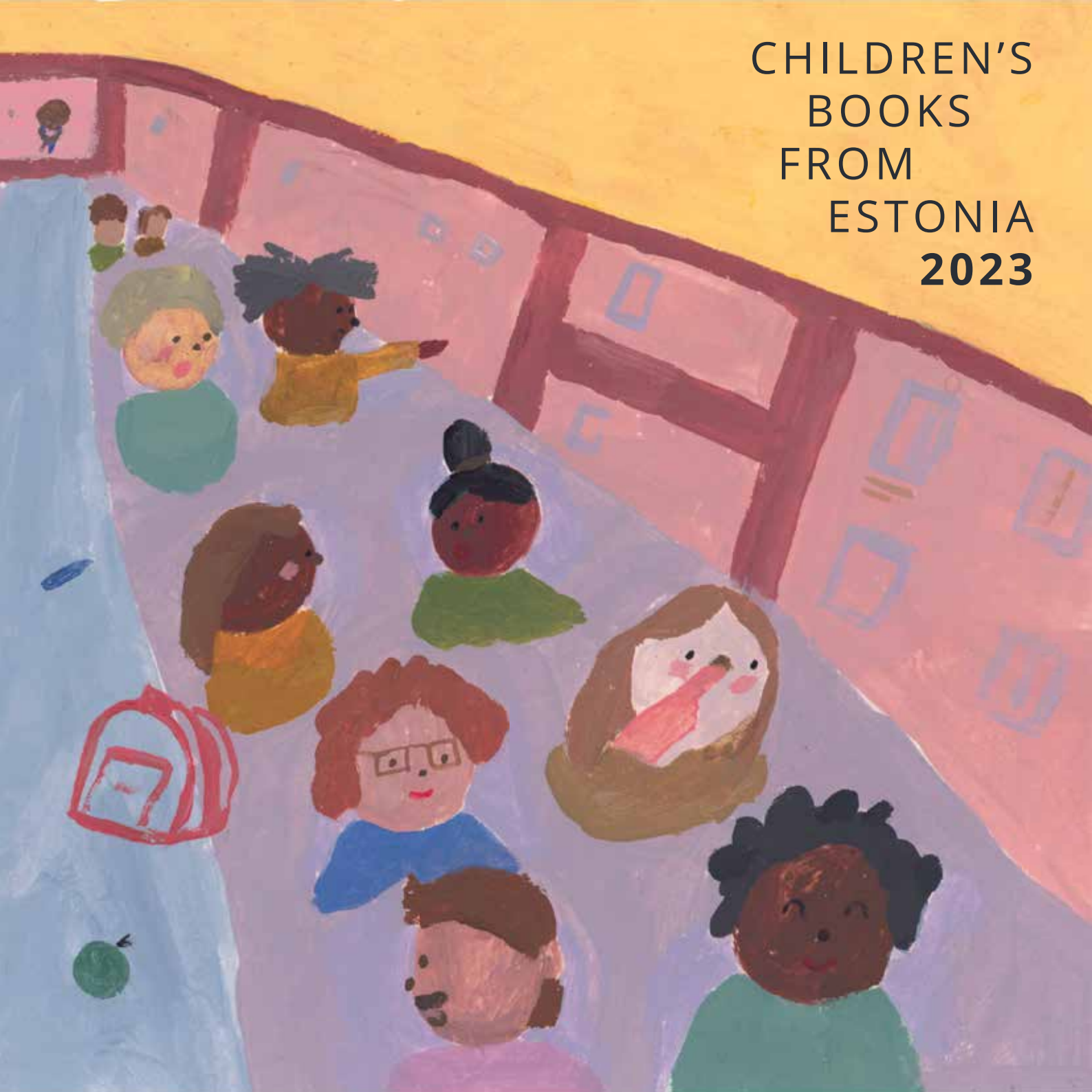


CHILDREN'S
BOOKS
FROM
ESTONIA
2023



THE ESTONIAN CHILDREN’S LITERATURE CENTRE

The Estonian Children’s Literature Centre is a specialised competency organisation that promotes the country’s most outstanding children’s works abroad. This includes representing Estonian children’s authors at the world’s largest book fairs, organising their appearances abroad, maintaining a database of Estonian children’s literature, and producing publications on the topic. The Centre collaborates on a large scale with publishers, researchers, translators, teachers, and other specialists.

How can we help? We ...

- provide information on Estonian children’s writers, illustrators and translators from Estonian.
- publish topical information in print and at www.elk.ee.
- send newsletters to publishers and translators.
- help interested parties contact Estonian authors.
- assist in the selection of suitable translators for Estonian children’s literature.
- inform publishers and translators about opportunities for financial support.

The TRADUCTA grant programme

Traducta offers grants to translators and foreign publishers to promote the translation and publishing of Estonian literature abroad.

Norsk Pengepung supports the translation of Estonian literary works into Norwegian, Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish, and their publication in Norway, Iceland, Sweden, and Denmark.

Application deadlines are 20 February, 20 May, 20 August, and 20 November of each year.

Apply here:
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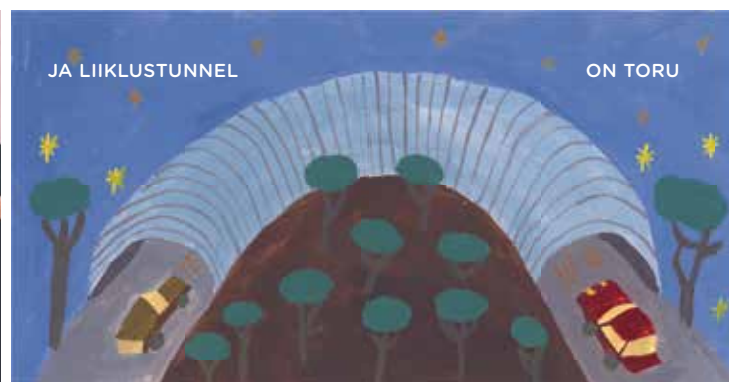
Tube

Written by Liis Kivirand
Illustrated by Pamela Samel

Päike ja Pilv, 2022
170x170 mm, hard cover, 24 pp
ISBN: 9789916630280

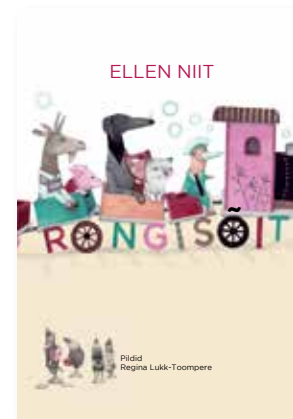
Tubes are everywhere: beneath the sink, inside rolls of toilet paper, and attached to vacuum cleaners. Some are used for sipping juice, others for blowing through. If you look closely, even your pants are tubes. There are even tubes inside your own body: take your nostrils, for instance! But what do you think might be the longest tube in the world?

