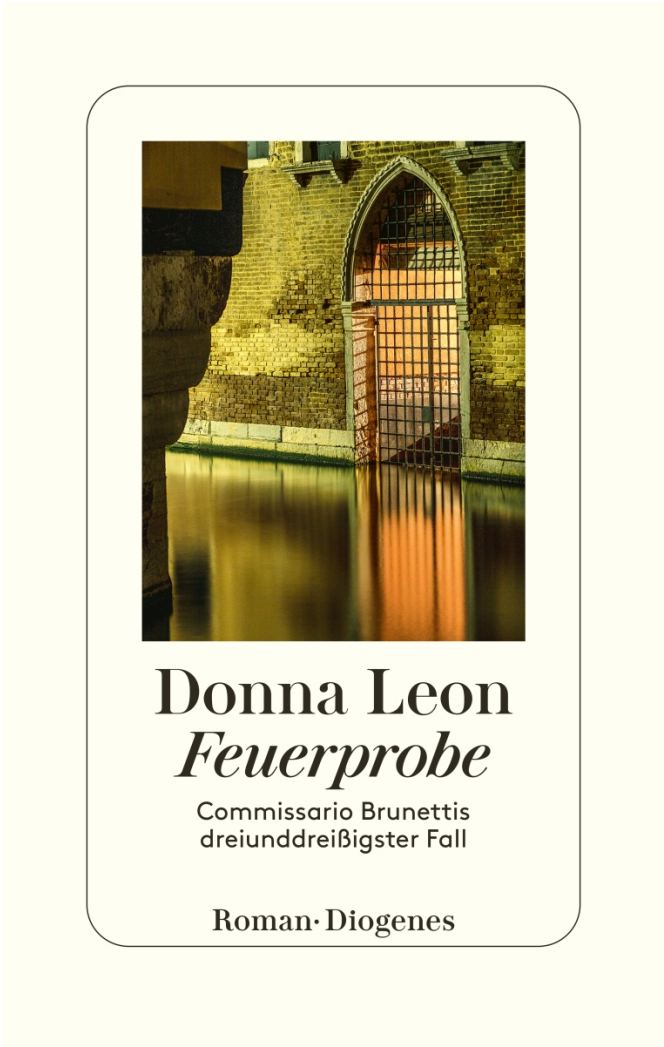
Diogenes

Book factsheet

Donna Leon
A Refiner's Fire

Published by Diogenes as *Feuerprobe*
Original title: *A Refiner's Fire*



Shards of glass lay across Piazza San Marco. Two ›baby gangs‹ have clashed violently in the darkness. While Commissario Griffoni relies on her intuition to find out how a teenager can get caught up in a flash mob, Brunetti uses his own connections. Even Vice-Questore Patta is willing to do whatever it takes to protect himself and his surroundings from any violence – which is especially unwelcome in a tourist city like Venice.

Contemporary Literature, Crime Fiction, Bestseller
336 pages
11.6 × 18.4 × 2.4 cm
June 2024

World rights are handled by Diogenes

Rights currently sold:
Catalan (Edicions 62)
Dutch (De Bezige Bij)
English/UK (William Heinemann)
English/USA (Grove /Atlantic)
Finnish (Otava)
French (Calmann-Lévy)
Polish (Noir sur Blanc)
Spanish/world (Planeta)

Bestseller

#1 Spiegel Bestseller
#1 Swiss Bestseller

Movie adaptations

2019: Ewige Jugend
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Jens-Frederik Otto
Cast: Mit: Uew Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Annett Renneberg, Karl Fischer, Michael Degen. In Episodenrollen: Max von Thun, Nadja Bobyleva, Hildegard Schmahl, Andreas Pietschmann, Nina Kronjäger.

2019: Stille Wasser
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Stefan und Florian Iwersen Holtz
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Karl Fischer, Annett Renneberg, Marie Leuenberger,Suzanne von Borsody

2018: Endlich mein
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Stefan Holtz und Florian Iwersen
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Michael Degen, Annett Renneberg. In Episodenrollen Leslie Malton, Edin Hasanovic und Jürgen Tarrach.

2017: Tod zwischen den Zeilen
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Stefan und Florian Iwersen Holtz
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Karl Fischer, Annett Renneberg, Michael Degen und Julia Jäger. In Episodenrollen: Jenny Schily, Thorsten Merten, Harald Schrott.

