

MLADINSKA KNJIGA PUBLISHING HOUSE

BOOKS 2018

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MLADINSKA KNJIGA PUBLISHING HOUSE

Speaking about publishing in Slovenia, it cannot be long before you come across the name of Mladinska Knjiga.

For more than 70 years we have successfully maintained the status of the largest publishing house in Slovenia with extensive lists of fiction and non-fiction for all generations as well as magazines for children and teenagers. At this we take pride in achieving the highest standards of quality at all levels.

To find out more about what we have to offer, you are warmly invited to visit our home page at www.mladinska.com/publishing.

STANKA HRASTELJ



Foto: Marko Kosović

STANKA HRASTELJ (1975) has so far published two collections of poems: *Nizki toni* (*Low Tones*, 2005) and *Gospod, nekaj imamo za vas* (*Sir, I Have Something For You*, 2009); the novel *Igranje* (*Acting*), published in 2012, is her first prose work. It won the Blue Bird Competition for adult novels organised by Mladinska Knjiga. Her new novel *Prva dama* (*First Lady*) will appear in 2018.

The novel **ACTING** (*Igranje*) consists of the personal reminiscences of the main character, a woman with a loving husband and, after she loses her job, suddenly with too much time on her hands. Although she can now do what she has always wanted, her interest in the world outside gradually disappears. Her waking state is increasingly mingled with dreams. She has a feeling that she is being watched, she hears voices, she is afraid of people, while at the same time she pretends everything is normal. Through the lens of her special psychological state everyday situations acquire unusual dimensions and meanings.

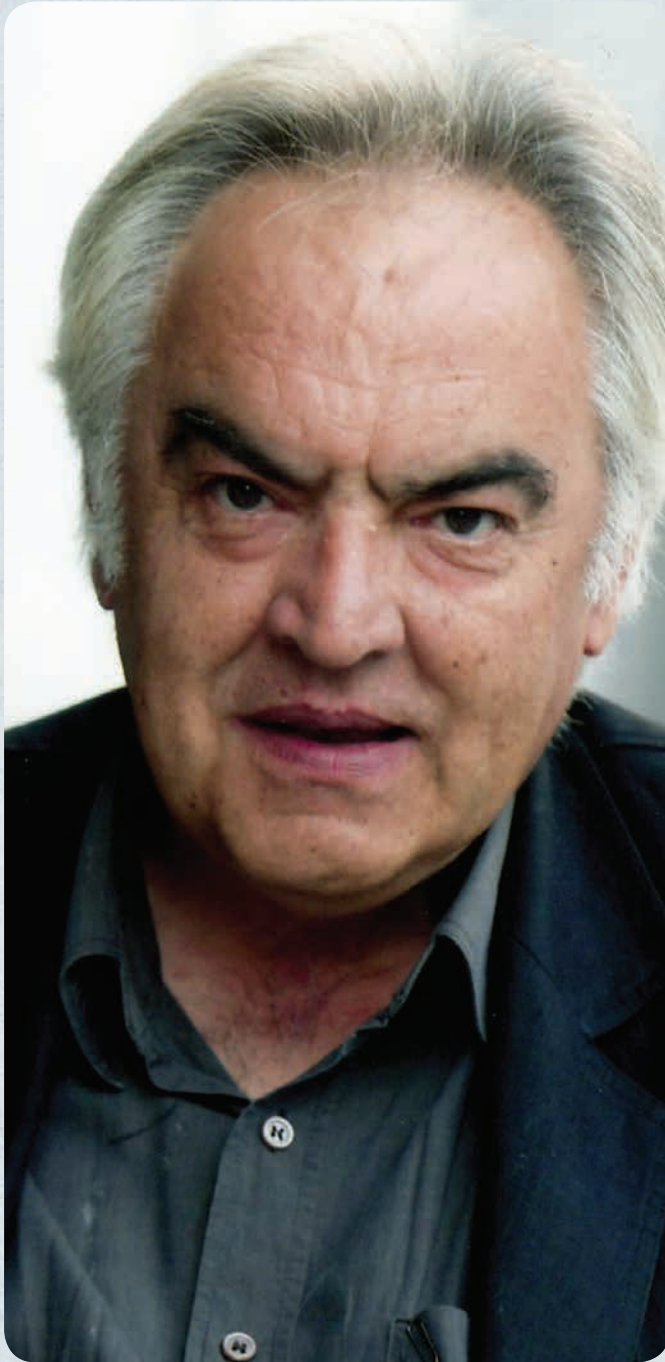


THE FIRST LADY (*Prva dama*)