Award: 2023 Bologna Children's Book Fair Illustrators Exhibition winner



Liis Kivirand (1985) is an Estonian translator living in the Netherlands. In 2010, she graduated from Tallinn University with a BA in English Language and Culture, and in 2013 with an MA in Translation. A lover of all types of text and several languages, she is usually busy with translation work across the whole spectre of genres and styles, from medical to literary. In 2021, her debut children's book *Tube* was awarded third place in the Knee-High Book Competition.

Pamela Samel (1985) graduated in art education from Tallinn University in 2007 and acquired a second bachelor's degree in textile design from the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2014. She has illustrated newspapers, magazines, and internet publications. Samel received third place in the Knee-High Book Competition, which encouraged her to dabble more in the field. Her debut as a children's book illustrator was *Who's There*.



The Train Ride

Written by Ellen Niit
Illustrated by Regina Lukk-Toompere

Tammerraamat, 2022
220x285 mm, hard cover, 30 pp
ISBN: 9789916681312

A train is rumbling down the tracks with Ducky as its conductor. Kitty cats, puppy dogs, piggies, billy goats – everybody's hurrying somewhere. Some are off to Marjaküla, others on to Karjaküla. One is going to Porila, and another on to Torila. The train chugs on and on and on. Suddenly, Ducky nods off. What will become of the passengers now? How will they get where they're going?

The Train Ride (first printed in 1957) is a rhyming children's classic that almost every Estonian can recite by heart.

Award: 2022 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit



Ellen Niit (1928–2016) was a legendary children's author, poet, and translator. Over her lifetime, she wrote more than 40 books of both prose and poetry for children. The author's works are a joy to read for all ages. Niit received many literary awards and recognitions, including the Cultural Endowment of Estonia's Award for Children's Literature on three occasions and the 1996 IBBY Honour List. Her works, which are written in an inventive style and with a depth of meaning, have been translated into 18 languages.

Regina Lukk-Toompere (1953) graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in illustration and book design. She has illustrated more than 90 books and textbooks. Lukk-Toompere was on the 2014 IBBY Honour List and has received several awards in annual Estonian book design and illustration competitions. She is masterful at a wide range of traditional drawing, graphic, and painting techniques.





Old Man's Mitten

Written by Mare Mürsepp
Illustrated by Kertu Sillaste

Tammeraamat, 2022
210x210 mm, hard cover, 40 pp
ISBN: 9789916681084

An old man was in the forest and dropped a mitten. A fly creeps into it for warmth and starts dancing joyfully. Soon a mouse joins in and after that a hare, a wolf, and even a bear. The party is in full swing when the rooster suddenly crows. The animals rip the mitten while trying to get out in a rush.

The old man was in the city and dropped a mitten. Who do you think will find it this time?



Mare Mürsepp (1958) is an author and children's literature professor. She graduated in education from Tallinn University and is a Doctor of Pedagogy (2005). Mürsepp has also written textbooks and teaches children's literature to future teachers.

Kertu Sillaste (1973) graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in textile design in 1996, and from Tallinn University with a Master of Arts in Education in 2017. Sillaste has illustrated books and textbooks; written and illustrated seven picture books and two silent books; designed books, posters, and more; and collaborated with children's magazines. She teaches art at the Estonian Children's Literature Centre. Sillaste is a member of the Estonian Graphic Designers' Association and the Estonian Section of IBBY.



Good Mood, Where Are You?

Written and illustrated by Sirly Oder

Koolibri, 2022
220x220 mm, hard cover, 40 pp
ISBN: 9789985050415

Nora's mommy is in a bad mood. She decides to lie down for a while to let a good mood return so she can be a patient parent again. Nora doesn't like this plan one bit and now, she is in a bad mood. What on earth can cheer her up? She tries walking the dog, her dad's favourite activity, but that doesn't help. Next, come dancing and gardening. Then, she turns to her mommy's favourites – drawing and taking a bath – but that good mood is still nowhere in sight. What if Nora tries doing the things she likes best?



Sirly Oder (1983) is an illustrator and social-media content creator for a large bookstore chain. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in scenography and has been an artist for numerous Estonian theatre productions, commercials, and short films. She has illustrated several children's books and has been awarded in the 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books competition. Her style is a personalised spin on modern design combined with cuteness, darkness, and humour. *Good Mood, Where Are You?* is her first self-illustrated book.





Endel and Kati

Written by Kadri Kiho

Illustrated by Stella Salumaa

Päike ja Pilv, 2022

200x250 mm, hard cover, 42 pp

ISBN: 9789916630259

Endel feels right at home while driving his bus. His wonderful colleague Kati, who resides somewhere under the dashboard, announces every bus stop in a confident and mellow voice while Endel is behind the wheel. Yet, one Thursday, Kati has fallen ill and Endel has to take over. He doesn't like it one bit as he has a severe fear of crowds and performing. How on earth is he supposed to manage names like Prophecy, Penguinless, Duckery, or Ertshertsog Ernst Square?

Award: 2022 Raisin of the Year award for the most remarkable children's book of the year



Kadri Kiho (1984) graduated from Tallinn Technical University's Tartu College in landscape architecture, has another degree in gene technology from Tal-Tech, and works at the University as an instructional designer. She is a co-founder of Hõp: an Estonian publishing house focused on innovative children's educational and activity books. Kiho has written two children's books and an adult radio drama.

Stella Salumaa (1985) is an illustrator and animator who graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts with a master's degree in animation. She has lived in the UK (London and Edinburgh) for the last decade and worked at several animation studios, focusing mainly on children's series. *Endel and Kati* is her first illustrated children's book.



Emil, Sass, and the Painted Stone Bugs

Written and illustrated by Tiiu Kitsik

Koolibri, 2022

210x245 mm, hard cover, 32 pp

ISBN: 9789985049860

Emil and Sass are sitting on a big stone. They are bored out of their minds. While plotting ways to earn some pocket money, they come up with a plan and spring to action. Their big idea is to collect stones from the beach and sell them on the street corner. No one seems to be interested in their stones at first, but when the boys implement helpful suggestions given to them by passers-by, the sales skyrocket. After a while, Emil and Sass realise that doing business can be kind of boring, so they decide to go and eat ice cream instead.