2016: Das goldene Ei
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Florian & Stefan Holtz Iwersen
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Michael Degen, Juliane Köhler, Imogen Kogge

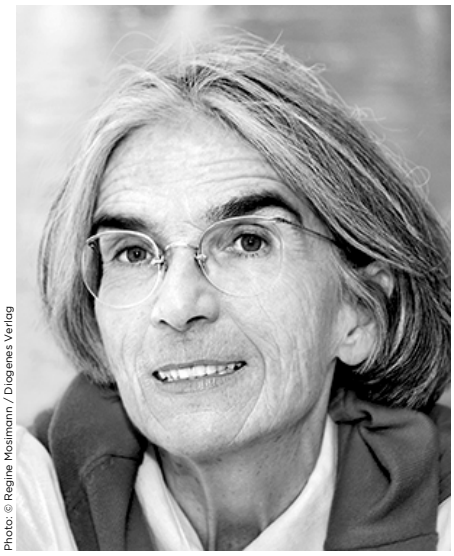


Photo: © Regine Mosimann / Diogenes Verlag

Donna Leon, born in New Jersey in 1942, has worked as a travel guide in Rome and as a copywriter in London. She taught literature in universities in Iran, China, and Saudi Arabia. The Brunetti novels brought her to world-wide fame. Donna Leon lived in Italy for many years, and although she now lives in Switzerland, she often visits Venice.



The Brunetti Cookbook
304 pages
2026



Backstage
256 pages
2025



So Shall You Reap
320 pages
2023
Bestseller



Wandering Through Life
192 pages
2022
Bestseller



Give Unto Others
352 pages
2022
Bestseller



Transient Desires
320 pages
2021
Bestseller



Brunetti's Miscellany
400 pages
2021



Trace Elements
320 pages
2020
Bestseller

Movie adaptations (cont'd)

2015: Tierische Profite
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Florian Iwersen
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Annett Renneberg, Karl Fischer, Michael Degen, Alice Dwyer, Florian Bartholomäi, Max Hopp, Walter Kreye

2014: Reiches Erbe
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Florian Iwersen
Cast: Neben dem beliebten Stammensemble um Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Annett Renneberg, Karl Fischer und Michael Degen spielen in Episodenrollen David Rott, Lisa Wagner, Tilo Prückner, Renate Delfs und Liv Lisa Fries.

2013: Auf Treu und Glauben
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Holger Joos
Cast: Mit der bewährten Besetzung rund um Uwe Kockisch, in Episodenrollen u.a. Jeanette Hain, Stephan Grossmann und Nicole Heesters

2012: Schöner Schein
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Screenplay: Holger Joos
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Karl Fischer, Annett Renneberg, Michael Degen, Julia Jäger. In Episodenrollen u.a Michael Mendl, Esther Schweins und Merab Ninidze.

2011: Das Mädchen seiner Träume
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Michael Degen Annett Renneberg, Jasmin Tabatabai, Martin Feifel, Valerie Niehaus

2010: Lasset die Kinder zu mir kommen (TV)
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Karl Fischer, Annett Renneberg, Michael Degen und Julia Jäger. In Episodenrollen u.a.: Nadeshda Brennicke, Michael Gwisdek und Gregor Törzs

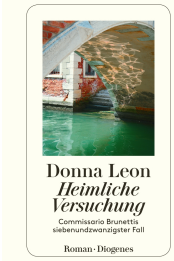
2009: Wie durch ein dunkles Glas
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Michael Degen und Annett Renneberg. In Episodenrollen Heikko Deutschmann, Katharina Wackernagel und Birge Schade.

