

**Rudi Erebara**  
*Epika e yjeve të mëngjesit*  
*The Epic of the Morning Stars*  
2016  
ISBN: 978-9928-06-162-1  
Publishing House: Ombrage GVG

## ALBANIA

### WINNER 2017



© Albes Fusha

The novel *Epika e yjeve të mëngjesit* (*The Epic of the Morning Stars*) is a testimony to the destiny of Suleyman, an Albanian painter employed at the state decoration company in the capital of Albania. A technical issue occurring on 16 October 1978, the birthday of Albania's dictator Enver Hoxha, is attributed to him by the State Security Services. Around this time, Albania is about to sever its relations with Mao's communist China. Also on 16 October 1978, Józef Wojtyła, a priest from communist Poland, becomes Pope John Paul II in the Vatican. In the late evening of 16 October, a heavy shower washes away the letters of the slogans written by the state decoration company in deep red, the symbol of the blood spilled during the war for freedom

by the communist fighters. Even though the festivities are over, the state security, under the direct orders of the communist dictator, starts the hunt for the perpetrators, even though no perpetrators could possibly exist. Suleyman is a man singled out as standing on the other side of the trench of class warfare, conceived and fanatically carried out by the ruling communists. As he feels he is being singled out as a victim, Suleyman tries to change his name to Edmond. He also makes a painting showing some partisans around a fire. This is viewed as a good enough reason for Suleyman to be punished.

**Rudi Erebara** was born in 1971. He is a poet, novelist and translator. After graduating in 1995 at the Academy of Fine Arts, he embarked on a career as a political analyst, a journalist in several national newspapers and as an editor in chief. He is the author of two books of poetry, *Fillon Pamja* (*There Begins the View*), 1994, and *Lëng argjendi* (*Silver Juice*), 2013. His two novels are *Vezët e thëllëzave* (*Eggs of the Quails*), 2010, and *Epika e yjeve të mëngjesit* (*The Epic of the Morning Stars*), 2016. His accomplishments include: Translator of the Year 2013, for the translation of *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, and Translator of the Year 2015, for the translation of *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville, both awarded by Cult Academy Albania; Translator of the Year 2012, for the book of poetry *The Wind Is My Savior* by A. R. Ammons, awarded by the Jury of Tirana 15th National Book Fair; winner of the national poetry competition Migjeni in 1993 and 1996, organized by Soros Foundation, Albania; winner of the 8th of December Prize with the poem *The House* in 1992; and winner of the Poem of the Year in 1991, awarded by the University of Tirana.

Ina Vultchanova  
*Остров Крак*  
*The Crack-Up Island*  
2016  
ISBN: 978-954-9612-32-5  
Publishing House: Razvitie Corporation

## BULGARIA

### WINNER 2017



© Razvitie Corporation, Yana Punkina

*Остров Крак (The Crack-Up Island)* presents two women telling their singular stories. They barely know each other, yet a magic liaison exists between them, because one of them is a newly self-initiated amateur astrologer and reads in the stars that a coming crack-up is threatening the other. Each of the women knows only her part of the story and the narrative pieces - two personal universes, so dissimilar yet so alike - have to be fitted into one whole by the reader, like in a puzzle. The pieces are stories about women, men, children and cats, plus a story about a remote and fascinating island - presumably the Croatian island of Krk in the Adriatic sea - where the star-foreseen crack-up might occur. The stories are also about land and sea, rain and

caves, stars and sun, rooms and houses; but mostly they are about human affairs, about impulses and frustrations, longings and reality, love and breaches of love, about the craving and impossibility to share one's soul. Whether the predicted crack-up will smash the characters, the reader will find out in the unanticipated last page of the novel. The surprising element is that the narrative is not telling the story of a breakdown.

**Ina Vultchanova** is a journalist, writer, producer and translator from French and Russian. She has an MA in Bulgarian Philology from Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski. Her professional career has been dedicated to the art of audio drama. She has worked as a long-time senior producer at the Drama Department of Bulgarian National Radio and has produced numerous audio adaptations of works by writers from Bulgaria and around the world. Her audio productions have won the Croatian Grand Prix Marulic in 1998, the second Prix Europa in Berlin in 1998 and the eighth Muse Prize in Sofia in 2006. Vultchanova is also a freelance writer and dialogist, who is currently working on a new Bulgarian film project.