Award: 2022 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit



Tiiu Kitsik (1981) is a visual artist, illustrator, and children's author. She graduated from Tallinn University in advertising and media and has also worked in the field. Kitsik is a co-founder of the Estonian crowdfunding platform Hooandja, where she has worked for several years. She has written four children's books and contributed to the children's magazines *Hea Laps*, *Täheke*, and *Mesimumm*. Kitsik lives and works as a freelance artist in Berlin.





The Pretty Mommy Bear

Written by Liis Sein

Illustrated by Catherine Zarip

Tammerraamat, 2022

210x270 mm, hard cover, 32 pp

ISBN: 9789916681336

One day, world-famous artist Juan arrives in a tiny mountain village to holiday. Vivid colours, popular exhibitions, and ever-growing fame have exhausted him. He wants to go unnoticed, find some peace and quiet, and create something totally unlike the art he's made before. Alas, the townspeople have already noticed him and by morning, a long cue of animals assembles at his door with everyone clamouring for their portrait to be painted. Juan refuses to come out and, after a while, the crowd disperses. Only a momma bear continues standing patiently on the edge of the sidewalk, returning every day to wait from sunrise to sunset.



Liis Sein (1983) is a playwright and children's author.

She graduated from Tallinn University in adult education and has trained in playwriting and creative writing. Sein currently works as an administrative assistant at the Estonian Children's Literature Centre. She has written seven children's books and won the Knee-High Book Competition in 2019. Sein conveys the world through children's eyes such that adults also see it as a bigger, brighter, and more lucid place.

Catherine Zarip (1966) is an illustrator and graphic designer. She

graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in ceramics, after which she worked at the publisher Avita as a book designer and art director. Zarip has illustrated dozens of textbooks, more than 30 children's books, and has designed about 200 works in total. She has been awarded twice at the Tallinn Illustrations Triennial and 13 times in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books competition. Her art is fresh and elegant – simultaneously animated and restrained, detail-rich and simplified.



The Good Feeling

Written and illustrated by Kristi Kangilaski

Koolibri, 2022

185x270 mm, hard cover, 32 pp

9789985049877

Laur is lying in bed with bad-mood thoughts spinning around his head. He doesn't like going to sleep – it's boring! Laur wants a dog but is allergic to dog fur. He's angry because the movie they watched before bedtime was about war and incredibly sad. "I feel bad!" he moans to his mom. Laur's mom suggests he think good thoughts. "You can't fit more than one thought at a time into your head," she says. So, Laur gives it a try. What could Laur's good-mood thoughts be?

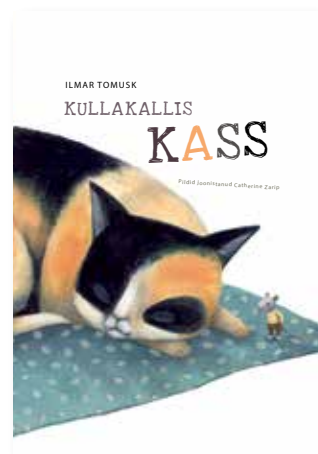
Award: 2022 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Special Prize of the Jury



Kristi Kangilaski (1982) is an illustrator, book designer, graphic designer, and

author of children's books. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design but loves writing as much as she loves drawing. She also illustrates various magazines, designs posters, and teaches art at the Viljandi Art School. Her books have been translated into several languages and she has received numerous awards for the works she has written and/or illustrated. Kangilaski's book *Tiu and the Dove* was included in the 2015 White Ravens Catalogue. Her illustrations are inquisitive and experiment with a rather wide range of techniques. Kangilaski is a member of the Estonian Graphic Designers' Association.





Precious Cat

Written by Ilmar Tomusk

Illustrated by Catherine Zarip

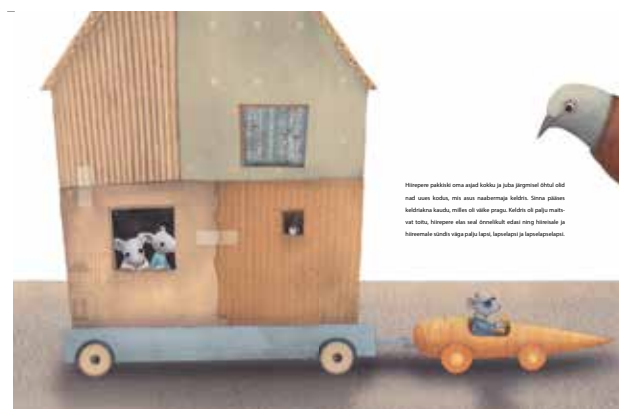
Tammerraamat, 2022

210x280 mm, hard cover, 32 pp

ISBN: 9789916681022

Somewhere, there is a cat who lives in a two-story house: he eats his meals downstairs and sleeps upstairs. An old man who brings him fresh fish and cream every day, also sleeps in the same wide bed. Whenever the cat has a full belly, he purrs, and this makes the old man happy. There is also a cellar where the old man stores potatoes, carrots, and turnips. However, neither the cat nor the old man knows that a little mouse family lives down there, too.

Award: 2022 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit



Ilmar Tomusk (1964) graduated from the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute in Estonian language and literature education, and currently works as the Chief Director of the Estonian Language Inspectorate. Tomusk has written more than 30 children's books. His humorous stories, which alternate between elements of realism and fantasy, tell of clever, busy children and their everyday activities and adventures. Testaments to his popularity among young readers are his three Nukits Awards, in addition to other reader's choice prizes.

Catherine Zarip (1966) is an illustrator and graphic designer. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in ceramics, after which she worked at the publisher Avita as a book designer and art director. Zarip has illustrated dozens of textbooks, more than 30 children's books, and has designed about 200 works in total. She has been awarded twice at the Tallinn Illustrations Triennial and 13 times in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books competition. Her art is fresh and elegant.



What Will We Do Today?

Written by Meelike Saarna

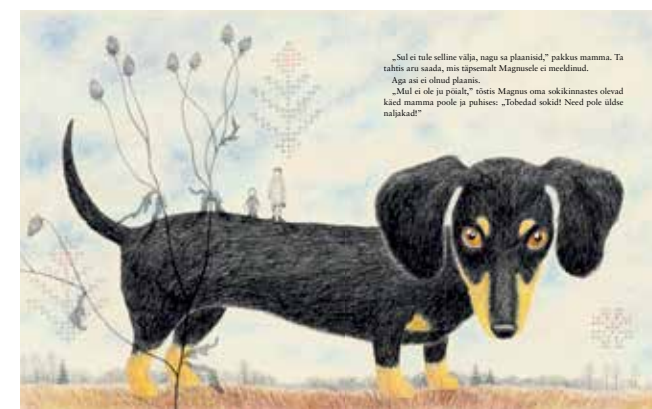
Illustrated by Kadri Ilves

Tammerraamat, 2022

200x245 mm, hard cover, 48 pp

ISBN: 9789916681121

Four-year-old Magnus and his granny are best friends. When Magnus' parents are at work and his siblings are busy with their own activities, these two friends get up to all sorts of fun. They "bake" an amazing birthday cake by the sea, play the Big Bad Wolf, pillow fight, and swim around in a pool of pillows. Either Magnus comes up with a game or asks, "What shall we do today?" to his granny, who is always up for exploring the world with her grandson.



