



European Union Prize for Literature 2020 – Francis Kirps, Winner for Luxembourg

The jury is delighted to announce that the European Union Prize for Literature for Luxembourg is awarded to Francis Kirps for his work *Die Mutationen. 7 Erzählungen und ein Gedicht* (Hydre Éditions, 2019).

Report of the Jury:

Die Mutationen. 7 Geschichten & 1 Gedicht by Francis Kirps is a collection of seven short stories and a poem written in German, with one story featuring passages written in Luxembourgish. The title-giving 'mutations' are programmatic in two major regards: thematically, as the stories cast moments and instances of transformation of the characters as central to the plot and conceptually, as each story is in fact a rewriting of a preexisting text from European literature. Under the precise and often humorous pen of Francis Kirps, texts by Virginia Woolf, Kurt Tucholsky, Franz Kafka, Propser Mérimée, Heinrich von Kleist, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach and Ingeborg Bachmann as well as the fairy tale Little Red Riding Hood are revisited. The jury was particularly impressed by the skillful intertextual weavings, the transplantation of plots and characters and their recasting in new unprecedented ways. While an awareness of the pretexts undoubtedly heightens the pleasure of reading, Kirps' stories manage to stand on their own however as they are entirely carried by a carefully crafted and powerful authorial voice and by the exceptional strength of Kirps' imaginative power.

The jury is composed of Jeanne E. Glesener (president – University of Luxembourg), Jean Back (author), Claude D. Conter (Centre national de littérature), Jean-Claude Henkes (Librairie Ernster) and Jérôme Jaminet (literary critic).

The EUPL 2020 Awards Ceremony is to take place on 29 September 2020 in BOZAR, Brussels (tbc).

The EUPL Award is endowed with 5000 €.

In 2020, Luxembourg is in the selection for the EUPL together with Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Kosovo, Montenegro, North-Macedonia, Norway and Spain.

EUPL promotes the international visibility of emerging writers. Its aim is to put the spotlight on the creativity and diverse wealth of Europe's contemporary literature in the field of fiction, to promote the circulation of literature within Europe and to encourage greater interest in non-national literary works. The Prize is financed by the Creative Europe programme of the European Commission. The consortium selected by the European Commission to coordinate the initiative is composed by the European and International Booksellers Federation (EIBF), the European Writers' Council (EWC) and the Federation of European Publishers (FEP).

Previous winners of EUPL for Luxembourg:

2010 – Jean Back, *Amateur* (Ultimomondo, 2009)

2013 – Tullio Forgiarini, *Amok. Eng Lëtzebuenger Liebeschronik* (Editions Guy Binsfeld, 2011)

2016 – Gast Groeber, *All Dag verstoppt een aneren* (Op der Lay, 2016)

2018 – In the EUPL writing contest „A European Story: EUPL Winners write Europe“, Jean Back and Gast Groeber were awarded first prize *ex aequo* by members of the European Parliament.

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