelin and her spiritual journey into theosophy. The novel is divided into three parts, which focus on the dramatic milestones in Alma's life: from 1910 until World War One (London, Christiania), the start of her journey around the world (1920, Genoa, Arequipa) and the time after her return home (from 1932 to 1944, from meeting Gamelin until Alma joined the Partisans). The narrator is led by imagination and intuition, through which he tries to sketch a mental portrait of the daring, courageous and talented heroine in conflict with the increasing brutality of the last century.



Rights sold to Austria.

DOCTOR FAULSTAFF INSTITUTE

(*Inštitut doktorja Faulstaffa*)

A biosemantics expert, involved in perfecting artificial intelligence, gets Pick's disease. Demotion at work, the suicide of his youngest son and a traffic accident involving his older son cause his mental state to deteriorate badly. His wife leaves him, his daughter gets married, his brother-in-law becomes the director of the institute where he works. He is increasingly convinced that he is just an element in the incomprehensible plan of an aged and demented universe, and that in his life there is not one iota of personal freedom. As he does not want to be a contributing factor to the cosmic dementia, he establishes the Society Against Hope and starts going to the shooting range. The novel with a surprising ending (and suffused with black humour) is a first-person narrative about the struggle between the scientific wish to transcend biological determination and human fragility.



VESNA LEMAIČ



VESNA LEMAIČ (1981) received the Fabula, Golden Bird and Best Debut awards for her collection of short stories *Popularne zgodbe* (*Popular Stories*) and recently Novo mesto Best Short Story Award for her collection of short stories *Dobrodošli* (*Welcome*). One of the stories was included in the Best European Fiction collection. In 2010, she wrote the novel *Odlagališče* (*Dumping Ground*), followed in 2014 by the novel *Kokoška in ptiči* (*The Hen and The Birds*).

DUMPING GROUND (*Odlagališče*)

Social outlaws who represent a threat to the system are condemned to forced labour. Among them is Grace, who does not consent to exploitation or democracy and even less to the capitalist world order. Trixie is a corporate researcher, so deeply engaged in the production chain that even her orgasms seem to belong to her employer. There is also Britt, a distributor of psycho-dogmatisms and a master of survival. They all meet in the Delta Zero entertainment zone and each of them tries to change her fate in her own way. This is a novel about a nearby world we have not yet noticed. It draws inspiration from real dumping grounds of electronic products and from a society in which the production and storage of waste is the domain of the social margins.



WELCOME (*Dobrodošli*)

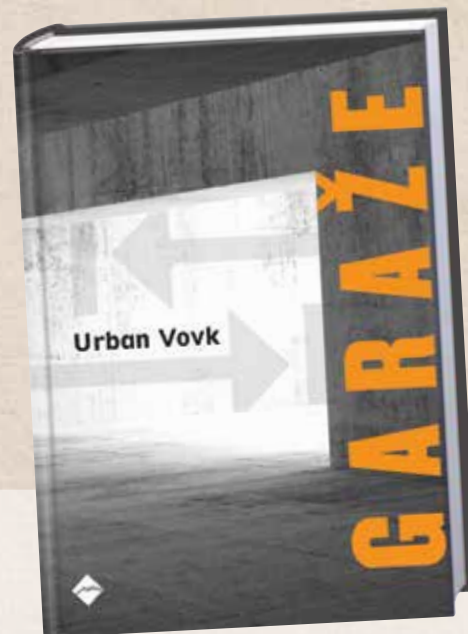
In this collection of short stories, the author juxtaposes the themes of tourism and migrations. Small, passing events reflect diverse identities, chosen or forced, and record places through which people pass or where they are trapped. In the stories, there is a coming together of the feelings of homeliness and foreignness, of being rooted and uprooted, of belonging and exclusion, which all arise from the dividing line – the difference between Us and Them. The network of cracks in society is getting denser through the memories and experiences of the narrator, who is trying to put the pieces together, aware that the surface is rotten because of the gaps, behind which lie depths of inequality that cannot be filled with meaning. The stories do not offer any resolutions, but place at the centre the superficial events with the understanding that these are not merely something ephemeral – that in their shadows hide de-layered meanings.



URBAN VOVK



URBAN VOVK (1971) is the author of three books. In 2002, he received the Stritar Award from the Slovene Writers' Association for his work as a critic, and in 2007 he was nominated for the Rožanc Award.



