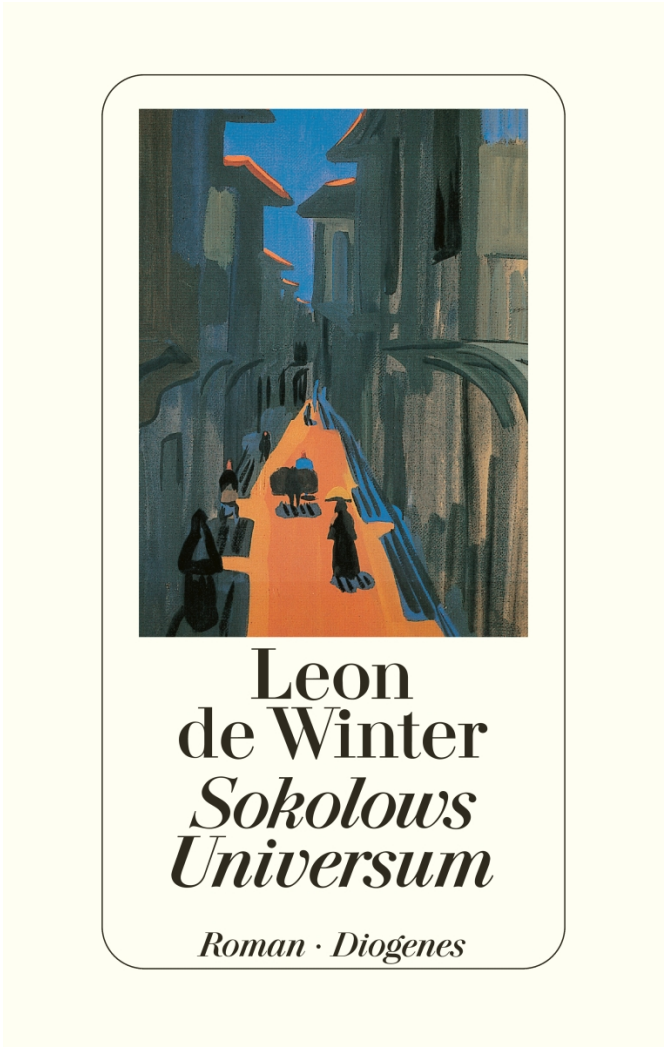
Diogenes

Book factsheet

Leon de Winter
Sokolov's Universe

Published by Diogenes as *Sokolows Universum*
Original title: *De ruimte van Sokolov*



On a hot September day in Tel Aviv, a road sweeper is witness to a murder. For a moment, the man doubts his sanity, for he believes he has recognised an old friend in the murderer. And this would contradict all the rules of probability. For Sascha Sokolov is no ordinary road sweeper. Only recently, the emigrated Russian was one of his country's most respected space research experts – until the day when the rocket he had helped to develop inexplicably exploded on take-off. Sokolov and his old project director and friend Lev Lesjava were suspended – and this was the man who looked so strikingly like the murderer in the Rechov Etsel. Ever since Sokolov came to Israel he has been trying to drown his sorrows in drink: the memory of his wrecked career and marriage, his fruitless search for a Jewish identity and, last but not least, the unsolved dilemma of the role Lev had played in the explosion of the rocket and his friend's enigmatic, seemingly unscrupulous character...
A rousing novel about friendship and betrayal, a search for identity and the achievements of modern science, and at the same time an exciting thriller about international Mafia machinations against the background of the impending Gulf War which threatens to destroy Israel.

Contemporary Literature
448 pages
11.6 × 18.4 cm
September 1999

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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*

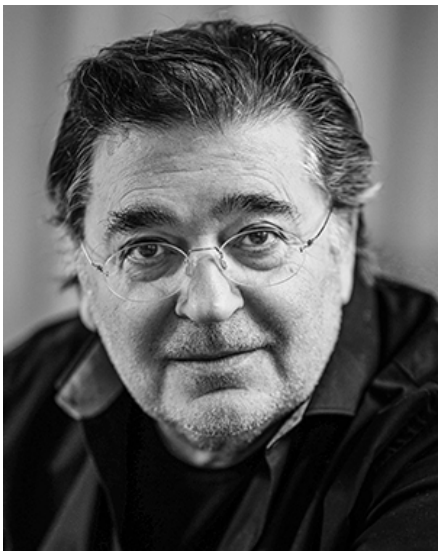
Praise

Sokolov's Universe

»A remarkably good book! It deserves a place of honour in Netherlands literature.« – NRC Handelsblad, Rotterdam

Leon de Winter

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



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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 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



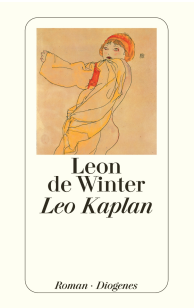
The Right to Return
560 pages
2009
Bestseller



Place de la Bastille
160 pages
2005



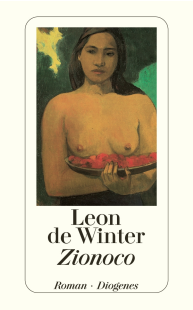
God's Gym
432 pages
2003
Bestseller



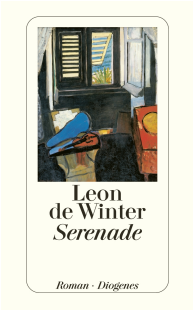
Kaplan
544 pages
2001



The Sky of Hollywood
368 pages
1998
Movie Adaptation



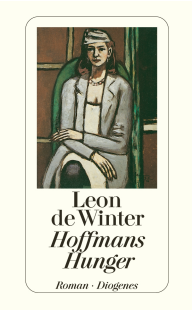
Zionoco
416 pages
1997



Serenade
176 pages
1996



SuperTex
272 pages
1994
Movie Adaptation



Hoffman's Hunger
416 pages
1994
Movie Adaptation