

Diogenes

Erich Hackl
Sara und Simón

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Erich Hackl
Sara und
Simón
Eine endlose
Geschichte

Diogenes

Book factsheet

Contemporary Literature
208 pages
February 1995

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French (Viviane Hamy)

 **Movie adaptations**

2011: Der Heimwehträger. Neunzig Minuten mit Fritz Kalmar. Eine Freundesgabe

Director: Erich Hackl
Cast: Dokumentation

1990: Abschied von Sidonie

Director: Karin Brandauer
Screenplay: Erich Hackl
Cast: Arghavan Sadeghi-Seragi, Kitty Speiser, Georg Marin

 **Awards**

- 2020 ›Theodor Kramer Preis‹ für Schreiben im Widerstand und Exil
- 2017 ›Menschenrechtspreis des Landes Oberösterreich‹
- 2015 ›Willy und Helga Verkauf-Verlon-Preis‹ für österreichische antifaschistische Publizistik an Erich Hackl
- 2015 ›Ehrenring‹ seiner Geburtsstadt Steyr
- 2015 Vom österreichischen Bundeskanzleramt vergebener Übersetzerpreis ›Translatio‹ an Erich Hackl für sein Lebenswerk als Übersetzer von spanischer und insbesondere lateinamerikanischer Literatur
- 2015 ›Literaturpreis der Österreichischen Industrie – Anton Wildgans‹ an Erich Hackl
- 2013 ›Adalbert-Stifter-Preis Oberösterreich. Großer Kulturpreis des Landes Oberösterreich
- 2011 Ehrendoktor der Universität Salzburg
- 2006 ›Donauland-Sachbuchpreis‹, Wien
- 2004 ›Ehrenpreis des Österreichischen Buchhandels für Toleranz in Denken und Handeln‹ für sein Gesamtwerk
- 2002 ›Solothurner Literaturpreis‹ für sein Gesamtwerk
- 2002 ›Preis der Stadt Wien für Literatur‹ für *Die Hochzeit von Auschwitz*
- 1998 ›Premio Hidalgo‹ der spanischen Romavereinigung Presencia Gitana für sein Gesamtwerk
- 1996 ›Bruno Kreisky-Preis für das politische Buch‹ für *In fester Umarmung*
- 1995 ›Gerrit-Engelke-Literaturpreis‹ der Landeshauptstadt Hannover für sein Gesamtwerk
- 1994 ›Kulturpreis des Landes Oberösterreich‹
- 1991 ›Österreichischer Förderungspreis für Literatur‹
- 1991 ›Prix de littérature étrangère Ecuréuil‹ anlässlich der 5. Buchmesse in Bordeaux für *Abschied von Sidonie*

On 20 August 1976, during the time of the military dictatorship, the following report appeared in the Uruguayan newspaper 'El Día': In Montevideo yesterday evening a two months old baby was found abandoned by its degenerate mother. The baby was admitted to the city orphanage by order of the court. The mother has not yet been traced.

Hackl links the finding of the baby with a young woman called Sara Méndez who fled from Uruguay in 1973 and continued fighting against the regime in Argentina. In June 1976 she gave birth to a child in Buenos Aires, and twenty days later she was abducted by a commando of the Secret Service. She had to leave her son Simón behind - one of thousands of missing persons. Sara's efforts at finding the baby Simón again were unsuccessful for many years, and it was only in the mid-1980s that she came upon the track of an abandoned boy who was probably her son. Her desire for certainty about the boy's identity brought her into conflict with all the other parties involved: the law of the land, the boy's foster parents, and the boy himself.

Hackl tells the story in great detail and in clear, poetic language. He does not shrink from calling a spade a spade, he spares neither the victim nor the culprits, he takes sides, and he does not deny his own part in the affair. Yet this gripping and moving story is concerned with more than just this one specific case and reminds us of a whole generation of young men and women who were set on changing the world two decades ago. The author asks, softly, what became of them and their dreams, what was neglected and what still remains to be done, and what happens to those actively dedicated to the ideal of justice for everyone. He asks, too, where the stories end and life begins, and above all he reminds us of man's power to retain his dignity and his ability to pass on his experiences.