GARAGES (*Garaže*)

Even when writing essays in primary school, Urban Vovk resigned himself to the fact that he was much better at observing than making things up, which is why during essay writing he really liked watching his classmates working and then in the last few minutes he tried to make up for lost time. Since his attempts at writing a novel never got beyond page one, he simply gave up and began to write reviews instead. He stumbled into prose by accident. Or rather: he was deposited there by his essay writing which is enriched by a personally expressive note, described by his readers – probably mostly because of the introduction of narrative elements and the persistent involvement in personal archaeology – as “simple short prose”. Because he likes to observe not only himself, he enriched his own experience with the narrated experiences of his nearest and dearest, creating a field of inter-reality – everything told has actually happened, but not necessarily in the same order and not (only) to him, which gives his prose the special warmth of the human touch.

EVALD FLISAR



EVALD FLISAR (1945) is one of the most highly regarded Slovene writers and playwrights. So far, 162 translations of his books were published in 41 languages and his plays are constantly staged in various theatres around the world.



WORDS ABOVE THE CLOUDS (*Besede nad oblaki*)

The story is set during an international flight from Frankfurt to Singapore and consists of conversations between passengers who happen to find themselves next to each other and who during the flight engage in stylistically, thematically, philosophically and dramatically very diverse dialogues. But that is not all – their exchanges soon tell us that some passengers are connected in an unusual way, perhaps even fatally so. The novel is an increasingly dramatic study, largely in dialogue form, of the fragmentation of modern thinking and the tricks we use in interpersonal relations in order to ensure advantages that usually do not bring anything good, be it for us personally or for the world. An exploration of the mire that the human spirit (and with it humankind) has sunken into; a mixture of detective story uncertainty, tragedy, laughter and ridicule, with an open end and the unpronounced threat of an approaching cataclysm. During the twelve-hour flight through the ideological history of humankind, we are accompanied by the question: will we crash? Or will we land safely?

METKA LAMPRET



METKA LAMPRET (1949) began to write after her retirement. She has read nearly all her stories at literary events (prose competitions, Prebranec prose evenings, events organised by the Public Fund for Cultural Activities, etc.). The audience did not boo her off the stage. In fact, she won a number of literary awards. This is her first book.



WHAT TO MAKE OF A DAY LIKE THIS? (*Kam bi dala takle dan*)
The characters in these short stories, from children to old people, come from different social environments, including some that feature only rarely in contemporary Slovene literature. Each of them is slightly maladjusted in his or her own way, not sufficiently integrated into the community where they are compelled to live. While reading their adventures, the reader is moved from laughter to tears and back again. Has the dying Polde really killed his wife? Has the unhappy, insomniac wife, who eavesdrops at night, really forgiven the adulterer? Have the two girls reached the promised land during their long journey?

DAVORIN LENKO

Foto: Iztok Hvala



DAVORIN LENKO (1984) created quite a stir on the Slovene literary scene when he very justifiably received the Kresnik Award for his first novel *Telesa v temi* (*Bodies in the Dark*, 2013).



WHITE DWARF STAR (*Bela pritlikavka*) is Lenko's second novel. The title refers to a specific type of star with a very small circumference but an exceptional density, which leads it to collapse into a black hole or explode into a supernova. This is a metaphor for the fatal attraction between the half-German, half-Slovene Maria and the American Louis. Their love story takes place from the marshy Louisiana across Ljubljana all the way to Berlin, where each of them in their own way (one through promiscuous sexuality and the other through the ritualisation of everyday life) seeks the most real, most authentic experiences: they are embroiled in a total love that absorbs everything in its way, thus presenting a danger not only for the two lovers, but also for all those that are close to them. The novel questions the divinity of love, which in Western culture is placed at the very apex of the pyramid of values and needs.

BLAŽ KUTIN



BLAŽ KUTIN (1970) was born in Ljubljana and now lives in Berlin. He is usually obsessing about film, film, film, but he also likes to write the odd short story or take a photograph.



TIME BOMB (*Tempirana bomba*)

These twenty short stories connect in a fresh, humorous, insightful and sometimes melancholy way our modern way of life. Kutin's characters, be it a dysfunctional family, an unsuccessful film director, an older lady, an American colonel, a young tourist or an estranged married couple, often have big dreams, but very little control over their fate. This is a world where things happen and events are strung together without anyone asking for our opinion. A world in which you never know if you will be adopted by Angelina Jolie or if a grand piano will fall on your head from the sky. All that is left to you is to try and go with the flow.

JOŽE PIRJEVEC



Since the 1980s **JOŽE PIRJEVEC** (1940, Trieste), a member of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts has dedicated a great deal of his research work to the history of Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav wars. His newest book *Partizani* (*The Partisans*) will be out in March 2020.