Her first novel, *The Sinking of Sozopol*, was filmed in 2013 and, in 2014, she was awarded a national Golden Rose Award for the film script. In 2015, the film won the Best Foreign Film award at the New York City International Film Festival and the Best Ensemble Cast award at the Milan International Film Festival. In 2016, it received the Grand Prix at the Prague Independent Film Festival.

Her third novel, *Остров Крак (The Crack-Up Island)*, won the Razvitie Literary Contest for unpublished Bulgarian novels in 2016, which led to the work being published later that year.



EUROPEAN UNION  
PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

**Bianca Bellová**

*Jezero*

*The Lake*

2016

ISBN: 978-80-7491-771-4

Publishing House: Host

## CZECH REPUBLIC

### WINNER 2017



© Marta Režová

A fishing village at the end of the world. A lake that is drying up and, ominously, pushing out its banks. The men have vodka, the women have troubles, the children have eczema to scratch at. And what about Nami? Nami doesn't have anything but a granny with fat arms. However, he does have a life ahead of him - a first love that is taken from him by Russian soldiers, and then all the rest of it. But if a life can begin at the very end of the world, maybe it can end at the beginning. This story is as old as humanity itself. For its hero - a boy who embarks on his journey with nothing but a bundle of nerves and a coat that was once his grandad's - it is a pilgrimage. To get to the greatest mystery, he must sail across and walk around the lake and finally sink to its bottom.

**Bianca Bellová**, born in Prague in 1970, is a translator, interpreter and writer with Bulgarian roots. Her first book, *Sentimentální román* (*Sentimental Novel*), came out in 2009 and describes the trials of growing up near the end of the communist totalitarian regime. Two years later, the publisher Host brought out the novella *Mrtvý muž* (*Dead Man*), which impressed critics. In 2013, Bellová's novella *Celý den se nic nestane* (*Nothing Happens All Day*) was published. The title both reflects and does not reflect reality: until the evening nothing much happens, but the reader is able to reconstruct the underlying stories. Her most recent book, nominated for the EUPL, is the novel *Jezero* (*The Lake*, 2016).



**Kallia Papadaki**

*Δενδρίτες*

*Dendrites*

2015

ISBN: 978-960-435-481-8

Publishing House: Polis

## GREECE

### WINNER 2017



© Phaedra Bei

When Minnie's teenage troublemaker brother goes missing, her Puerto Rican mother dies of sadness. The Campanis family decides to take Minnie in: Susan, the ex-hippy mother; Basil, the second-generation Greek-American stepfather; and Leto, Minnie's classmate. Adolescents and adults in crisis-ridden 1980s Camden, New Jersey, must deal with hard times, as action gains perspective through flashbacks to previous generations of Greek and other immigrants. *Dendrites* is a term used to describe a form of snowflake, and like snowflakes, Minnie and Basil, Leto and Susan are unique as they swirl in the air and melt away. This is a novel about wanting to belong; a

story about immigration and its quest for a meaningful life; a tale of lost second chances, failed marriages, and broken careers; a book about how big dreams, small gestures, and unspoken words can create minute cracks that bring down walls, buildings and lives. Some cracks come from family history; others from current decisions. There is a crack in everything. But, as Leonard Cohen has said, that's how the light gets in.

Born in 1978 in Didymoteicho, **Kallia Papadaki** grew up in Thessaloniki and studied economics in the United States, and film at the Stavrakos Film School in Athens. Her third book, the novel *Δενδρίτες* (*Dendrites*, 2015), received a Centre national du livre development grant in 2012, was shortlisted for Best Novel (*Anagnostis* magazine) and won a Young Author Award (*Clepsydra* journal). Her short story collection *The Back-Lot Sound* (2009) won the New Writers Award (*Diavazo* journal). In 2011, she was selected to participate in the *Scrittura Giovani* project at the Mantova, Hay and Berlin literary festivals.

Papadaki works as a professional screenwriter. September, her first feature script, won the International Balkan Fund Script Development Award, received a Nipkow scholarship, and premiered at the 48th Karlovy Vary Film Festival.