Meelike Saarna (1959) graduated from the University of Tartu in journalism and, in addition to writing, is a trained and practicing family therapist. For over a decade, she has led creative writing courses at Tallinna Rahvaülikool (the Tallinn Folk High School). She has written six children's books to date. Her descriptions of the relationship between children and adults are charged with a positive view of parenthood, and her dialogues are filled with warmth and humour.

Kadri Ilves (1977) is an illustrator. She graduated from the University of Tartu with a degree in painting in 2002 and has worked as a freelance artist since then. Ilves has illustrated more than 40 books and textbooks, including over 20 for the Swedish publisher Bonnier Carlsen. She regularly contributes to the Estonian children's magazine *Täheke* and has been awarded for her works in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books competition.





Hugo the Scarecrow is Looking for Work

Written by **Monika Undo**
Illustrated by **Elina Sildre**

Päike ja Pilv, 2022
200x250 mm, hard cover, 36 pp
ISBN: 9789916630242

Hugo lives in a garden on a farm. He's a scarecrow, and a good one at that – everyone's afraid of him, but it also makes him sad as he doesn't have any friends to talk to. Instead of scaring everyone away, he'd much rather play the harmonica, but that would lure the birds back into the garden. He's in a tight spot. How could he find friends and work that would suit him better?



Lindude hirmutamise asemel
oleks Hugo aga parem meeliga
midagi muud teinud, näiteks suupilli
mänginud. Pillimäng näi tal hõbe väärt, sest
poroku ei ajanud see linde eemale – vastupidi,
näd jäd Hugo muusikat kuulama. Nii oli
Hugo pillimängust juba ammu loobunud,
sest hernehirmutsed ei sobi linde hoopis
peenestada ligemini
meelduda.

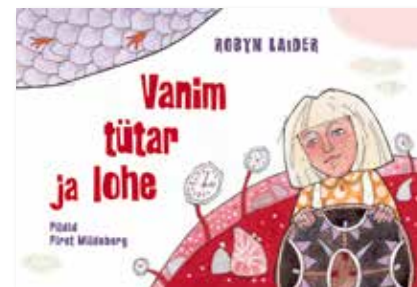


Inimesed olid ta ju hernehirmutsiks loonud, teadmata,
et hernehirmutsed võimalik ei tahagi hernehirmutsed olla.
Teiste kohutamisest ja kole olemisest pole ju midagi meeldivat.
Ega Hugo kippunudki tagasiotsima minema, kuni karris, et
ta muud võidaks teha selle hõlpsa suhtuda.
Pillilegi ei ole maal lõhne tööd leidis.



Monika Undo (1979) is a teacher of Estonian language and literature, who lives in Haapsalu. She has written literature textbooks, collections of creative-writing assignments, local history books, and a weekly linguistic column for the newspaper *Lääne Elu*. Undo has also penned several books for children and stories for the magazine *Täheke*. Her manuscript of *Hugo the Scarecrow is Looking for Work* took third place in the Knee-High Book Competition.

Elina Sildre (1980) is an illustrator and comic artist who graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design. She has illustrated over 30 children's books and contributed to the children's magazines *Täheke* and *Mesimumm*. Sildre has also created illustrations and comics for anthologies, textbooks, and activity books. The artist has been awarded in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books and the Knee-High Book competitions.



The Eldest Daughter and the Dragon

Written by **Robyn Laider**
Illustrated by **Piret Mildeberg**

Varrak, 2022
245x162 mm, hard cover, 32 pp
ISBN: 9789985354742

Once upon a time, there lived a man with three children. They were all very happy even though they weren't wealthy. One day, a dragon showed up at their home and demanded all their riches. Since the man didn't have any to give, the dragon decided to take him and two of his children instead. Meanwhile, the eldest daughter was in the woods and saw the dragon getting ready to fly off with her precious family. In a flash, she hopped onto the dragon's tail to try and save them.



Seekord hüppas ta lohe sabale,
silmad pisarast tulvil.



Robyn Laider (1985) is a Canadian-Estonian born in Ontario. Her paternal grandparents fled Estonia during the Second World War and settled in Canada. She wrote *The Eldest Daughter and the Dragon* while working on her MA at Tartu University. While her first children's book came to her as a dream, she has been writing for as long as she can remember and aims to never stop.

Piret Mildeberg (1957) graduated from the Estonian State Art Institute (now the Estonian Academy of Art) in graphics and illustration in 1984. She is a freelance artist and a member of the Estonian Artists' Union, the Estonian Graphic Designers' Association, and the Estonian chapter of IBBY. Mildeberg has illustrated over 40 books in addition to designing posters, postcards, packaging, and logos. Her photography, dolls, and paper art have been featured in Estonian exhibitions.





Brita's Always the One

Written by Pille Kannisto

Illustrated by Anni Mäger

Tänapäev, 2022

143x215 mm, hard cover, 208 pp

ISBN: 9789916172131

Brita lives with her mom and grandparents in a big apartment building surrounded by lots of others. Her dad lives somewhere else and that makes her a little sad, though the presents he brings do cheer her up a bit. Luckily, Brita's friends Elli, Anna, and Paul are also nearby. Although the girl's mom does her very best to keep things under control, and her grandparents try to keep an even keel, the kids always find a way to embark on some adventure. They end up riding bikes on a busy road, having an epic snowball fight, and even leaping over a flooded ditch in spring.



Pille Kannisto (1967) graduated from Tallinn University in Integrated Craft and Home Economics Technologies. Currently, she works as an employer consultant at the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. Her debut children's book contains light-hearted tales of a seven-year-old girl, and offers adults moments of happy recognition of their own childhoods *Brita's Always the One* is written with warmth and well-intentioned humour.