TITO AND HIS COMRADES (*Tito in tovariši*)

A new light on familiar events – the most comprehensive presentation of Josip Broz Tito.

Jože Pirjevec's book presents Tito's life story and the background to his political rise, which was closely connected with the life and political activities of his "comrades". In revealing new dimensions of the leading creators of the second Yugoslavia, with Tito at the helm, the author draws upon documents kept in private and state archives in Ljubljana and other capitals of the former Yugoslav republics, while he also researched the available archive materials in Washington, New York, Moscow, Berlin, Cairo and New Delhi, as well as the archives of the Slovene and foreign intelligence services, such as Stasi and the KGB. Rich pictorial material.

Rights sold to Macedonia, Albania, France, Italy, Czech Republic. Translated also in to German, Russian and English languages.

THE PARTISANS (*Partizani*)

This long-awaited book is the first to contain a comprehensive account of the emergence and development of the Partisan movement in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which occupiers and Quislings tried to erase from the map of Europe in 1941. The book contains a considerable amount of information obtained by the author through research in archives in London, Washington, Berlin, Munich, Helsinki and Moscow which to date has remained unknown since some parts of the archives were only opened recently. It is the first comprehensive and synthetic account of the emergence and development of the Partisan movement in the whole of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The author describes the strained relations within the movement, as well as the relations between the Partisans and other military formations (White Guards, Chetniks, Ustashe, Ballists, etc.) and between the Partisans and allies in the anti-Hitler coalition. The book demonstrates that there would have been no national liberation movement without the Communists and their utopian belief that they would create a better future, without their fanaticism, organization and discipline. Above all, the Yugoslav Partisan movement contributed significantly to the defeat of the Third Reich and its satellites and brought victory to the Yugoslav nations.

VINKO MÖDERNDORFER



Foto: Gaja

VINKO MÖDERNDORFER (1958) has written a series of books in different genres and received a number of Slovene literary awards.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR HAPPINESS (*Navodila za srečo*)

Novellas alternate with shorter, expressive stories, and all of them revolve around complex human relationships. Some stories, mainly the longer ones, are based on realistic psychology and narration, which is linguistically enriched with poetic digressions. The shorter stories are mostly notes about the traumatic experiences of individuals in different periods of their life. All revolve around the search for happiness and finding the reasons why life often does not work out, why happiness is not found, why we always feel that we are running after happiness. The protagonists of most of the stories in this collection are women. A woman as a being that gives life and perhaps because of this feels more strongly the questions about meaning as an important part of existence.

IVANA DJILAS



Foto: Peter Uhan

IVANA DJILAS (1976) is a theatre director and, recently, also a journalist writing for the weekly *Mladina*; she is an immigrant, an artist, a career woman, a precarious worker; she is nearly 40 years old, she is loud and carries a few superfluous kilogrammes; she has a house, a loan and an MA; she is the mother of an adopted child and a child with special needs; she does not use the social media and does not have a smartphone. Since 1999, she has been living in Slovenia, directing performances for adults and children. She writes about equal opportunities and accepting differences. *The House* is her first novel.



THE HOUSE (*Hiša*)

It is not easy to admit to yourself that you are an idiot. To one day look in the mirror and say: "You are an idiot." But the plan was a good one. The incentive for the novel *The House* was a resounding article by Ivana Djilas, which went viral on the internet as so many readers could see themselves in it. Selling a house because of a loan and an irregular income opens up wider issues about the social crisis, which can easily turn into a family crisis. All the time we believed that we had reached the bottom, that it could not get any worse. And years went by. The world moved on, leaving us behind. The trouble with crises is that they last.

Translated in to Serbian language.

LUČKA KAJFEŽ BOGATAJ



LUČKA KAJFEŽ BOGATAJ is a researcher in meteorology and climatology, a professor and head of the Centre of Biometeorology at the Biotechnical Faculty in Ljubljana. In 2007, as a member of the IPCC, she received the Nobel Peace Prize; in 2012, she was ranked among the women who inspire Europe. *Planet, ki ne raste* (*The Planet that Doesn't Grow*) is her third book about the environment aimed at young readers.



