

# Diogenes

Leon de Winter  
*God's Gym*

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



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.

## Book factsheet

Contemporary Literature  
432 pages  
11.6 x 18.4 cm  
February 2003

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(except Dutch)

### Bestseller

Spiegel Bestseller

### Movie adaptations

**2003: SuperTex**  
Director: Jan Schütt  
Cast: Stephen Mangan, Jan Declair

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

**1993: Hoffman's hunger**  
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

Leon de Winter

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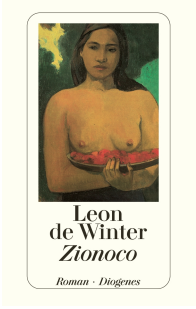
**Praise (cont'd)**

»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

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*.

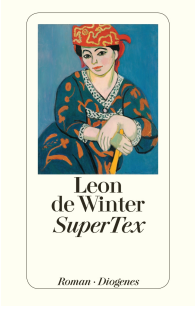
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|---|---|--|---|
|  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Stadt der Hunde</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p>      |  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Geronimo</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p>   |  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Ein gutes Herz</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p>      |  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Das Recht auf Rückkehr</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p>   |
| <p><i>City of Dogs</i><br/>272 pages<br/>2025</p>   | <p><i>Geronimo</i><br/>448 pages<br/>2016<br/><b>Bestseller</b></p>   | <p><i>VSV</i><br/>512 pages<br/>2013<br/><b>Bestseller</b></p>   | <p><i>The Right to Return</i><br/>560 pages<br/>2009<br/><b>Bestseller</b></p>  |
|  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Place de la Bastille</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p> |  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Leo Kaplan</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p> |  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Sokolov's Universum</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p> |  <p>Leon de Winter<br/><i>Der Himmel von Hollywood</i><br/><small>Roman · Diogenes</small></p> |
| <p><i>Place de la Bastille</i><br/>160 pages<br/>2005</p>   | <p><i>Kaplan</i><br/>544 pages<br/>2001</p>   | <p><i>Sokolov's Universe</i><br/>448 pages<br/>1999</p>  | <p><i>The Sky of Hollywood</i><br/>368 pages<br/>1998<br/><b>Movie Adaptation</b></p>   |



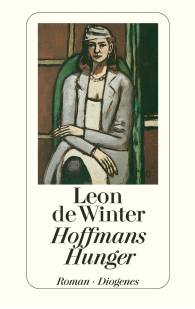
Zionoco  
416 pages  
1997



Serenade  
176 pages  
1996



SuperTex  
272 pages  
1994  
 **Movie Adaptation**



Hoffman's Hunger  
416 pages  
1994  
 **Movie Adaptation**