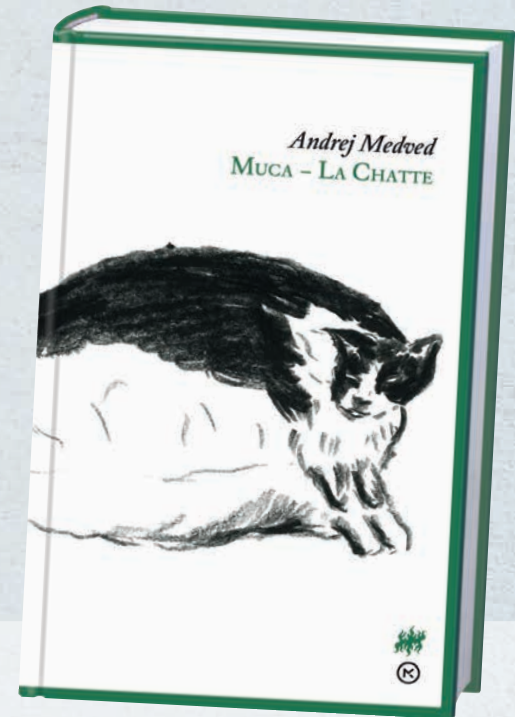
This novel is a reworking, in minimalist style and condensed manner, of the Biblical story of the beautiful Bathsheba and King David. The king's "controversial" wife is an archetypal femme fatale, who is aware of her charms also in an emancipatory sense and, regardless of the means and victims, in an almost mathematically calculating way exchanges them for a "better" life – marriage to the educated king loved by his people and through this a climb up the social ladder, a better position, and consequently better pay and independence. Although Bathsheba's life seems like a fairy tale, inside her grows a nagging feeling of guilt. Using fate and god as an excuse does not bring her peace, but pushes her towards self-destructive behaviour.

FORTHCOMING IN MAY 2018

ANDREJ MEDVED



ANDREJ MEDVED (born 3 February 1947) is a Slovene poet, editor and translator that has published numerous poetry collections. He won the Prešeren Foundation Award in 2003 for his poetry collection *Hiperion*, the Jenko Award in 2008 for his poetry collection *Približevanja* (*Convergences*) and the Veronika Award in 2010 for *Razlagalec sanj* (*Interpreter of Dreams*).



PUSSY CAT (*Muca - La Chatte*)

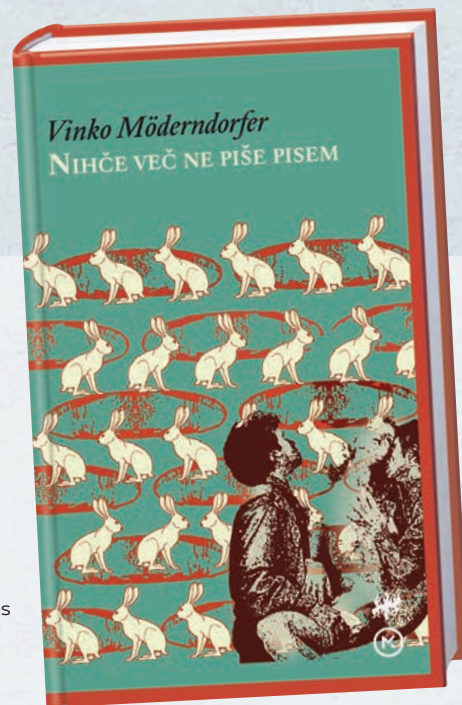
The novel starts at the Saturday market, a day before Easter Sunday and the Monday resurrection, which is supposed to signify a new beginning. The main character is dangerously depressed, suffused with alcohol, sunk into the isolation of a no longer so very libidinous human male. Lost without the one who finally left him. To top it all, he is plagued by feelings of guilt. All this triggers a merciless exploration of himself and his tribe, of artistic creativity and of isolation, and again and again of women and love. Is he telling the story to himself or a visitor? Was this passionate tale really triggered by an emotional shock or something else? Which is stronger, stories or life?

