Diogenes

Book factsheet

Sasha Filipenko
The Shadow of an Open Door

Published by Diogenes as *Der Schatten einer offenen Tür*
Original title: *Woswraschtschenije w Ostrog*



What happens if you realise the best part of your life is gone, never to return?
In the godforsaken provincial town of Ostrog in Russia, a series of teenage suicides in the orphanage shakes up the community. Inspector Alexander Kozlov, from Moscow, is supposed to be leading the investigation, but the local police have their own theories. When Petya, a misfit who cares deeply about nature, gets arrested, Kozlov doesn't believe he's guilty. But why did Petya get so agitated when the Mayor of Ostrog had wanted to gift the orphans a holiday in Greece?
Inspired by a true story: a philosophical crime novel by one of the »most exciting authors in the Russian language« (News, Vienna).

Contemporary Literature
272 pages
11.6 × 18.4 × 2.2 cm
October 2024

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Translation rights currently sold:
French (Noir sur Blanc)
Japanese (Shueisha)

Awards

2025 Ruth Altenhofer wurde für ihre Übersetzung des Romans *Der Schatten einer offenen Tür* von Sasha Filipenko aus dem Russischen mit dem ›Sacher-Masoch-Preis‹ ausgezeichnet.
2024 ›Prix Transfuge du meilleur roman européen ‹ für *Kremulator*
2024 ›ProLitteris-Hauptpreis‹ für herausragende Leistungen in der Literatur und Kultur
2022 *Rote Kreuze* auf der Shortlist für ›EBRD Literaturpreis‹, vergeben von der Europäischen Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung für übersetzte Belletristik
2021 ›Writer in Residence‹ bis Juli 2021: Fondation Jan Michalski, Montricher, Nähe Genfersee, Schweiz
2020 ›Yasnaya Polyana Award‹ des Lev Tolstoy Museum für *Der Schatten einer offenen Tür*
2016 *Die Jagd* auf der Shortlist für den russischen ›Big Book Award‹
2016 ›Snob Award: Made in Russia‹ für *Die Jagd*
2014 ›Znamya Magazine Award‹ für *Der ehemalige Sohn*
2014 ›Russian Prize‹ für *Der ehemalige Sohn*

Praise

The Shadow of an Open Door

»Sasha Filipenko's brilliant new suspense novel about corruption [...] He writes bestsellers on a high linguistic level. Clever, atmospherically compact, humorous.« – Barbara Beer / Kurier, Vienna

»It all reads like a jauntily written piece of absurd theater. But it's sinister because you can well imagine how close reality must be.« – Katharina Granzin / taz, Berlin

»In short scenes and alternating in time and perspective, Filipenko draws the reader into the intrigue.« – Kerstin Holm / Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt

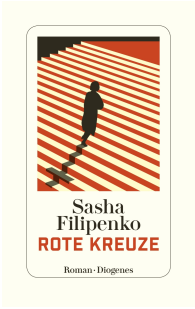


Photo: Lukas Lienhard / © Diogenes Verlag

Sasha Filipenko, born in Minsk in 1984, is a Belarusian author who writes in Russian. After leaving his training in classical music, he studied literature in St. Petersburg and worked as a journalist, scriptwriter, television presenter and gag writer for a satirical show. His novels *Red Crosses* and *The Hunt* were *Spiegel* bestsellers. Filipenko is an ardent football fan and lived in St. Petersburg until 2020. He had to leave Russia with his family and currently lives in Switzerland.



The Hunt
288 pages
2022
Award winner
Bestseller



Red Crosses
288 pages
2020
Award winner
Bestseller

Praise (cont'd)

»Hidden in-between lies great hope – the hope for better times. For the resilience of human dignity!«
– Annemarie Stoltenberg / NDR Kultur, Hamburg

»Sasha Filipenko's extraordinary thriller *The Shadow of an Open Door* is a view into the abysses of Russian justice.« – Susanne Zobl / News, Vienna

»If you're after an accurate look on the current commotion in Russia, I recommend Sasha Filipenko's latest novel.« – Nicolas Butylin / Berliner Zeitung

»Sasha Filipenko's novel is a parabola on the failure of Perestroika and present-day Russia that goes straight to the heart.« – Welf Grombacher / Frankfurter Neue Presse

»In a nicely ironic way, the author Filipenko – who had to leave Russia and now lives in Switzerland – tells of chicanery in a provincial town.« – Britta Helmbold / Ruhr Nachrichten, Dortmund

»A book full of dark humour, full of anecdotes and with a resolution that makes you realise: I didn't anticipate that.« – Ziphora Robina / Radio Bremen Zwei

»Rampant, sparkling with wit, joyfully entertaining, and utterly dismal, this is the novel of a Russia confronting itself at last, and bursting into laughter before collapsing.« – Florent Georgesco / Le Monde, Paris

Sasha Filipenko

»There is something unshakable to Sasha Filipenko's literature – impressive.« – Nora Zukker / Tages-Anzeiger, Zurich

»Filipenko is a relatable intellectual and a first-class writer who is gradually becoming known and appreciated in the West.« – Wlodek Goldkorn / L'Espresso, Rome

»Sasha Filipenko is one of those young writers who immediately gained a reputation for being a serious author. If you want to get inside the head of modern, young Russia, read Filipenko.« – Svetlana Alexievich / (›Nobel Prize‹ winner 2015)

Praise (cont'd)

»Sasha Filipenko's books are based on thorough documental research – material that he turns into fictional literature with linguistic innovation and acumen. Sasha Filipenko possesses the ability to depict dismal circumstances with powerful metaphors, rendering the absurdity of political and existential situations. With satire and finesse, he reconstructs the intimate and the mundane that lets humans persevere – or keeps them caught – in objectively unbearable situations. His humour is brilliant and conveys complex historical contexts to the readers, employing human fates as examples. By bestowing this award on Sasha Filipenko, the jury also wants to honour an author whose career has been marked by substantial personal and political risks. Both of which reflect in his writing. Sasha Filipenko is an invaluable witness who contributes, as an intermediary, to the understanding of the contemporary geopolitical situation.« – Pro Litteris Award Jury