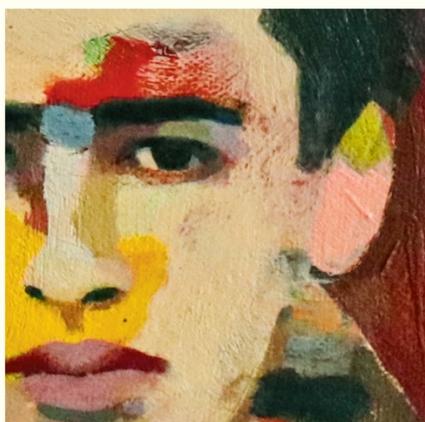


Diogenes

Sasha Filipenko
The Ex-Son

Published by Diogenes as *Der ehemalige Sohn*
Original title: *Biwschij Sin*



Sasha
Filipenko
*Der ehemalige
Sohn*

Roman · Diogenes

After being trampled at a mass panic in his Belarusian hometown, 16-year-old music student Zisk falls into a coma. Most people give up on him, his girlfriend, his mother, his doctor. Only his grandmother Elvira Alexandrovna stays by his side and sees to it that he is taken care of - for days, months, years. Zisk's mother falls in love with the doctor and has a baby with him. After ten years, at the very moment when Zisk is told that his grandmother has died, he wakes up. He realizes that his family has moved on to another period in their lives, that they don't want him anymore. The country as a whole, however, is still governed by the same authoritarian president, the general brain drain persists, the police quickly smother any kind of protest. Will Zisk find his place in Belarus?

Book factsheet

Contemporary Literature
320 pages
11.6 × 18.4 × 2.5 cm
April 2021

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Slovak (E.J. Publishing)

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 Ex-Son

»*The Ex-Son* was published in Russian back in 2014; a significant detail, because the novel has lost none of its topicality« – Nora Zukker / Tages-Anzeiger, Zurich

»Sasha Filipenko made us more closely acquainted with Belarus and its history. The fact that his book remains topical even seven years after its publication shows how dire the situation is« – Uli Hufen / WDR 5, Cologne

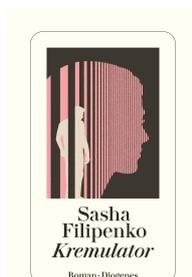
»The Belarusian author Sasha Filipenko depicts all this and more in his new, witty, acerbic, combative and outstanding novel.« – Volker Weidermann / Der Spiegel, Hamburg



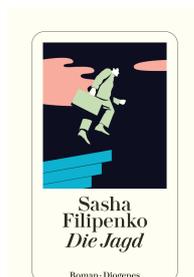
Sasha Filipenko, born in Minsk in 1984, is a Belarusian author who writes in Russian. After leaving his training in classical music, he studied literature in St. Petersburg and worked as a journalist, scriptwriter, television presenter and gag writer for a satirical show. His novels *Red Crosses* and *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.



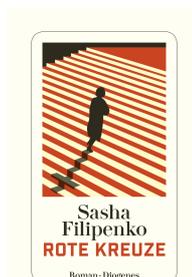
The Shadow of an Open Door
272 pages
2024
🏆 Award winner



Kremulator
256 pages
2023
🏆 Award winner



The Hunt
288 pages
2022
🏆 Award winner
📈 Bestseller



Red Crosses
288 pages
2020
🏆 Award winner
📈 Bestseller

Praise (cont'd)

»This literal irony of history is densely narrated, with humour and bitter solemnity.« – Cornelia Geißler / Berliner Zeitung, Berlin

»Perhaps the most moving and shocking release of spring 2021: Sasha Filipenko's prophetic debut novel *The Ex-Son*, available for the first time in German, depicts the hell of the Lukashenko regime.« – Dagmar Kaindl / Buchkultur, Vienna

»A brilliant novel that undermines the facts with humour.« – Peer Teuwsen / NZZ am Sonntag, Zurich

»In this novel, too, the young author impresses with his considerable imaginative talents and stylistic force. A must read!« – Lilo Solcher / Augsburger Allgemeine, Augsburg

»Filipenko's metaphor is impressive: it's as though it wasn't Franzisk in a deep sleep, but the world around him.« – Jutta Sommerbauer / Die Presse am Sonntag, Vienna

»Filipenko's novel is emblematic of the wound which, even six years on from its first appearance, continues to bleed heavily.« – Bernadette Conrad / Aargauer Zeitung, Aarau

»It seems to me that a cult writer of the first twenty years of the 21st century has appeared in Russia, replacing Viktor Pelevin.« – Mikhail Davidson

»Despite its brevity and Belarusian style, you are holding a really big Russian novel – perhaps the one that literature has been awaiting for years.« – Mikhail Idov / GQ Russia, Moscow

»If we leave out Svetlana Alexievich, who is already a classic, today the leaders of the literary course are Alger Bakharevich in the Belarusian-speaking segment and Sasha Filipenko in the Russian-speaking segment.« – Nikolai Khalezin / (Playwright and director of the Belarus Free Theatre)

»When I had opened the book by Sasha Filipenko, I saw a great novel about the events taking place today in Belarus.« – Sergei Chuprinin / (Literary critic and jury president for the »Russian Prize«)

»The book is extremely lyrical. I don't think I've ever read anything better about a grandmother's love for her grandson.« – Alex Dubas / (Russian author)

»A powerful, dense, surprisingly sincere text.« – Natalya Sindeeva / (Founder and CEO of Rain TV)

»Filipenko describes the rebellion of his people against dictator Lukashenko with enchanting humour, full of wit and yet full of grief.« – Lerke von Saalfeld / Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt

»This novel is first class, narrated with drama and suspense.« – Freie Presse, Chemnitz

»*The Ex-Son* is proof that Filipenko is one of the most exciting Russian-language authors of our time.« – Meike Schnitzler / Brigitte, Hamburg

Praise (cont'd)

»One of my favourite books from this year's spring releases.« – Helmut Zechner / ORF, Vienna

»A bold, ink-black reckoning with the Lukashenko regime.« – Werner Krause / Kleine Zeitung, Graz

»Filipenko's style captivates with its subtle irony and bitterly serious black humour.« – Karlheinz Kasper / Neues Deutschland, Berlin

»*The Ex-Son* couldn't have appeared at a more fitting time than the Lukashenko twilight in Belarus.« – Jens Uthoff / taz, Berlin

»Highly topical, skilfully narrated and deeply moving.« – Dagmar Kaindl / Buchkultur, Vienna

»In this novel, humorous and bitter in turn, Filipenko depicts a country living in a state of paralysis, beneath a blanket of fear.« – Kristian Teetz / Sonntag, Hannover

»And yet *The Ex-Son* envisions the end of this dictator: almost a Good Bye, Batka!« – Peter Zander / Berliner Morgenpost, Berlin

»Filipenko's style is clean and unadorned.« – Marco Kefting / Münchner Merkur, Munich

»Filipenko employs a timeless style of political satire comparable to the Absurdism of Frenchman Eugène Ionesco and other playwrights.« – Marc Duursma / NRC Handelsblad, Amsterdam

»Filipenko employs a timeless style of political satire comparable to the Absurdism of Frenchman Eugène Ionesco and other playwrights.« – Marc Duursma / NRC Handelsblad, Amsterdam

»Filipenko's book is a roman à clef, offering aggrieving insight into the situation of the Belarusians.« – Franziska Trost / Kronen Zeitung, Vienna

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