VINKO MÖDERNDORFER

Foto: Gajja



VINKO MÖDERNDORFER (1958) is a poet, writer, playwright and director. He has directed over one hundred theatre and opera performances. He also works as a radio, television and film director. He has written and directed three feature films: *Predmestje* (*Suburbs*), *Pokrajina številka 2* (*Landscape No. 2*) and *Inferno*. He has published over forty books of prose, poetry, drama and essays. He has received numerous awards, among them the Prešeren Fund Award and the Župančič Award; in 2009 he was given the Immortality Cup Award for his achievements in poetry in the last ten years.



The novel **NOBODY WRITES LETTERS ANYMORE** (*Nihče več ne piše pisem*) begins with a scene in which the main protagonist Ivan finds a white envelope in his post box, on which the address is written in ink. The letter takes him back to the time when he was in secondary school, and inseparably connected with Sonja and Pavel. They were a legendary threesome, but after the baccalaureate, Sonja suddenly escaped from their lives to Australia, while something unfinished and unspoken remained among them, which marked all three of them. And now the secrets suddenly begin to surface. In recent years, Mladinska Knjiga has also published the following novels for young people and adults by Möderndorfer: *Kot v filmu* (*Like in a Film*), *Kit na plaži* (*A Whale on the Beach*), *Vaje iz tesnobe* (*Exercises in Anxiety*), *Balzacov popek* (*Balzac's Navel*), *Konec zgodbe* (*End of the Story*).

SUZANA TRATNIK

Foto: Nada Žganek



SUZANA TRATNIK (1963) is one of the most important Slovene female authors and has for many years been a lesbian activist. She has published a number of short stories, novels and essay works, which have been translated into 20 languages. She also works as a translator of fiction from English into Slovene. She has received numerous awards, among them the Prešeren Fund Award for her book *Vzporednice* (*Parallels*) in 2007.



BINGO OR LIFE! (*Tombola ali življenje!*)

Sixteen-year-old Mija is growing up feeling trapped in a small, boring town, with her mother who is desperately trying to tie her to a job, and with her mostly absent father who is filling her head with empty promises and dreams about a better future. During a period of disappointments – over school, decisions about the future, her parents, best friend and boyfriends – Mija has to learn for herself which path is the right one for her and who in her life is worth betting on. Her search for answers, which in the end brings surprising results, is an excellent read even for those whose teenage years are far behind them. This novel by the multiple award winner Suzana Tratnik was nominated for the 2016 Blue Bird Award, which is awarded by Mladinska Knjiga to hitherto unpublished Slovene fiction.

FERI LAINŠČEK



Foto: Denis Cizar

FERI LAINŠČEK (1959), writer, playwright and scriptwriter, is one of the most popular Slovene writers. His bibliography includes over 100 books for children and adults, some of which have been translated into other languages. He has received numerous awards. In 1995, he was given the Prešeren Fund Award for his novel *Ki jo je megla prinesla* (*She Who Was Brought By the Fog*). He has received the Kresnik Award for the best Slovene novel twice, in 1992 for his novel *Namesto koga roža cveti* (*Instead of Whom Does the Flower Bloom*) and in 2007 for the novel *Muriša*. Six feature films have been made on the basis of his novels, among them *Petelinji zajtrk* (*Rooster's Breakfast*), the second ranking Slovene film in terms of viewer numbers since Slovenia's independence.

The novel **UNTOUCHABLES** (*Nedotakljivi*) is an excellent Slovene contribution to the international collection *Myths*, in which over 40 publishers from around the world took part. Feri Lainšček, who has always been enchanted by the "gypsy soul", decided to write a myth about the Roma. He used a legend about how the Roma made the nails for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and how the last of the red-hot nails could not be extinguished. This is why Jesus was crucified with three nails only. The fourth nail continues to travel around the world. A masterful tale, bubbling with the nomadic human spirit pushing through the tragic with unbelievable inventiveness and stubbornness. The story has also been made into a film. Mladinska knjiga has published other two novels by the writer: *Jadrnica* (*Sailing Boat*) and *Ki jo je megla prinesla* (*She Who Was Brought By the Fog*). And Cankarjeva Založba Publishing House has published two exceptionally well-received collections of poems by Lainšček: *Ne bodi kot drugi* (*Do Not Be Like Others*) and *Demon ljubezni* (*The Demon of Love*).