THE PLANET THAT DOESN'T GROW (*Planet, ki ne raste*)

If people continue to exhaust our planet's natural resources, today's teenagers will live in a world marked by numerous environmental problems. This is why, before our children become adults, we need to clean up the air we breathe and ensure sufficient quantities of drinking water. The soil gives us food, but is getting more and more polluted, we are threatened by genetically modified food and the remnants of chemical concoctions in it, and in the end we carelessly throw it away. Our sins are also reflected in nature. We must stop the processes that lead to the loss of the variety of life in ecosystems. Moreover, we must also tackle the sins of energy production, which is the main culprit for the release of greenhouse gasses and climate change. Otherwise, the latter will completely change the life of future generations. It is not too late to make our progress more sustainable and show that the role of an individual is not necessarily marginal and unimportant. Through awareness, knowledge and determination, the young generation has all the possibilities of preserving and even increasing the quality and welfare of humankind.

UROŠ ZUPAN



Foto: Maja Pavček

UROŠ ZUPAN (1963) is a poet, essayist and occasional translator. He lives with his family in the outskirts of Ljubljana.



MOVING WARM AIR WITH FINGERS

(*S prsti premikamo topel zrak*)

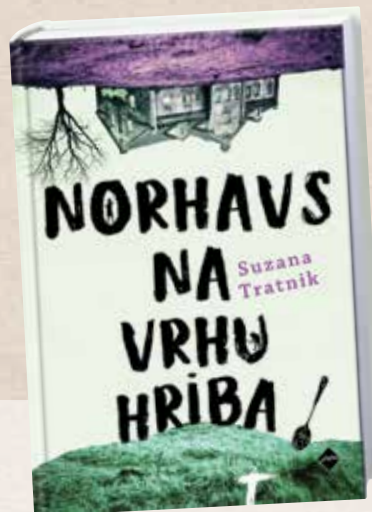
What exactly are the expectations? To reinvent ourselves from one book to the next? This is probably a desire and a need coming from the outside world, which is constantly expecting new sensations and excitement. Or perhaps a similar rule is involved as in painting where, because of something that is called originality, personal style, we immediately know who painted a work and we do not need to read the signature at the bottom. Zupan's book lies somewhere in between. The atmosphere is typically Zupanian; a slowly floating melancholy or nostalgia or a desire to become a believer in slowness. These are poems that simulate classical form and through this come close to music, but at the same time commit violations, since their rhyme is always random and almost unnoticeable. In short, this is a book which, through refined and well considered means, talks about the world we live in.

SUZANA TRATNIK

Foto: Nada Žganek



SUZANA TRATNIK (1963) is an award winning author of short prose and novels, including some for young readers. Her works and individual stories have been translated into over twenty languages. In 2007 she received the Prešeren Fund Award for literature; and this year the novo mesto award for her book *Noben glas* (*No Voice*).



THE LOONY HOUSE ON THE HILL (*Norhaus na hribu*)

“Oh, believe me, this woman, who is still so young, did all this. She killed someone, disposed of the body and concealed it all.” This sentence in the introduction to the novel surprises us, but still does not prepare us for what follows. The main character, Ariana, whose mother disappeared when Ariana was still very little, lives in a tense, conflictive relationship with her aunt, in the remote village of Privežice. The place which, as noted by the merciless observer and commentator Ariana, appeared around the madhouse on the hill at the end of the paved road, where one of the inmates was her grandmother. What happens is not a typical love story or a typical story about getting to know oneself, although it talks precisely about this. What distinguishes this novel above all else is the lively, flowing dialogue, and the uncompromising, direct aesthetics (sometimes involving ugliness or at least uncouthness or lack of political correctness), which grabs us and takes us on a crazy adventure.

Rights sold to Austria.

VERONIKA SIMONITI



Foto: Laura Sozi

VERONIKA SIMONITI (1967) appeared on the Slovene literary scene as an author of short stories, which have won numerous competitions and been collected in two books. In 2015, her first novel, *Kameno srce* (*A Stone Heart*), was among the five finalists for the Kresnik Award.



IVANA IN FRONT OF THE SEA (*Ivana pred morjem*)

The narrator returns from Paris, where she has created a home for herself, to the Primorje region in Slovenia in order to clear the apartment that belonged to her late mother for a serious buyer, and in a heap of yellowed photographs she finds a picture of her grandmother, holding her five-year-old mother's hand, whilst her other hand lies on her pregnant stomach. The year it was taken, 1943, was one of troubling events and rapid change. What happened to the unborn child? Through a number of parallel stories taking place at different times and generations of one family, Veronika Simoniti's novel presents the reader with the collective past and individual fates. These move between Paris and Primorska, also stopping in Gorenjska, Ljubljana and many other places, even in Serbia as refugees, but all this movement cannot break the human bonds. Even the hard times after the war are written about in the author's gentle manner, looking from ever new standpoints at what we share. A beautiful novel about unattractive times and things.

Rights sold to Albania, Croatia, China, Serbia.

