Diogenes

Book factsheet

Leon de Winter
God's Gym

Published by Diogenes as *Malibu*
Original title: *God's Gym*



Contemporary Literature
432 pages
11.6 × 18.4 cm
February 2003

Contact:
Susanne Bauknecht, Rights Director,
susanne.bauknecht@diogenes.ch and
Suzanne Hégelé, Film Rights Manager,
suzanne.hegele@diogenes.ch

Bestseller

Spiegel Bestseller

Movie adaptations

2003: SuperTex
Director: Jan Schütt
Cast: Stephen Mangan, Jan Decleir

2001: The Hollywood Sign
Director: Sönke Wortmann
Cast: Burt Reynolds, Rod Steiger, Tom Berenger

1993: Hoffman's honger
Director: Leon de Winter
Cast: Jacqueline Bisset, Elliot Gould, Thom Hoffman, Huub Stapel

Awards

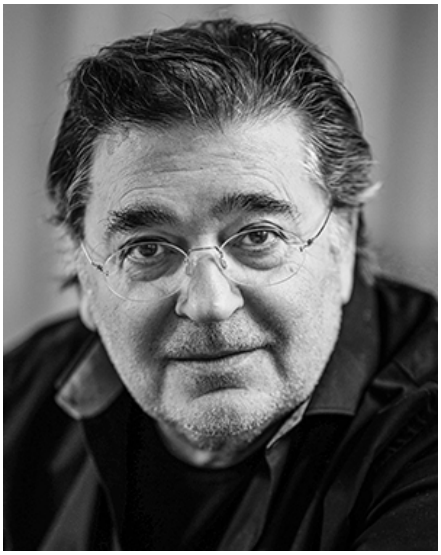
2009 Literaturpreis der Provinz Brabant (›Schrijversprijs der Brabantse Letteren‹) für *Das Recht auf Rückkehr*
2006 Buber-Rosenzweig-Medaille
2002 WELT-Literaturpreis für sein Gesamtwerk
2002 ›*Welt*-Literaturpreis‹ für Leon de Winter: »Die Jury ehrt Leon de Winter für seine so komplex wie spannend angelegten Romane, die am Beispiel meist jüdischer Protagonisten hochkomisch und psychologisch einfühlsam vom Getriebensein des modernen Menschen erzählen. Sein Schreiben zeichnet sich durch einen souveränen Wechsel von Nähe und Distanz im Hinblick auf seine Figuren aus, durch ein meisterliches Gespür für pointierte Dialoge, durch die gekonnte Verknüpfung verschiedener Haupt- und Nebenhandlungen, die seine Bücher so komplex wie spannend machen. Er wird für sein Gesamtwerk geehrt.«
1978 ›Reina Prinsen Geerlings-Preis‹ für *De (ver)wording van de jongere Dürer*

Praise

God's Gym

»Leon de Winter writes with a seductively light touch about the heaviness of life.« – Welt am Sonntag, Berlin

On the morning of 22 December 2000, Joop Koopman, a 47-year-old, moderately success-ful Dutch-born scriptwriter in Los Angeles, congratulates his daughter Mirjam on her 17th birthday. He has arranged to meet an old school friend, Philip van Gelder, for lunch. Van Gelder wants to recruit Joop for the Israeli secret service, the Mossad, with the job of spying on a Moroccan suspected of being connected with the planning of terror acts. During their conversation the phone rings: Mirjam has had an accident on her way to her birthday party. Twenty hours later, his beloved daughter is dead. But Joop is not given a chance to abandon himself to his grief. A series of fateful events turn the life of the unhappy Joop upside-down: a huge coloured man called God, on whose motor-cycle Mirjam had her accident, refuses to leave his side; Joop feels an inexplicable liking for the Moroccan he is supposed to be spying on; and when his cousin Linda, whom he has not seen for thirty years, suddenly appears in Los Angeles with a Tibetan monk, Koopman does not know what to think or who is writing the script: a madman, a clever swindler or a hidden divine hand? De Winter's boldest novel to date: human tragedy, metaphysical speculation, physics-related theories, political espionage and greed for profit enter into an explosive combination that guarantees superb entertainment and food for thought.



© Paul Tolenaar

Leon de Winter was born in 's-Hertogenbosch in 1954, the son of Dutch Jews. He has worked as a freelance writer and filmmaker since 1976, and lives in the Netherlands. In 2002, he was awarded the ›Welt Literature Prize‹; in 2006, the ›Buber-Rosenzweig Medal‹ for his fight against Antisemitism; and in 2009, the ›Brabant Literature Prize‹ for *The Right of Return*.

Praise (cont'd)

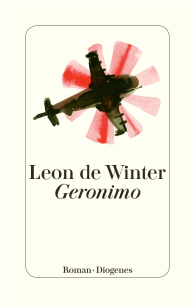
Leon de Winter

»Ingenious, entertaining, funny – always to the surprise and delight of the reader.« – Volker Hage / Der Spiegel, Hamburg

»Leon de Winter stokes the fires of imagination until the pages are ablaze. It's an approach that makes him unique.« – De Volkskrant, Amsterdam



City of Dogs
272 pages
2025



Geronimo
448 pages
2016
Bestseller



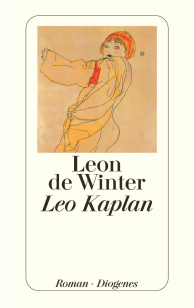
VSV
512 pages
2013
Bestseller



The Right to Return
560 pages
2009
Bestseller



Place de la Bastille
160 pages
2005



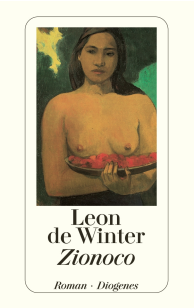
Kaplan
544 pages
2001



Sokolov's Universe
448 pages
1999



The Sky of Hollywood
368 pages
1998
Movie Adaptation



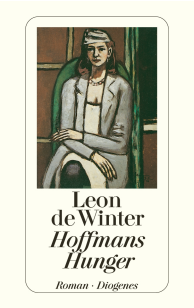
Zionoco
416 pages
1997



Serenade
176 pages
1996



SuperTex
272 pages
1994
Movie Adaptation



Hoffman's Hunger
416 pages
1994
Movie Adaptation