Anni Mäger (1977) is an illustrator and graphic designer. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design and currently works as an art director at the advertising agency Taevas Ogilvy. Mäger has illustrated 15 children's books and contributes to the Estonian children's magazine *Täheke*. Her bold style of caricature enthralls young readers and has delivered repeated success at the Nukits Competition, including winning its main prize in 2006.



Grandma ruins Brita's birthday party

Finally, Brita's long-awaited birthday came round and Mum, Grandma, and Grandad woke her up with cake and flowers. "Happy birthday to youuuuuuu!" they sang in a raucous three-part harmony. Presents were waiting on the table for Brita: her favourite sweets and a thick story book with lovely, lively pictures. Brita was delighted and gave everyone a hug.

Guests were invited for the evening and the family happily bustled about in excited anticipation. Mum made her famous apple cake, of course, and sardine and egg sandwiches. Grandma had prepared mountains of food herself the day before. She disappeared into her own room and said she needed to make some preparations. She reappeared soon after, curlers in her hair, and began tidying up the hall. The shoes formed a great long line that was difficult to navigate. Grandma approached it in her usual fashion and put each person's shoes behind their bedroom doors. "Check what you'll be wearing and put anything you're not wearing somewhere else!" she told everyone grumpily. "There are enough shoes here for a shop!"

Brita watched Grandma hesitatingly. The hall could really do with a shoe cupboard like the ones she'd seen in other children's houses. But for some reason, her family didn't have one and a single layer of shoes covered the entire hall. Brita popped the shoes she didn't need under her bed.

In the evening the guests arrived; Anna, Elli, and Paul. Grandma had decided that, as there wasn't much room, they would have the family party on the weekend. The only food she'd made for today was brawn.

The children gave Brita her presents. She decided not to open them straight away because it was so much better to do it when she was by herself. That way she could try and work out what was in each parcel calmly and there was no danger that the excited guests would start playing with the gifts themselves. She still remembered a family birthday when a little boy was given a car that an over-enthusiastic guest had broken that same day. Brita had felt so sorry for the little birthday boy.

"What's to eat?" asked Paul, who hadn't had any lunch because of the birthday.

"First you must try my homemade brawn. Here's the vinegar and there's some horseradish in the little jug," Grandma said.

Brawn! Vinegar! Horseradish! How disgusting! The children looked on in horror as Grandma presented each of them with a huge portion. "Help yourselves to potatoes and salad and marinated beetroot. The herring is here on the plate." Grandma was most obliging.

Brita tried the brawn. It tasted like jelly but, unfortunately, this kind of jelly was salty. The first mouthful wasn't a problem, but while she was eating the second one, she bit on a suspicious lump.

Translated by Susan Wilson





What Do You Hold Dear? A Little Book About Values and Philosophy

Written by Tia Navi and Kadri Simm
Illustrated by Elina Sildre

Tartu Ülikooli eetikakeskus, 2022
215x235 mm, hard cover, 64 pp
ISBN: 9789985413074

What does it mean to really be in deference to life? What words describe your friendship the best? What are the similarities and differences between genders? Why can't a society function without care and solidarity? What would the world look like if everyone was and felt exactly the same? What makes a homeland and a mother tongue so precious to a person?

These themes are explained in stories through everyday situations, followed by questions meant to help contemplation and a short philosophical essay for grown-ups.



Tia Navi (Kõnnussaar, 1965) is a children's author, editor, and columnist. She studied media and communications at the University of Tartu and works at the UT Centre of Ethics. Navi has written five children's books, a wealth of journalistic articles, a book of parenting advice, and a young-adult play. She also runs creative writing courses. Her books contain humour, wordplay, and a projection of the world as seen by sharp-eyed children.

Kadri Simm (1976) is a philosopher and bioethicist. She has been teaching moral philosophy, applied ethics, and various topics in political philosophy at the University of Tartu for more than two decades. Her main research foci are the nature of ethical decision-making and moral expertise, theories of justice, and the ethics of new reproductive technologies.



An Invisible Treasure

Sphere was excited. It was her first day of first grade! She would be going to school with other little spheres, cubes, and interesting shapes. She'd learn how to read and write and would make new friends!

Waiting in front of the classroom was their teacher, Ms. Cone, who warmly shook the hand of every student as they entered.

"Welcome to school!" she said. "Come on in, little Sphere!"

The room was already buzzing with young shapes. Then, Sphere spotted a funny kid who was all straight lines. He had green eyes, a buzz cut, and big ears.

"Hi! What's your name?" she asked curiously. "I'm Sphere!"

"Um . . . hi. I'm Cube," he answered shyly. He looked very glad to have someone to talk to. When Cube smiled, his whole face lit up. Sphere had a funny feeling like they'd known each other for ages.

"Do you want to be my friend?" she asked eagerly.

Cube's cheeks turned pink.

"I sure do," he replied softly.

"Then you and I will share a desk. We'll be desk-mates!"

Sphere and Cube were like two peas in a pod from the very first day. They walked to school together in the morning and walked back together after class. Whenever Cube forgot his pencil at home, Sphere would lend him her own. Whenever Sphere was sad after getting into an argument with her mom, Cube would tell funny stories to cheer his friend up. Although

they also played and did projects with other students, Cube and Sphere knew they could always count on each other.

The school year flew by, and summer arrived. Sphere went to spend the months with her grandma and grandpa in the countryside. Cube and his parents went on a trip abroad.

Finally, autumn arrived. The rowan berries were turning red. Birds perched on the electrical wires and practiced long flights every day, readying to migrate south. One beautiful morning, Sphere set off towards school, wearing a brand-new backpack. She was thrilled to be a second grader and see Cube and all her classmates again!

The sun was shining, and the school door was standing wide open. Crowded together, the second-grade students were chatting happily. Each couldn't wait to tell the others all the amazing things they'd done over the summer. As Sphere joined the bunch, Prism skipped over to her.

"Wow, what a cool backpack you've got!" Prism said.

"Yeah, my aunt brought it back for me when she went traveling!" Sphere explained.

"That's such a sweet dog on it. Dogs are my favourite!" Prism exclaimed. Suddenly, she proposed: "How 'bout being my desk-mate this year?"

Sphere really liked the idea. Then, she noticed Cube coming over.

"Hi, Cube!" Sphere squeaked. "How was your summer? Hey, so, Prisma is going to be my desk-mate this year. Don't let it get you down – we'll sit together again next year!"

Sphere waved and turned back to Prisma to share her summer stories. She didn't see Cube freeze in place and slump, his mouth hanging open.

