

Diogenes

Sasha Filipenko
Red Crosses

Published by Diogenes as *Rote Kreuz*
Original title: *Krasny Krest*



A great Russian novel in only 280 pages – from Stalin’s terror to the present day.

One fights against forgetting, the other would like nothing more than that.

She is suffering from Alzheimer’s, losing more and more memories. But once you meet this old lady, you’ll never forget her.

Alexander is a young man whose life has been brutally torn in two. Tatiana Alexeyevna is over ninety and getting more forgetful by the day. The old lady tells her new neighbour her life story, encompassing the entire Russian 20th century and all its horrors. And she tells him: »God is afraid of me. There are too many uncomfortable questions coming His way.«

Bit by bit, the two recognize their own broken hearts in each other and forge an unlikely friendship, a pact against forgetting.

Book factsheet

General Fiction
288 pages
11.6 x 18.4 cm
March 2020

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📍 Bestseller

Spiegel Bestseller

🏆 Award

2021 ›Writer in Residence‹ bis Juli 2021:
Fondation Jan Michalski, Montricher,
Nähe Genfersee, Schweiz

Praise

Red Crosses

»A tour de force. A book full of sound and fury, but also greatness and gentleness.« – Astrid de Larminat / Le Figaro littéraire, Paris

»This is gripping contemporary history that exerts a unique pull on the reader.« – Ursula May / HR2 Kultur, Frankfurt

»A truly important book.« – NDR Kultur, Hamburg

»You learn something about the Stalin era, as well as about people’s suffering during and after the Second World War; this is powerful, impressive reading.« – Michael Opitz / Deutschlandfunk Kultur, Cologne

»Filipenko impressively demonstrates how it could affect anyone – and how many tried to stay human in spite of it.« – Brigitte, Hamburg

»Sasha Filipenko expertly links past and present, building a bridge between intimacy and otherness.« – Kurier, Vienna

»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)



Sasha Filipenko, born in Minsk in 1984, is a Belarusian author who writes in Russian. After abandoning his classical music training, he studied literature in St. Petersburg and worked as a journalist, screenwriter and author for a satire show. *The Ex-Son* is his second novel to be published in German. Sasha Filipenko is a passionate football fan and lives with his family in St. Petersburg.

Praise (cont'd)

»One of the best books to be released this spring. A wonderful, gripping story with touches of humour.« – Helmut Zechner / ORF 2, Vienna

»The way in which Tatjana and Alexander's fates become increasingly entwined and their encounter gives rise to something new, something hopeful, is both mesmerising and beautiful.« – Annegret Arnold / Bayern 2, Munich

»Filipenko's book is a tale of a poignant fate, interspersed with extracts from original documents.« – Ruhr Nachrichten, Dortmund

»With *Red Crosses*, comedian and author Sasha Filipenko has created a moving testament to Russian history.« – Gala, Hamburg

»Sasha Filipenko has a talent for bringing his characters to life within the novel's historical context.« – Anton Thuswaldner / Salzburger Nachrichten, Salzburg

»He allows the injustice suffered by the woman to simply take hold – no explanations are necessary, particularly for the author's compatriots.« – Torsten Kohlschein / Freie Presse, Chemnitz

»An important, necessary book. Both for Russia, which suffers from historic amnesia, and Europe which is also running the risk of losing its historic memory.« – Dmitry Glukhovsky / (Russian author)

»With *Red Crosses*, Sasha Filipenko has written the novel of the Russian 20th century.« – Alemannò Partenopeo / literaturzeitschrift.de

»In a captivating yet matter-of-fact way, Sasha Filipenko tells the story of the Soviet Union from beginning to end – and beyond.« – radio fm4 (ORF), Vienna

»First, this book is very sophisticatedly constructed. Second, it tells an outrageous story.« – Peer Teuwsen / Neue Zürcher Zeitung am Sonntag, Zurich

»The idiosyncrasies and particular quirkiness of the characters make them especially lovable, ensuring light-hearted moments despite the serious subject matter.« – Christin Deja / Märkische Allgemeine, Potsdam

»In this novel he [the author] combines research with a story that is highly readable and sensitively written, despite the gloomy details of Tatjana's life during the Stalin era« – Erika Achermann / Aargauer Zeitung, Aarau

»He deftly forges links with modern-day Russia, a land that often suppresses the sinister aspects of its history.« – Felix Mürnger / SRF 1, Zurich

»Young Sasha Filipenko has written an essential book which is here to stay.« – Marko Martin / Die Welt, Berlin

»He has pulled off the impressive feat of condensing Russian history, up to the present day, into 280 pages.« – Augsburg Allgemeine, Augsburg



The Ex-Son
320 pages
2021

Praise (cont'd)

»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

»This author brings freshness and wit to a familiar story of Soviet tragedy.« – Publishers Weekly, New York