2008: Die dunkle Stunde der Serenissima
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Karl Fischer, Annett Renneberg, Michael Degen, Julia Jäger, Axel Milberg, Katrin Sass, Bettina Zimmermann, Rike Schmid

2008: Blutige Steine
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Karl Fischer, Annett Renneberg, Michael Degen, Julia Jäger, Helmut Zierl, Ernest Allan Hausmann, Rosel Zech



Unto Us a Son Is Given
320 pages
2019
Award winner
Bestseller



The Temptation of Forgiveness
336 pages
2018
Bestseller



Earthly Remains
352 pages
2017
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



The Waters of Eternal Youth
336 pages
2016
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



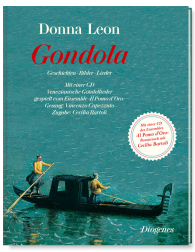
Falling in Love
320 pages
2015
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



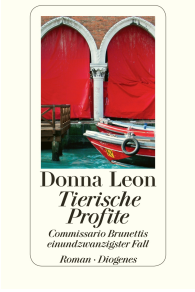
By its Cover
288 pages
2015
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



The Golden Egg
320 pages
2014
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



Gondola
140 pages
2013



Beastly Things
336 pages
2013
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



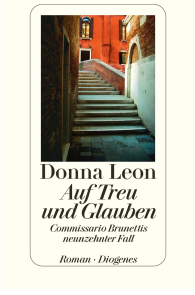
The Jewels of Paradise
304 pages
2012
Bestseller



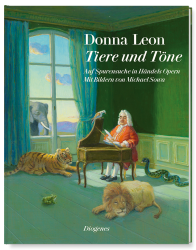
Drawing Conclusions
320 pages
2012
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



Venetian Curiosities
80 pages
2011



A Question of Belief
320 pages
2011
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



Handel's Bestiary
144 pages
2010



About Face
352 pages
2010
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



The Girl of His Dreams
352 pages
2009
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller

Movie adaptations (cont'd)

2006: Endstation Venedig
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Esther Schweins, Heiner Lauterbach, Monica Bleibtreu

2006: Das Gesetz der Lagune
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger, Tim Bergmann, Laura-Charlotte Syniawa

2005: Beweise, dass es böse ist
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger u.a.

2005: Verschwiegene Kanäle
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger u.a.

2004: Sanft entschlafen
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger u.a.

2004: Acqua Alta
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger u.a.

2003: Venezianisches Finale
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger u.a.

2003: Feine Freunde
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Uwe Kockisch, Julia Jäger u.a.

2002: Nobiltà
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Joachim Krol , Barbara Auer

2001: In Sachen Signora Brunetti
Director: Sigi Rothemund
Cast: Joachim Krol , Barbara Auer

2001: Davon stirbt man nicht
Director: Christine Hartmann
Cast: J. Prochnow

2000: Vendetta
Director: Christian Castelberg
Cast: Joachim Krol, Barbara Auer

2000: Venizianische Scharade
Director: Christian Castelberg
Cast: Joachim Krol, Barbara Auer

Awards

2024 ›Ehrenpreis des Bayerischen Ministerpräsidenten‹ für ihr Werk
2024 ›Ripper Award‹ von der Jury des Europäischen Preises für Kriminalliteratur
2021 ›Gaudium Award‹ des Breukelein Institutes
2019 ›Lifetime Achievement Award‹ vom *Strand Magazine*
2019 *Ein Sohn ist uns geboren* war auf der Shortlist des ›Golden Dagger Award‹
2018 ›B.Z.-Kulturpreis‹ (Berliner Zeitung)



Brunetti's Venice
368 pages
2008



Suffer the Little Children
368 pages
2008
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



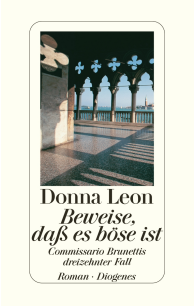
Through a Glass Darkly
352 pages
2007
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



Blood from a Stone
368 pages
2006
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



On Venice, Music, People and Books
352 pages
2005



Doctored Evidence
336 pages
2005
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



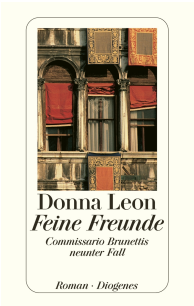
Uniform Justice
336 pages
2004
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



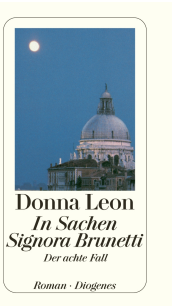
Wilful Behaviour
384 pages
2003
Award winner
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



A Sea of Troubles
336 pages
2002
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



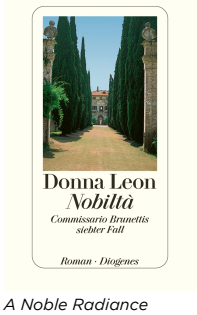
Friends in High Places
336 pages
2001
Award winner
Movie Adaptation