JURE JAKOB



Foto: Thimir Pinter

JURE JAKOB (1977), a poet and essay writer, studied philosophy and comparative literature (MA) at the Ljubljana Faculty of Arts. He is the author of a monograph about the prose of Lojze Kovačič *Otroški pogled* (*A Child's View*) and four collections of poems: *Tri postaje* (*Three Stations*), *Budnost* (*Being Awake*), *Zapuščeni kraji* (*Deserted Places*) and *Delci dela* (*Fragments of Work*). He is considered the most lucid Slovene poet of his generation.



Jakob's first prose work **HOUSES AND OTHER ESSAYS** (*Hiše in drugi prosti spisi*) is a book of essay-like prose sketches, a book of memory and imagination, a book of experiences. When an experience is repeated, this is re-experience. Re-experience, which is interested more in inner states rather than external circumstances changes freely but not randomly from memory to fiction. The hidden anxieties and bright moments from childhood and youth return in the shape of a passion for narrating, like shadows of a time that still persists.

Jakob has received two awards for *Houses and Other Essays*: the 2016 Critic's Sieve Award and the 2016 Rožanc Award for essay-writing.

RENATA SALECL



Foto: Šimen Zupancič

RENATA SALECL, a philosopher and sociologist, is a full professor and a research counsellor, employed by the Institute of Criminology at the Faculty of Law in Ljubljana. She is also a visiting professor at the Cardozo School of Law, New York and at the School of Law, Birkbeck College, University of London. Her books, among them *(Per)verzije ljubezni in sovraštva* (*(Per)versions of Love and Hate*), and *Izbira* (*Choice*), have been translated into ten languages. She also writes columns for various European newspapers, including the Slovene *Delo* and the Barcelona based *La Vanguardia*.

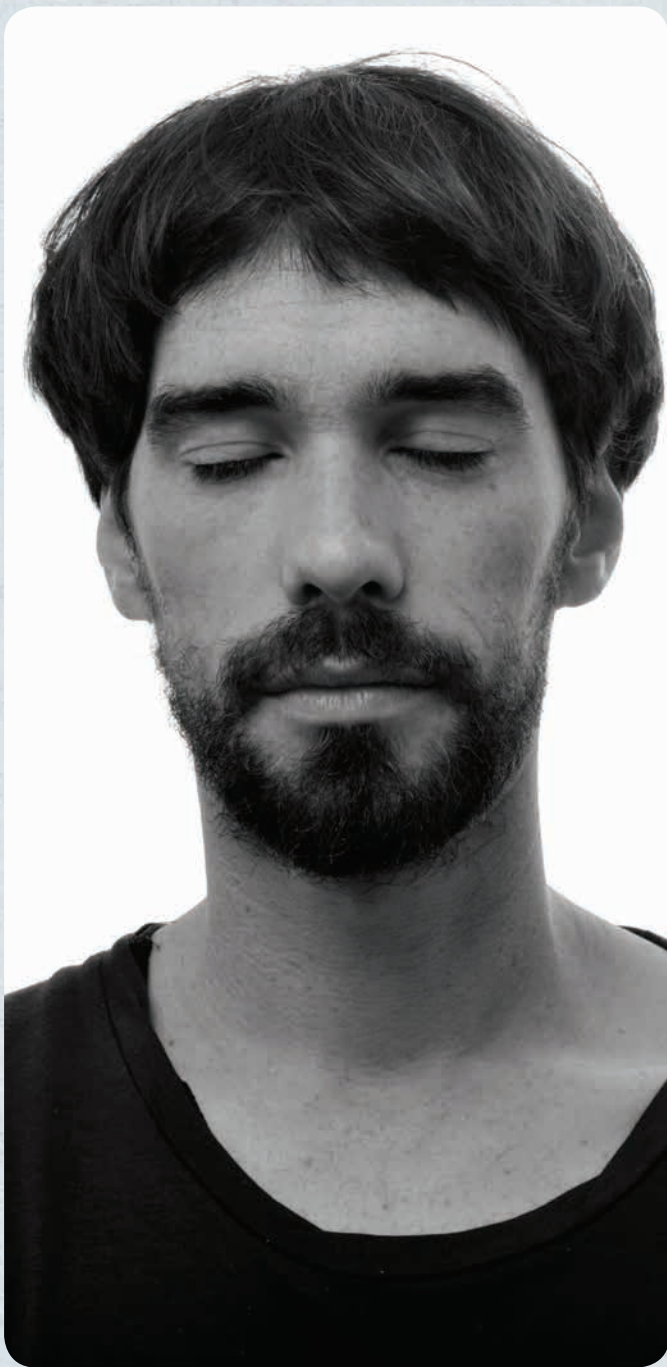
Her latest book of essays **RUNNING ON THE SPOT**