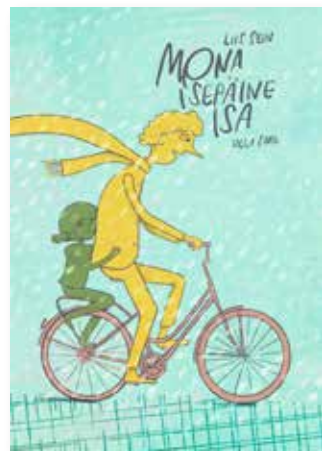
Second grade passed almost as quickly as the first year. Cube found himself a new bench-mate, too—Cylinder.

Every day, the students learned new and fascinating things. Ms. Cone took them on field trips to the zoo and hiking, and they played ball outside during every recess. Before they knew it, summer came, and the long-awaited school break was at hand.

Translated by Adam Cullen



Elina Sildre (1980) is an illustrator and comic artist who graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design. She has illustrated over 30 children's books and contributed to the children's magazines *Täheke* and *Mesimumm*. Sildre has also created illustrations and comics for anthologies, textbooks, and activity books. The artist has been awarded in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books and the Knee-High Book competitions.



Mona's Dad Has Some Ideas

Written by Liis Sein

Illustrated by Ulla Saar

Pegasus, 2022

165x230 mm, hard cover, 88 pp

ISBN: 9789916162354

Mona's family lives an all-around ordinary life. She attends an ordinary school, and her parents go to ordinary jobs. In the evenings, her family spends ordinary time together at home. Then one completely ordinary day, Mona's dad decides to change his life. "Otherwise, I won't have any memories to remember when I'm old or any stories to tell the coming generations," he says. But how should he go about the task? Should he become an art collector or a globetrotter? What if he spiced up his days with exotic foods or embarked upon a writing career? Perhaps life could be made more exciting by moving or picking up a new sport?

Award: 2023 Bologna Children's Book Fair Illustrators Exhibition finalist



Liis Sein (1983) is a playwright and children's author. She graduated from Tallinn University in adult education and has trained in playwriting and creative writing. Sein currently works as an administrative assistant at the Estonian Children's Literature Centre. She has written seven children's books and won the Kneehigh Book Competition in 2019. Sein conveys the world through children's eyes such that adults also see it as a bigger, brighter, and more lucid place.

Ulla Saar (1975) is an illustrator and graphic artist. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in product design. Her first illustrated book *Lift* achieved immediate widespread recognition and was listed in the 2014 White Ravens Catalogue. Since then, every one of her books has received international attention. Saar practices a contemporary, design-like approach to book illustration: her spirited and playful art is often more a part of the work's overall design than free-standing pictures.



One entirely normal Monday, Mona's father decided things had to change. If they didn't, there would be nothing worth remembering at the end of their lives, and no fabulous stories to pass on to their kids and grandkids. Just the idea of being a boring grandfather to Mona's future children made him worry.

Everything in Mona's family was great. They were thriving! Mona went to school, Dad and Mom went to work, and they spent all their free time together at home. None of them had any big hobbies or favourite activities. For variety, they had their lazy cat Rooski, whom they sometimes took on short walks, and their neighbours, whom they greeted politely every day.

At the kitchen table one morning, Dad sighed and said, "I'm bored!" He peered at the rest of the family.

Mona and her mom paid no attention at first and continued eating their breakfast. Mom had made some delicious oatmeal, and Mona couldn't get over how good it was!

"I repeat, I'm bored," Dad said again. He laid his newspaper on the table like he had something important to say. On the front of the newspaper was an eye-catching photo of a man who collected postcards from around the world. "A person ought to do something fun with their life, even if it's just collecting postcards."

Dad's desperate words had caught everyone's attention. Mona stared at her father, and a bit of oatmeal slid from her spoon and plopped back into her bowl. Mom hid her face behind her coffee cup and widened her eyes at Mona.

"Yes, I want to do something interesting with my life," Dad looked at Mona and Mom and then smiled widely.

"But Dad, your life is already interesting," said Mona. "You have a super cool job, an awesome family, and a beautiful place to live."

"And the neighbours adore us," Mom said proudly. "They've never lived in a building with such calm and peaceful neighbours."

"But..." Dad started to say, but Mona interrupted.

"Dad, you shouldn't live a life that's too interesting," Mona reminded him. "That's what you said when I wanted to join soccer club, art club, folk dance club, and music club all at the same time."

"But..." Dad started again, but Mom interrupted this time.

"Dear, I agree with Mona," Mom said, giving Dad a hug. "Everything in our life is perfect: good and calm."

"Exactly! Good and calm... I can't take it anymore!" Dad said firmly. He wriggled out of Mom's hug and opened his laptop. "If no one in this family can help me, then the internet will."

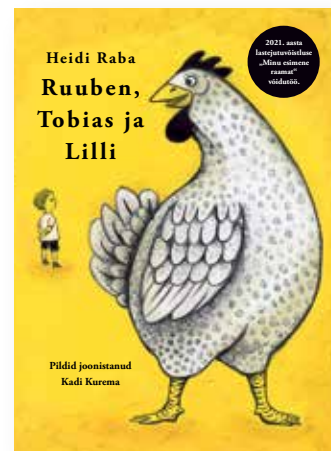
Mona's father typed in different keywords and read some articles about how people spend their free time. The list of hobbies could fill an entire room, each more impressive than the last, and some so popular that almost everyone in the world gave them a try.

To make his choice easier, Dad made a big chart of hobbies and stuck it to the door of the fridge. In the first slot was the surprisingly popular polar plunge. Gardening came second and identifying animal tracks came third. These were followed by photography, e-shopping, reading, collecting art, sunbathing, cooking, genealogy, choir, fishing, and, lastly, the good ol' collecting of candy wrappers.

It was an impressive list, but not one of them tempted Mona's father at first. In reality, Dad mostly liked stretching out on the couch and nibbling pastries. He couldn't see himself swimming in freezing water, digging around in a muddy garden, or following animal tracks for miles and miles. But whenever he lay down, he felt restless. Something had to change in his and his family's lives...

Things were normal for the next few days. Mom and Mona were glad that Dad had just been blowing off steam and didn't actually do anything after all... But just at the calmest, most peaceful part of one day, Dad sprang from the sofa and shouted so loudly that all the neighbours could hear, "I've got it! I've got it! I'VE GOT IT!"