EUROPEAN UNION  
PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

**Halldóra K. Thoroddsen**

*Tvöfalt gler*

*Double Glazing*

2016

ISBN: 978-993-546-551-1

Publishing House: Sæmundur

**ICELAND**

**WINNER 2017**



© Ásdís Thoroddsen

Modern life separates generations and isolates both youth and those in old age. The often overlooked passions of old age are captured exquisitely in the novella *Tvöfalt gler* (*Double Glazing*). Death is closing in on an elderly woman in her small apartment; her husband recently passed away, her friends gone, her body failing and her role in society diminished. As she observes the world through her window pane, she feels simultaneously exposed and isolated. A sudden chance of romance swirls up into her lonely existence, filling her with exuberance but also with doubt. Knowing that the love life of the elderly is still a taboo to be frowned upon or even ridiculed, she will have to find strength to go against the norm - to not back down from living life to the fullest, like a fly in autumn still buzzing at the window.

**Halldóra Thoroddsen** was born in 1950 and is a resident of Reykjavik. She graduated from Iceland College of Education in 1976 and from Iceland Academy of the Arts in 1986. Thoroddsen has worked as a teacher, designed layout for a newspaper, supervised the arts curriculum for elementary schools, and worked as a programme director in radio. She writes poetry, short stories, microfiction and novels. Her first poetry collection, *Hárfínar athugasemdir*, was published in 1998, and was followed in 2002 by a popular collection of microfiction, *90 sýni úr minni mínu*. A second collection of poems, *Gangandi vegfarandi*, was published in 2005, the short story collection *Aukaverkanir* in 2006, and her novel *Tvöfalt gler* in 2016. *Tvöfalt gler* (*Double Glazing*) was awarded the Icelandic Women's Literature Prize (Fjöruverðlaunin) in 2016.



**Osvalds Zebris**  
*Gaiļu kalna ēnā*  
*In the Shadow of Rooster Hill*  
2014  
ISBN: 978-998-488-773-9  
Publishing House: Dienas grāmata

LATVIA

WINNER 2017



© Kristaps Kalns

It is 1905 in Riga - the Russian Tsar is slowly losing power over his vast empire, and the city is being rocked by worker riots, violence and pogroms. Revolution is in the air. Pitting brother against brother, the chaos forces people to choose a side. Among this upheaval, a former schoolteacher becomes involved in the revolution, but soon realizes that war will take much more than he is willing to give. The following year, a dramatic kidnapping of three children has Riga's police on edge. Who did it? What was their motive? The answer will shatter the lives of two families, as they struggle to understand who is guilty in a revolution where all sides are victims. Osvalds Zebris weaves a

powerful tale of a country's desire to become free against the backdrop of the 1905 Revolution in Tsarist Russia, an event that gave birth to some of the most dramatic events in the 20th century.

**Osvalds Zebris**, born in 1975, is a Latvian writer and journalist, holding a master's degree in economics. Zebris has worked in public relations and communications for Hill+Knowlton and McCann, and as an editor for various newspapers and magazines. He is also the author of three novels. Zebris' first book, a collection of short stories entitled *Brīvība tīklos*, brought him instant popularity among readers and won him a Latvian Literature Award in 2010 for the best debut. *Gaiļu kalna ēnā* (*In the Shadow of Rooster Hill*, nominated for the Latvian Literature Award in 2015) was written and published for the historical novel series, "We. Latvia. The 20th Century", focusing on the Latvian experience during 1905 in the Russian Empire. The novel *Koka nama ļaudis* tells the story of a strange wooden house in one of the oldest neighbourhoods of Riga. The wooden house is a breathing character in the story, influencing people living in it and initiating various mysteries. Zebris is a member of the Latvian Writers' Union.



EUROPEAN UNION  
PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

Walid Nabhan  
*L-Eżodu taċ-Ċikonji*  
*Exodus of Storks*

2013

ISBN: 978-99932-7-470-4

Publishing House: Midsea Books Ltd

MALTA

WINNER 2017



© Bettina von Brockdorff

The novel tells the story, in the first person, of a Palestinian man called Nabil who has lived all his life outside his homeland. His life is irrevocably intertwined with the fate of Palestine and of the whole Arab world, and in trying to understand himself he needs to find explanations for the way things have turned out in the Middle East, especially since the Six-Day War, an event which coincided with the birth of the narrator. The events in the novel take place mainly in Jordan, where Nabil was brought up and where his father continued to live until his death, and Malta, where the protagonist ended up later in life. It is a novel about identity, exile and displacement, but also about love and family in difficult times.

**Walid Nabhan** was born in Amman, Jordan, in 1966. His family fled Al-Qbeybeh, a small village in the outskirts of Hebron, Palestine, after the 1948 war that established the state of Israel and resulted in the first Palestinian Diaspora.