(*Tek na mestu*) is a collection of reflections on the problems of modern society and the individual within it. The texts reflect changes in the fields of ethics, medicine, parenthood, genetics, consumerism and poverty. She talks about the anxieties faced by people on a daily basis and the painful

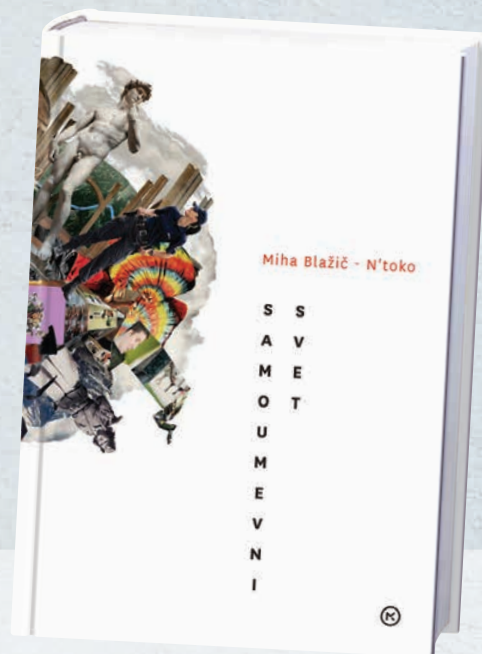
choices that do not guarantee a less difficult future. In spite of the constant talk about the need for progress, it seems that societies are more or less running on the spot. Individuals, meanwhile, are both at work and in their private lives constantly under pressure to run better and faster than others. They work ever more so that they can consume more and sooner or later begin to consume themselves. This appears as workaholism, dependence on drugs or alcohol, and in the new symptoms such as anorexia, bulimia and other forms of self-harm.



MIHA BLAŽIČ N'TOKO



MIHA BLAŽIČ N'TOKO (1980) is a rapper and singer in the band Moveknowledge, who has in recent years – particularly since becoming a columnist for the journal *Mladina* – become the foremost voice of the “millennium generation”.



THE SELF-EVIDENT WORLD (*Samoumevni svet*) systematically and critically deals with the key narratives trying to make sense of the world around us. In a particular period in the past, historical processes were explained mainly through the category of social classes. Today, it seems that the key conflicts appear on the generational front, mostly between the generation of precarious workers without any possessions and those who still have permanent jobs and their own homes. Social differences, which also have an age dimension, exist, but is it really this dimension that is of key importance in the understanding of all the tensions that have developed in our societies, for example in relation to the labour market and the social state? Are social networks today a privileged terrain of social activism? These are the questions that N'Toko asks about the world that can no longer be taken for granted.

ALMA M. KARLIN

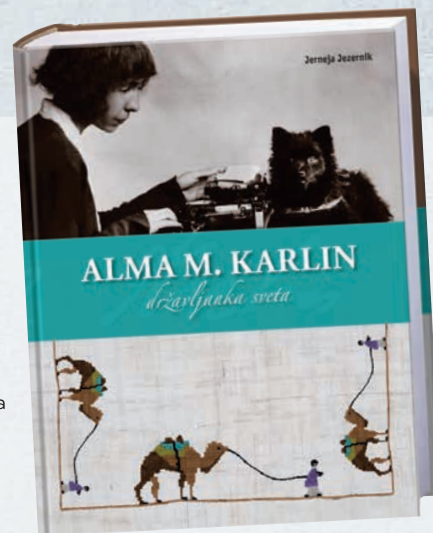


For the first time the biography **ALMA M. KARLIN** – *Citizen of the World* throws a comprehensive light on the life and rich literary work of Alma Maximiliana Karlin (Celje, 1889–1950), a writer, world traveller, polyglot and polymath. The individual chapters show her unusual childhood, her youth, her first travels and explorations around Europe, her journey around the world between 1919 and 1928, her travelogues and literary work, the period after 1920, marked with book successes and fame around Europe, her cooperation with the writer, painter and literary manager Thea Schreiber Gammelmin, her pacifist struggle against Nazism and the Partisan period, and her theosophy.