Translated by Tony Allen



Ruben, Tobias, and Lilli

Written by Heidi Raba

Illustrated by Kadi Kurema

Tänapäev, 2022

168x230 mm, hard cover, 128 pp

ISBN: 9789916172070

In a little village, at Globeflower Street 6, lives Tobias Hackberry, a boy who loves to dash around and sing. His favourite audience is his best friend, Lilli, who happens to be a chicken. Tobias' brother, Ruben, is happiest while inventing things. Since the siblings' parents are busy with their own work, Ruben also has to "enjoy" looking after Tobias and Lilli. "Perhaps it won't be as bad as last summer," Ruben thinks. "Perhaps we will be able to work on my bike and explore, as Tobias is finally old enough to be allowed to leave the yard." But will it go as smoothly as Ruben hopes?



Heidi Raba (1971) lives in a village in Viljandi County. She has written two books of poetry, a trilogy of youth sci-fi novels, and five children's books. She has won several awards in the My First Book children's story contest and the BestSeller literary contest. Raba's works are light, heartfelt, and pleasantly humorous. They champion courage, friendship, and listening to one's heart.

Kadi Kurema (1963) is an illustrator and printmaker who graduated in graphic arts from the Estonian Academy of Arts. She has illustrated 18 children's books and collaborates regularly with the Estonian children's literary magazine *Täheke*. Kurema has been awarded for her works in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books competition. The artist's illustrations, which are entrancing and packed with provoking ideas, mix etching with other techniques while using very little colour.



Tobias and Lilli had been inseparable ever since she was brought into their family as a baby chick. The other chickens went about their lives and paid no attention to the boy, but Lilli started following him everywhere he went. He played with her inside the chicken pen at first, but they were soon strutting around the garden and, not long afterward, even indoors together. Now, Tobias would occasionally even walk around the village with her. There's nowhere that Lilli was more content than when she was with him, and it was plain as day to see. Tobias also couldn't be happier! How lucky he was to have the world's cutest chicken pick *him* to be her best friend! The boy vowed to be her very best friend in turn.



"I learn something new about Lilli every day," he told his brother. "By the time I'm old enough to go to school, I'll be so smart there'll be nothing new they can teach me there."

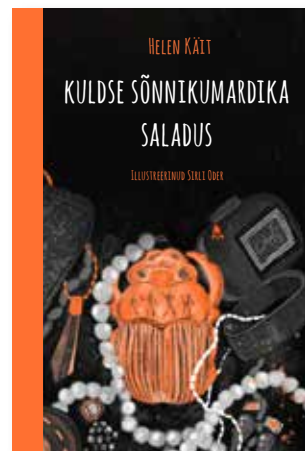
"They teach stuff *other* than nature studies, you know," Ruben said with a grin. "Like mathematics. Tell me, Tobi-buddy: what's seven plus eight?"

Tobias carefully set the egg down on the table, stared at his fingers, crooked them one after another, and answered: "Fifteen." He snatched the egg back immediately.

Ruben gaped. When had his pipsqueak little brother gotten a hang of adding and subtracting? Just a few weeks earlier, he'd insisted that five plus five was ninety-five.

"Mommy's helping me learn. She asks me to take Lilli six pieces of grain, or maybe ten plus two or fifteen plus three," Tobias said importantly. "I try over and over until I get it right. You think I'd just let her starve?"

Translated by Adam Cullen



The Secret of the Golden Scarab

Written by Helen Käit

Illustrated by Sirly Oder

Tänapäev, 2022

150x200 mm, hard cover, 176 pp

ISBN: 9789916172377

One Sunday afternoon, a strange man trying to sell a “wonder-vacuum”, barges into the home of siblings Armin and Anna. Before long, it turns out that the family’s precious scarab figurine, which their great-grandpa brought back from a trip to Egypt nearly a hundred years ago, has vanished from the mantel. Given that the salesman was their only visitor, Armin and Anna deduce that he must be to blame. Enlisting their friends for help, the kids decide to recover their precious heirloom, whatever the cost.

Award: 2022 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children’s Books, Certificate of Merit



Helen Käit (1974) is a children’s author and corporate adviser. She has a degree in management from the Tallinn University of Technology. Käit has written nine children’s books and has been awarded in the My First Book children’s story competition, as well as in other writing contests. Her works are filled with excitement and adventure, though they are primarily anchored in our own reality.

Sirly Oder (1983) is an illustrator and social-media content creator for a large bookstore chain. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in scenography and has been an artist for numerous Estonian theatre productions, commercials, and short films. She has illustrated several children’s books and has been awarded in the 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books competition. Her style is a personalised spin on modern design combined with cuteness, darkness, and humour.



Armin was the one who discovered that the greenish-golden dung beetle had disappeared from the mantel. Dad couldn’t find his car keys anywhere (though, as it later turned out, they were in his pocket the whole time), so he asked Anna and Armin to help find them. Armin happened to glance at the mantel and, although the keys obviously weren’t there, the empty space on the white dolomite slab that was otherwise packed with bric-a-brac immediately caught his attention.

“Hey, where’s Poopy-Ick run off to?” he asked his sister after taking a closer look just in case.

The cookie-shaped beetle figurine had gotten its nickname when they were still just tots. Dad explained to them that dung beetles, a.k.a. scarabs, roll tiny balls of droppings, to which two-year-old Anna pursed her lips in a funny way and exclaimed, “Poopy, ick!” They’d called the beetle “Poopy-Ick” ever since and had a great time playing with it when they were young.

Mom was a little more help.

“I dusted the mantel on Saturday and I’m sure it was still there then. I’d have noticed an empty spot.”

“Hm, Saturday,” Armin murmured thoughtfully. “Today’s Tuesday. That means we need to figure out what happened to Poopy-Ick between Saturday and today. Do you think Dad moved it somewhere else? No, impossible—why would he do that?”

Mom and Anna also agreed that Dad had no reason to move the dung beetle elsewhere.

“Okay, but there’s nobody else here!” Armin whined in exasperation. “We haven’t had any visitors and even if we had, then why would somebody . . .”

He trailed off when he noticed Anna staring at him as if she’d seen a ghost.

“What happened?” he asked.

“The vacuum-cleaner salesman,” she whispered, her eyes bulging, and looked to their mom for support.

Mom’s eyes widened, too.

“Anna’s right. We haven’t had any guests recently, but when you and Dad were watching basketball yesterday afternoon, this weird wonder-vacuum cleaner salesman showed up . . .”

Mom wrinkled her nose at the memory.

“A wonder . . . what? A vacuum?”

“Yeah, a vacuum,” Anna confirmed. “The guy was super-unpleasant. I wouldn’t be surprised in the least if he pinched our dung beetle.”

“Wait, hold on a minute,” Armin snorted. “So, you’re saying some kind of wonder-vacuum-cleaner salesman—and what the heck is a wonder vacuum cleaner, anyway?—came here yesterday and ran off with our Poopy-Ick? You do realize how silly that sounds, don’t you?”