Nabhan studied at United Nations schools in Amman. He arrived in Malta in 1990, where he studied laboratory technology. In 1998, he graduated in Biomedical Sciences from Bristol University in England. In 2003, he gained a master's degree in Human Rights and Democratisation from the University of Malta. He has published two collections of short stories in Maltese (*Lura d-Dar u Ġrajjet Oħra li ma Ġrawx* in 2009 and *Leĥen tal-Fuħħar u Stejjer Oħra* in 2011) and one novel (*L-Eżodu taċ-Ċikonji* in 2013) which won the National Prize for Literature in 2014. He also published his first collection of poetry, *Fi Triqti Lejha*, in 2014. His poetry and articles have appeared in several papers and periodicals. He has also translated contemporary literary works from Maltese into Arabic.



**Aleksandar Bečanović**

*Arcueil*

*Arcueil*

2015

ISBN: 978-86-89225-17-4

Publishing House: Levo krilo

**MONTENEGRO**

**WINNER 2017**



© Dnevne novine

On Easter Sunday, April 3, 1768, Marquis de Sade promised an écu to a beggar by the name of Rose Keller if she would follow him to Arcueil. Only a few hours later, after Keller managed to escape from the Marquis' country house, this little 'adventure' in the Paris suburbs would become the notorious 'Arcueil affair', a scandal that caught the public imagination in France and beyond. Different testimonies and rumours were spreading, conflicting interpretations were heard, but what really happened in the Marquis' room? Where lies the truth about the scandal? Was Arcueil the scene of horrible sadistic sexual violence and some kind of perverse theatrical production, or was the victim not so innocent after all? Arcueil is a complex, multi-perspective

retelling of the 'Arcueil affair', which emphasizes the doubts and ambivalences of any historical or - for that matter - media event.

**Aleksandar Bečanović**, born in 1971, is a Montenegrin writer, film critic and screenwriter. He is the author of five poetry books, *Ulysses' Distance* (1994), *Being* (1996), *The Pantry* (1998), *Places in the Letter* (2001) and *Preludes and Fugues* (2007); two short story collections, *I am Waiting, What Will Happen Next* (2005) and *Obsession* (2009); and a novel, *Arcueil* (2015). He has also published two books of film criticism, *Genre in the Contemporary Cinema* (2005) and the 900-page long *Lexicon of Film Directors* (2015). He received the Risto Ratković Award for the best book of poetry in Montenegro in 2002. He writes film reviews and essays for Montenegrin daily *Vijesti*, and is one of the contributors to the books *501 Movie Directors* (2007), *501 Movie Stars* (2007), *101 Horror Movies You Must See Before You Die* (2009) and *101 Sci-Fi Movies You Must See Before You Die* (2009).



EUROPEAN UNION  
PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

**Jamal Ouarichi**

*Een Honger*

*A Hunger*

2015

ISBN: 978-902-145-679-9

Publishing House: Querido

## NETHERLANDS

### WINNER 2017



© Arnout Hulskamp

Aurélie is the loving and dedicated mother of a three-year-old daughter, a role she combines with a successful career in television. Her life is turned upside down when she receives a phone call out of the blue from an ex-lover: Alexander Laszlo, formerly an iconic figure in the world of Dutch development aid and once better known as ‘Holland’s answer to Bob Geldof.’ Ten years previously, the passionate relationship between Aurélie, then a young student, and the flamboyant Alexander came to an abrupt end when Laszlo was convicted of sexually abusing one of his Ethiopian foster children. The boy had been brought to Amsterdam together with a dozen other children to be raised as part of Laszlo’s megalomaniac Future Leaders of

Europe initiative. The aim was to give these children the best possible education so that they would return to their homeland armed with the knowledge to make a difference to society.

**Jamal Ouarichi**, born in 1978, is the son of a Dutch mother and a Moroccan father. Jamal studied psychology at the University of Amsterdam and spent years working as an online therapist. He made his literary debut in 2010 with the novel *De vernietiging van Prosper Morèl* (*The Destruction of Prosper Morèl*). Since then he has written controversial stories, articles and columns for a range of leading publications including nrc.next, HP/De Tijd, de Volkskrant, Knack Focus and Vogue. His second novel *Tenderness* earned him nominations for the BNG Literatuurprijs and the Gouden Uil. He followed it up with *25*, one third of a Dutch literary trilogy written in response to *Fifty Shades of Grey* together with Daan Heerma van Voss and David Pefko.