The story of Karlin's life, which is unusual and exceptional even today, one hundred and thirty years after her birth, is supplemented with new translations from her literary legacy. The monograph includes the testimonies of people who knew her, and the thoughts of the artists inspired by Karlin's personality and work. The biography includes pictorial material: photographs, manuscripts, Alma's drawings, postcards and the objects she collected and brought from five continents with the wish that they should one day be in a museum.

Jerneja Jezernik: **ALMA M. KARLIN – CITIZEN OF THE WORLD** (Alma M. Karlin – Državljanica sveta)

Jerneja Jezernik, expert on Slovene, translator and writer, knows a great deal about the life and work of Alma M. Karlin. For a number of years, she has been researching Karlin's intellectual legacy both in Slovenia, where Alma lived, and in Germany where during her life she published most of her books and articles. Jezernik has translated two of Karlin's books: *Smrtonosni trn in druge nenavadne zgodbe iz Peruja in Paname* (*The Deadly Thorn and Other Peculiar Stories from Peru and Panama*) and *Japonske novele* (*Japanese Novellas*).



BORIS PAHOR



The life story of **BORIS PAHOR** (1913), a Slovene writer and centenarian, is at the same time a story about one of the most turbulent centuries in human history. With his clear standpoints and engagement, the author has always challenged current authorities and found himself in some of the most difficult situations of the 20th century. *That's How I Lived* is also a story about Trieste and the lives of the people who moved there from rural areas, about the sad fates of Pahor's patriotic friends and, of course, about his own Calvary through the Third Reich's concentration camps. It offers an insight into Pahor's private life, his first experiences of love and the first meetings with people with similar intellectual views and allies. The reader follows Pahor through his much-noticed conflicts with Slovene politicians and his activities on the international stage in favour of the rights of minority cultures. The narrative is supplemented with documents and photographs.



Tatjana Rojc: **BORIS PAHOR – THAT'S HOW I LIVED** (Boris Pahor – *Tako sem živel*)

Tatjana Rojc, a literary historian, in a series of conversations for the Slovene section of RAI radio in Trieste, led the writer through the story of his life. The record of these conversations is the common thread throughout the book *That's How I Lived*. In 2015, Rojc received the historical-literary "Count Emilio and Janja Auersperg Award" for this biography, also published in Italian.

MONIKA ŽAGAR



Foto: Jernej Prelec

MONIKA ŽAGAR (1949) lived, lectured and wrote abroad for many years. After returning to Ljubljana, she wrote the story of her family in the book *Dva brata, trije svetovi* (*Two Brothers, Three Worlds*), which has also been made into a film. *Košček čokolade v pasji dlaki* (*Chocolate in Dog's Hair*) is her second novel.

CHOCOLATE IN DOG'S HAIR (*Košček čokolade v pasji dlaki*) is about an international family with two daughters adopted from Russia. The Slovene-Canadian family lives between Kranjska Gora and Ottawa, where after years of travelling around they find their place and settle down. Since some key scenes take place in Hong Kong and Novosibirsk, the novel's setting is truly international. The first-person narrator thinks globally and is in no way navel-gazing or wrapped in self-pity because of her lack of biological children. She deals with the various situations brought on by international adoption in a realistic way, with a pinch of humour and a great deal of warmth. At the end – regardless of whether the family is an extended, biological or blended one – all that is needed is a sufficiently solid network of security and ties woven between the individuals involved.