Photo: Maurice Haas / © Diogenes Verlag

Erich Hackl, born in Steyr, Austria in 1954, studied German and Spanish and worked as a teacher and editor for a number of years. Madrid and Vienna, where he works as a writer and translator, have been home to him for a long time now. His stories are based on authentic cases. *Aurora's Motive* and *Farewell Sidonia* are on school reading lists. Erich Hackl has received numerous awards, including the 2017 ›Human Rights Award‹ of the state of Upper Austria, the ›Anton Wildgans Prize 2015‹ by the Federation of Austrian Industry and the ›Award for Literature‹ from the city of Vienna in 2002.

🏆 Awards (cont'd)

- 1991 ›Evangelischer Buchpreis‹ des Deutschen Verbandes Evangelischer Büchereien für *Abschied von Sidonie*
- 1988 ›1. Grand-Prix Genève – Europe‹ der Union europäischer Fernsehanstalten (EBU) für das Filmdrehbuch *Sidonie Adlersburg*
- 1987 ›Aspekte-Literaturpreis‹ für die Erzählung *Auroras Anlaß*

Praise

Sara And Simón

A wonderful story-teller. – Stephan Hermlin

Erich Hackl

›A masterful and authoritative chronicler.‹ – Michael Opitz / Deutschlandradio Berlin

›The name Erich Hackl has become a trademark for wonderfully sensitive real-life stories unique in contemporary German literature.‹ – Tobias Becker / KulturSpiegel, Hamburg

›Erich Hackl's concise and hauntingly dense works of prose have gained him a huge audience and great success. At the bottom of his efforts are usually some forgotten beings, victims of our century's cruel history, with their authentic albeit not exactly remembered biography. Here Hackl, the Austrian author, overly sensitized perhaps because of his own country's extreme insensitivities, steps in and tries to bring about an act of belated justice and redemption. This obviates the question whether Hackl is a fiction writer or a historian, a lawyer of the ›small people‹ or a missionary voice of human dignity: he is all of these, and ideally they all add up to make a writer.‹ – Erich Wolfgang Skwara / World Literature Today, New York

›One of Austria's virtuoso masters of language [. . .] who has done more to correct our image of history than a dozen historians put together.‹ – Thomas Rothschild / Die Presse, Vienna

›Erich Hackl's narrative is masterful and compelling.‹ – Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin



Erich Hackl
*Im Leben
mehr Glück*
Reden und Schriften

Diogenes

More Happiness in Life
432 pages
2019



Erich Hackl
Am Seil
Eine Heldengeschichte

Diogenes

Roped Together
128 pages
2018

Bestseller



Erich Hackl
*Drei tränenlose
Geschichten*

Diogenes

Three Tearless Stories
160 pages
2014



Erich Hackl
*Dieses Buch
gehört
meiner Mutter*

Diogenes

*This Book Belongs to My
Mother*
128 pages
2013



Erich Hackl
*Familie
Salzmann*
Erzählung aus unserer Mitte

Diogenes

The Salzmann Family
192 pages
2010



Erich Hackl
*Als ob ein
Engel*
Erzählung nach dem Leben

Diogenes

As If an Angel
176 pages
2007



Erich Hackl
*Anprobieren
eines Vaters*
Geschichten und Erregungen

Diogenes

If the Father Fits
304 pages
2004



Erich Hackl
*Die Hochzeit
von
Auschwitz*
Eine Begebenheit

Diogenes

Wedding at Auschwitz
192 pages
2002

Award winner



Erich Hackl
*Entwurf
einer Liebe
auf den
ersten Blick*

Diogenes

Love at First Sight
80 pages
1999



Erich Hackl
*In fester
Umarmung*
Geschichten und
Berichte

Diogenes

In a Firm Embrace
336 pages
1996

Award winner



Erich Hackl
*Abschied
von
Sidonia*

Erzählung · Diogenes

Farewell Sidonia
128 pages
1989

Award winner
 Movie Adaptation
 Bestseller



Erich Hackl
*Auroras
Anlaß*

Diogenes

Aurora's Motive
144 pages
1987

Award winner
 Bestseller