EUROPEAN UNION  
PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

**Darko Tusevljakovic**

*Jaz*

*The Chasm*

2016

ISBN: 978-86-523-0195-9

Publishing House: Arhipelag

**SERBIA**

**WINNER 2017**



©Arhipelag

At its core, *Jaz (The Chasm)* is a story about the disintegration of a family. In the first of the two parts of the novel, an estranged husband suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as a consequence of his war experience, strives to re-establish the relationship with his estranged wife during a holiday in Greece, succeeding only in deepening the discord between the two of them. The second part takes place in Serbia and focuses upon the main reason for the marital discord of the couple from the first part - the plight of their son, a student who tries to find his place in society, as well as his identity, through a series of dramatic events with a surprising and powerful twist at the end.

**Darko Tusevljakovic** was born in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1978. Since 2002, his fiction has been published in literary magazines and anthologies in Serbia and elsewhere in the Balkans. In 2004, he was awarded the Lazar Komarcic Award for short fiction. Tusevljakovic is the author of two novels and a collection of short stories. His books have been shortlisted for some of the most important Serbian national awards for fiction. In 2016, his novel *Jaz (The Chasm, the Serbian winner of the European Prize for Literature)* was shortlisted for the NIN Award for the best novel of the year, the most prestigious literary award in Serbia. He lives and works in Belgrade.

**Sine Ergün**



*Baştankara  
Chikadee*

2016

ISBN: 978-975-07-3237-9

Publishing House: Can Yayınları

## TURKEY

### WINNER 2017



© Can Erok

The book's 23 stories in 80 pages are succinct: the shortest story is just one page long, the longest six pages, plainly written with depth and variety. Each story is an independent being, inviting the reader to start a new challenge. Her "Decree With Force of Law" ("Kanun Hükmünde Kararname") is a political satire on a highly abstract level: it is realistic, though also dreamlike. That story in itself could be considered sufficiently enlightening with regards to the situation in Turkey. The concluding piece illustrates the overall atmosphere succinctly: a truck driver, after many years of solitary driving, is unable to leave his truck any more and sits nailed to

the steering wheel. This indeed is an unnerving parable of the human condition. In her stories, the themes she deals with are: alienation to oneself and to others; facing mediocrity; coming to terms with the past, the present and the future; revolt to inner and outer pressures; challenging your reality; seeing your city, your environment and your surroundings with different eyes; making choices; and looking deeper and deeper into one's soul.

Born in 1982 in Biga, Turkey, **Sine Ergün** graduated from Cağaloğlu Anadolu High School and Bilkent University, where she studied creative drama. She started writing poetry while she was still in high school. For three years, Ergün worked as an editor for a literary magazine, before publishing her short stories and poems in publications including Notos, Özgür Edebiyat and Sözcükler. She is currently working as a researcher at Bilgi University in Istanbul. She has published three books so far and her 2012 collection of short stories, *Bazen Hayat*, won the Sait Faik Short Story Award the following year.

**Sunjeev Sahota**  
*The Year of the Runaways*  
2015  
ISBN: 978-144-724-165-2  
Publishing House: Picador

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**WINNER 2017**



© Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert

*The Year of the Runaways* tells of the bold dreams and daily struggles of an unlikely family thrown together by circumstance. Thirteen young men live in a house in Sheffield, each in flight from India and in desperate search of a new life. Tarlochan, a former rickshaw driver, will say nothing about his past in Bihar; and Avtar has a secret that binds him to protect the chaotic Randeep. Randeep, in turn, has a visa-wife in a flat on the other side of town: a clever, devout woman whose cupboards are full of her husband's clothes, in case the immigration men surprise her with a call.

Sweeping between India and England, and between childhood and the present day, Sunjeev Sahota's generous, unforgettable novel is - as with Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* - a story of dignity in the face of adversity and the ultimate triumph of the human spirit.

**Sunjeev Sahota** was born in 1981 in Derbyshire. His debut novel, *Ours are the Streets*, was called 'Nothing short of extraordinary' by the Observer, and 'A moral work of real intelligence and power' by the Times. His second novel, *The Year of the Runaways*, won the South Bank Sky Arts Award for Literature, and the Encore Award. It was also shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2015. In 2013, Sahota was named as one of Granta magazine's Best of Young British Novelists.