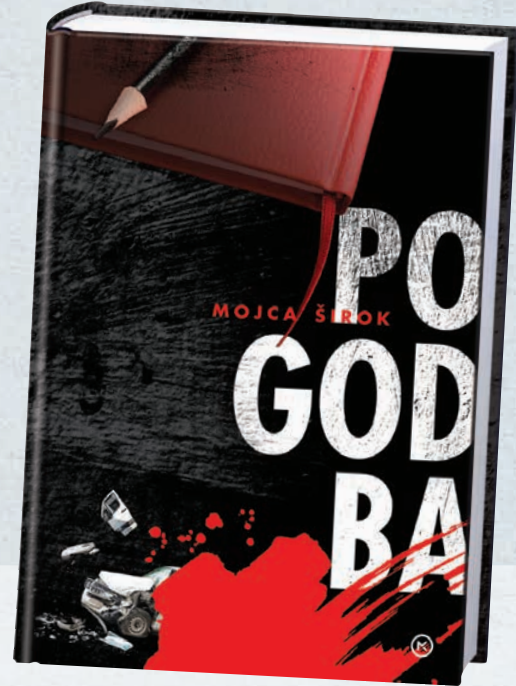
FORTHCOMING IN MAY 2018

MOJCA ŠIROK



Foto: Marko Jamnik

MOJCA ŠIROK a columnist and journalist, has so far published three books of reportage: *Zadnji rimski cesar* (*The Last Roman Emperor*), *Oblast brez obraza* (*Power without a Face*) and *Od Benedikta do Frančiška* (*From Benedict to Francis*). The crime novel *Pogodba* (*The Contract*), which received the 2018 Blue Bird award, is her literary debut.



THE CONTRACT (*Pogodba*)

The first body of a man is discovered by the police in a prestigious city quarter, in the villa belonging to one of the most successful lawyers in Rome. This murder is followed by a traffic accident at the other end of Rome and a suicide of a mafia boss in prison. But coincidences exist only in novels, says the chief police investigator. By examining the events behind the scenes, *Pogodba*, through juicy language, lively dialogues and unexpected plot twists takes the reader into the very heart of mafia activities. The detectives, prosecutors, journalists and politicians often share past connections. Their love affairs and friendships are interwoven with their professional duties, and the lines between where the state ends and the mafia begins, are very fuzzy.

JANI VIRK



JANI VIRK (1962), writer, essayist and editor, is the author of eight novels, five short stories collections, a collection of poems and two books of essays. He has received the Golden Bird and Prešeren Fund awards for his work. *Brez imena* (No Name) is his ninth novel.

NO NAME (*Brez imena*) is a novel about a boy growing up in a normal urban family in Ljubljana. His childhood is nothing special, he has a circle of friends in the neighbourhood, he likes football and is even in a team, he is attracted by girls and erotic dreams. Towards the end of primary school his parents divorce, and the father goes to live in a town by the sea with his new partner. After moving with her son to an impersonal high-rise housing estate, the mother sinks ever deeper into numbness and strangeness. The boy's life with her becomes increasingly difficult, while his father, to whom he is particularly attached, becomes ever more distant. Of all the things the boy used to like, only football remains. Gradually, he falls into bad company, slowly loses his way in life, resorts to self-harming, and one of his last shelters is his football trainer, who offers himself as a surrogate father figure.

FORTHCOMING IN OCTOBER 2018

VLADIMIR P. ŠTEFANEC



VLADIMIR P. ŠTEFANEC (1964), writer, journalist and university lecturer, is the author of nine novels (three have been shortlisted for the Kresnik Award) and one short story collection. *Najlepša neznanka svetloba* (*The Most Beautiful Stranger Light*) is his tenth novel.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL STRANGER LIGHT

(*Najlepša neznanka svetloba*)

The novel's starting point is six portraits on the desk of the main character. These photographs show the people closest to him, with whom his life to date, its determinants, longings, regrets, captivity, the possibility of liberation, has been connected. Through fragments of memory, their stories are woven into a common story about their past, torn between the seemingly carefree life in the late nineteenth century until the 1920s, when the looming shadows of world events reached Slovenia.

In this novel about liberation achieved through the clearing of an individual's past and his family's, about everyday melancholy and the melancholy of everyday life, which nevertheless includes some of what makes life exciting and precious, the main character keeps wondering what distance to choose for the best photographic result, as well as how close to let someone come without letting them penetrate his isolation.

FORTHCOMING IN MAY 2018

A poem is a bird table that you have put up not so that you can collect as many birds as possible, but so that you can observe the life of birds and show it to others, your readers. It is not a cage in which you have caught an animal. The living spirit is invisible. When it seems you have caught it, you realise that you have something dead in front of you.

Jure Jakob