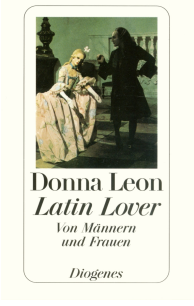
Fatal Remedies
320 pages
2000
Movie Adaptation



An American in Venice
96 pages
2000



A Noble Radiance
304 pages
1999
Award winner
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



Latin Lover
112 pages
1999



Quietly in Their Sleep
352 pages
1998
Movie Adaptation
Bestseller



Acqua alta
384 pages
1997
Movie Adaptation

Awards (cont'd)

2016 ›Premio Pepe Carvalho‹ anlässlich des Krimifestivals BCNegra von der Stadtregierung Barcelonas
2006 Das Hörbuch *Mein Venedig* ist auf den 1. Platz des österreichischen Publikumspreises ›Buchliebling‹ gewählt worden, der Roman *Verschwiegene Kanäle* erzielte den 3. Platz in der Rubrik ›Krimis und Thriller‹
2005 ›Silver Award‹ in der Kategorie ›Krimi/Thriller‹ des britischen Hörbuchpreises ›Spoken Word Awards‹ für das englische Hörbuch *Blood from a Stone*

(dt. Blutige Steine)
2003 Donna Leon erhält den ›Corine – Internationaler Buchpreis‹ für *Die dunkle Stunde der Serenissima*
2000 Donna Leon ist im Rahmen der Veranstaltungen zum Welttag des Buches für *Nobiltà* mit dem ›Goldenen Buch‹ des Österreichischen Hauptverbandes des Buchhandels ausgezeichnet worden.
2000 Donna Leon erhält den ›Silver Dagger‹ der Crime Writers' Association für *Friends in High Places* (dt. *Feine Freunde)*
1997 3. Platz für *Venezianische Scharade* in der Internationalen Sparte beim 13. ›Deutschen Krimi-Preis‹
1991 Japans renommierter ›Suntory‹-Preis für *Death at la Fenice* (dt. *Venezianisches Finale)*

Praise

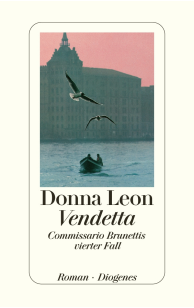
A Refiner's Fire

»No one knows the labyrinthine world of Venice or the way favoritism and corruption shape Italian life like Donna Leon's Brunetti.« – Johanna McGreary / Time Magazine, New York

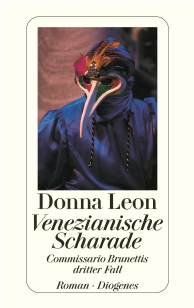
»It's always a pleasure to meet these carefully crafted characters who are so close to the hearts of Donna Leon's readers.« – Lilo Solcher / Augsburger Allgemeine, Augsburg

»The grand finale is truly inspired, explosive in every sense of the word and perhaps the best of Leon's long career.« – BookPage, Nashville

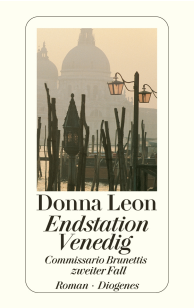
»[...] showcasing the emotional depth and intellectual acumen of Commissario Guido Brunetti, a late-night dustup between teenage rival gangs has far-reaching impact. [...] With the understated elegance and empathy imbued throughout this internationally acclaimed series, Leon once again examines the confluence of solid police work with issues of redemption and social justice.« – Carol Haggas / Booklist, Chicago



Death and Judgment
352 pages
1997
Movie Adaptation



Dressed for Death
384 pages
1996
Award winner
Movie Adaptation



Death in a Strange Country
400 pages
1995
Movie Adaptation



Death at La Fenice
352 pages
1993
Award winner
Movie Adaptation

Praise (cont'd)

»As usual in Leon's books, the mystery plays second fiddle to the characters and relationships from whom hints of secret misbehavior gradually coalesce into revelations as sordid and violent as you could wish. Is all this really 'the stuff of television drama,' as Brunetti fears? Only of a very high order indeed.« – Kirkus Reviews, New York

