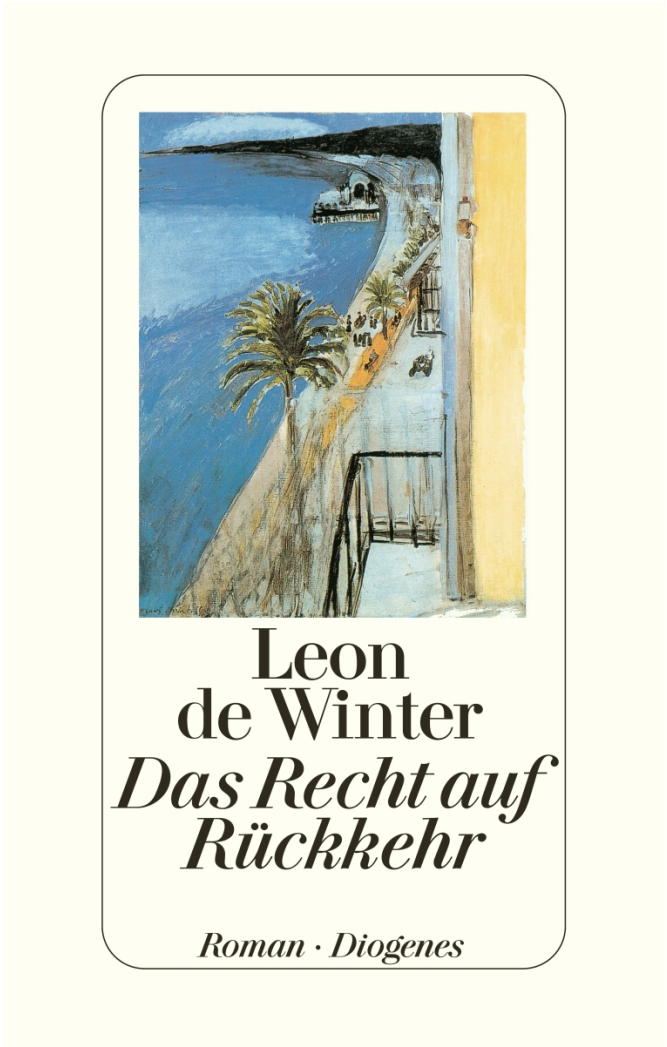
Diogenes

Book factsheet

Leon de Winter
The Right to Return

Published by Diogenes as *Das Recht auf Rückkehr*
Original title: *Het Recht op Terugkeer*



Tel Aviv in the year 2024: Israel is reduced to a heavily secured city state, a narrow strip of land by the sea. Those able to leave have left. Bram Mannheim has stayed and is looking after his ill father. Twenty years ago Bram, who grew up in Amsterdam, was a well-known university teacher in Princeton. When Bennie, his four- year-old son, vanished into thin air, his life collapsed; and with it Bram's marriage, his career, and his self-confidence. In Tel Aviv he runs a support service helping parents track down their disappeared children. Then a new series of suicide bombings shock the small country. And Bram discovers that an atrocious secret lurks behind the attacks which at the same time, however, gives him hope that Bennie may still be alive. A serious subject matter, brilliantly and poignantly told.

Contemporary Literature
560 pages
11.6 × 18.4 cm
September 2009

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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

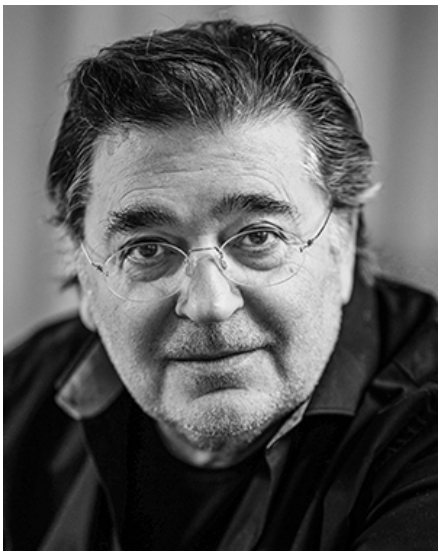
Awards

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

The Right to Return

»He can tell a story like hardly any other writer in Western Europe.« – Literaturen, Berlin



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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*.



City of Dogs
272 pages
2025



Geronimo
448 pages
2016
Bestseller



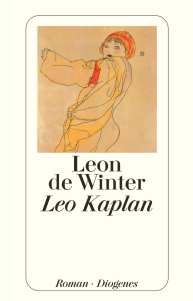
VSV
512 pages
2013
Bestseller



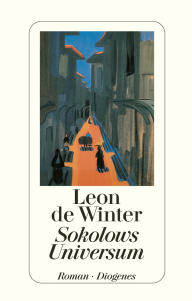
Place de la Bastille
160 pages
2005



God's Gym
432 pages
2003
Bestseller



Kaplan
544 pages
2001



Sokolov's Universe
448 pages
1999



The Sky of Hollywood
368 pages
1998
Movie Adaptation

Praise (cont'd)

»A depiction of Israel's near future. By a novelist with a panoramic view!« – Trouw, Amsterdam

»A novel, broad in scope and audacious, which does not confine itself to one country or one continent. Instead, it takes a wider, international perspective.« – De Volkskrant, Amsterdam

»You want to read it all, and immediately.« – De Groene Amsterdammer

»In ›Right to Return‹ Leon de Winter has written a nightmarish and visionary novel of Israel. An impressive, sombre novel. A master is here at work.« – Die Welt, Berlin

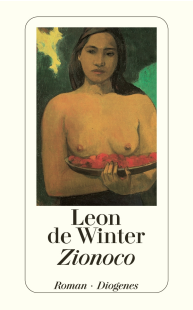
»This novel is his masterpiece.« – Focus, Munich

»Leon de Winter's novel, which is as exciting as it is complex, is also a book about forbidden thoughts and self-delusion.« – Münchner Merkur

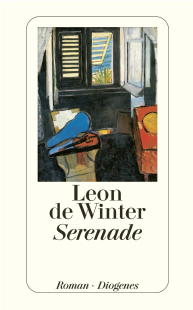
Leon de Winter

»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



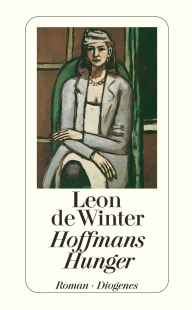
Zionoco
416 pages
1997



Serenade
176 pages
1996



SuperTex
272 pages
1994
Movie Adaptation



Hoffman's Hunger
416 pages
1994
Movie Adaptation