»Even readers who haven't visited Venice will feel as if they were right there in the lagoon city.« – Sven Trautwein / Frankfurter Rundschau, Frankfurt

»Only in a Donna Leon novel could you find Tacitus (›They make a desert and call it peace‹) and Nancy Sinatra cited on the same page. You never know what she's going to say next. If her increasingly sardonic wit provides more surprises than the perfectly crafted plot, this only proves what a truly great writer she has become.« – Mark Sanderson / The Times, London

»Where else but Venice would you find a policeman who reads Proust, appreciates the beautiful things in life and cannot work on an empty stomach? . . . Like many of her readers, while I came for the crime, I stayed for the characters and Italian culture.« – Claer Barrett / Financial Times, London

Donna Leon

»Brilliant.« – Sunday Times, London

»A splendid series . . . with a backdrop of the city so vivid you can almost smell it.« – The Sunday Telegraph, London

»Donna Leon can paralyze the reader with joyful suspense.« – The Mail on Sunday, London

»[Donna Leon] has never become perfunctory, never failed to give us vivid portraits of people and of Venice, never lost her fine, disillusioned indignation.« – Ursula K. LeGuin / The New York Times

»The most obvious appeal of Donna Leon's novels about Commissario Guido Brunetti is that they are so supremely civilized. For readers with a certain mindset—distaste for violence, love of Italy's cultural and sensual pleasures and scorn for officialdom — Donna Leon's novels are always a pleasure.« – Patrick Anderson / The Washington Post

»Donna Leon guides us through Venice like James Ellroy through Los Angeles or Manuel Vázquez Montalbán through Barcelona: with an eye used to detect what lies behind the façade.« – Le Figaro, Paris

»Donna Leon is a top thriller writer, on a par with Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, Patricia Highsmith and Ruth Rendell. Women, so it would seem from literary history, have always been in their element with the genre of murder and violence.« – Sonntags Zeitung, Zurich

Praise (cont'd)

»Brilliantly evokes Venetian atmosphere. The characters of Brunetti and his family continue to deepen throughout this series.« – The Times, London

»Donna Leon is the undisputed crime fiction queen.« – Sarah Weinman / Baltimore Sun

»In the footsteps of Brunetti, endowed with a ruthless humor and a healthy appetite, Donna Leon's readers discover Venice better than with a guide book.« – Le Monde, Paris

»Brunetti's humane police work is disarming, and his ambles through the city are a delight.« – The New York Times, Book Review

»Brunetti remains unique – an everyman who's also extraordinary.« – Publishers Weekly

»Donna Leon's Venetian mysteries never disappoint, calling up the romantic sights and sound of La Serenissima even as they acquaint us with the practical matters that concern the city's residents.« – Marilyn Stasio / The New York Times Book Rreview

»Donna Leon's books are a joy.« – The Guardian, London

»When writing about her beloved Venice, Donna Leon can do no wrong.« – The New York Times

»[Leon] has never become perfunctory, never failed to give us vivid portraits of people and of Venice, never lost her fine, disillusioned indignation.« – Ursula K. Le Guin / New York Times, New York

»Hers is an unusually potent cocktail of atmosphere and event.« – The New Yorker, New York

»[Leon] uses the relatively small and crime-free canvas of Venice for rips about Italian life, sexual styles and - best of all - the kind of ingrown business and political corruption that seems to lurk just below the surface.« – Chicago Tribune, Chicago

»Leon started out with offhand, elegant excellence, and has simply kept it up.« – The Guardian, London

»Leon whips up a brilliant narrative storm.« – Sunday Times, London

»Her depiction of Venice, its crimes and beauties, villains and heroes, high and low and the character of Brunetti and his family and friends has long been a delight for discerning readers. The warmth, understanding and shrewdness with which Leon's elegant, witty prose depicts this particular part of Italy is a joy. She is one of the best European novelists around, and her unflinching address to current affairs makes her worthy of the highest regard.« – Amanda Craig

»She has reinvented Venice.« – Kristina Maidt-Zinke / Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich

Praise (cont'd)

»Her love for this city shines through from every line of her crime novels.« – Maria Wiesner / Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt

»Leon's pedagogical eros is akin to that of Mary Poppins. Who could resist it?« – Simone Dattenberger / Münchner Merkur, Munich

»To read her is to restore the soul.« – Mark Sanderson / The Times, London