Translated by Adam Cullen





King Toti and the Flaming City of Dorpat

Written by Kristin Kongi

Illustrated by Sirly Oder

Postimees kirjastus, 2022

200x260 mm, hard cover, 192 pp

ISBN 9789916698105

Just when summer vacation is about to start, Lukas and Thor's parents have to go away on a work trip and leave the boys with Grandma Aada. This upsets them at first, but Grandma Aada starts taking the kids around their hometown of Tartu while telling exciting stories about its history. One morning, the brothers decide to surprise their granny with some freshly-baked pastries. On their way to the bakery, they decide to take another look at a tunnel they spotted the previous day. While poking around the entrance, they suddenly find themselves transported back in time to when Tartu was still called Dorpat. Lukas and Thor soon have to fight a malevolent dragon and save the city to find their way back home.



Kristin Kongi (1985) studies history at the University of Tartu's Institute of History and Archaeology. Out of a desire to bring children closer to history, she has written two books about Estonia's largest cities – Tallinn and Tartu. In 2020, Kongi's debut *Lukas, Luurih, and the Limping City* was picked as one of the top-ten best Estonian children's books of 2020.

Sirly Oder (1983) is an illustrator and social-media content creator for a large bookstore chain. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in scenography and has been an artist for numerous Estonian theatre productions, commercials, and short films. She has illustrated several children's books and has been awarded in the 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books competition. Her style is a personalised spin on modern design combined with cuteness, darkness, and humour.



Expectantly, the boys dashed down the winding street that led to a door. But it was nothing like the one they'd tumbled through just moments earlier. Instead, the astonished brothers found themselves facing a towering golden door in a spacious entryway. It was taller than any tree on Toome Hill! Wider than any doorway in all of Tartu! What's more, drifting from the door, which was covered in a rough and scaly pattern, were teensy sparks that resembled gold dust.

Now, they could clearly hear a crackling like logs in a fire, which seemed to be coming from the other side of the mysterious entrance. There was no sign of the bat whose shadow they'd thought they saw.

"What's *this*?" Thor gasped.

"Check out those *scales*!" Lukas exclaimed. "I think I know what's behind the door."

But the word he wished to speak didn't make it past his lips. Instead, Lukas took a deep breath, squeezed his eyes shut, and pushed a hand through the saffron-coloured veil of sparks. Strangely, it didn't even burn.

His fingers barely brushed the door when it yanked them through in a flash. Still, everything that goes in must also come out. The boys flew through the door and into an all-too-familiar ditch.

[...]

"Where are we?" Thor asked, gasping in fear.

"I don't know" Lukas whispered in a quivering voice.

They felt as if their feet were locked to the ground by magnets and might have even begun to spread roots if the spell weren't broken by high-pitched giggling.

Startled, the brothers stared down into the valley.

"Look! There's a girl down there," Thor said, pointing.

And so there was: a girl with braided flame-red hair who, judging by her clothes, might have jumped straight out of the past. She was holding a butterfly net and running through the tall grass, swinging at the colourful insects and laughing brightly.

Unlike them, she didn't appear confused in the very least; nor did she seem bothered by the mysterious disappearance of the



tennis courts. Lukas took his little brother by the hand as they began carefully picking their way down the hillside. The sight of the girl filled them with relief and gave Lukas hope that he might soon have a sensible answer to Thor's question.

[...]

"Are you children of the tsar?" the girl asked politely, trying to make up for her insult while actually thinking that no heir to the Russian throne could be dressed as bizarrely as these two.

"No."

The boys both shook their heads.

"Where are you from, then? I haven't seen you in town before."

"We're from right here," Lukas said, stamping his foot against the ground.

"You live underground?" she asked mockingly.

Lukas shot her a glare and decided not to show another pinch of friendliness from that point forward.

Translated by Adam Cullen



The Candy Monster

Written by Juhan Voolaid
Illustrated by Marja-Liisa Plats

Kuuloom, 2022
168x215 mm, hard cover, 80 pp
ISBN 9789916984000

Can you guess what bikes decide to do when they get bored waiting for their owners all day? Or what happens to a talking tennis ball who relishes saying “pling!” and “bop!”? Do you have any idea how a fly could pull off coaxing a whole city full of car owners to walk instead of drive? If you do, then there’s no point in reading the stories in *The Candy Monster*. And if you still read it, then at least you can compare your own fantastic knowledge to that of the author.

Award: 2022 25 Best Designed Estonian Books, Certificate of Merit



The Candy Monster

Once upon a time there was a candy monster. He was as big as several humans and looked a bit like a crocodile and a bit like a kangaroo, but he was very friendly and could talk like humans do.

The candy monster’s head was raspberry red, his chest banana yellow, his body chocolate brown and his tail kiwi-fruit green. The candy monster ate nothing but candy. When he roared, a chocolatey-coconut smell emanated from his mouth for a distance of several metres.

The candy monster moved into a blue building on a street corner, into a flat neighbouring a dentist. Once, as he was going down the stairs, he met the lady from the third floor on her way up. The lady saw the monster, screamed in terror, ran away, and phoned the police. Soon a car with flashing lights pulled up in front of the building. The police rang the candy monster’s doorbell. The candy monster opened the door and smiled.

“Hello,” he said in a friendly way.

“Hello there,” said the police. “What’s going on here then?”

The candy monster looked at the stairs. “Nothing,” he said.

“So, there’s nothing going on here then, is there?” one police officer replied in annoyance. “The residents have complained that they’re afraid to use the stairway.”

“Why?”

“Because they’re scared of you.”

“Oh!” exclaimed the candy monster. “There’s really no need to be scared of me. I’m very good-natured.”

The police officers discussed something between themselves. “Well, just watch yourself anyhow!” they said and left.

The candy monster rang the neighbour’s doorbell. The neighbour – the dentist – a slender woman with curly hair, opened the door and, startled, clapped her hand to her mouth. “Help!” she whispered on seeing the monster. “Help!”

“Please don’t be frightened,” said the candy monster, “let’s be friends. I’m a candy monster.”

“I’m a dentist,” whispered the dentist and shook the monster’s large, chocolate-coloured paw.

“I never knew monsters could be so friendly,” she said. The candy monster blushed so much that his red head turned violet.

“Oh, you’re too kind!” he exclaimed. “You really are.”

“There’s a sweet smell coming from your mouth,” said the dentist. “Could you tell me what you eat?”

“Candy. Just candy.”

Translated by Susan Wilson



Juhan Voolaid (1971) graduated from the University of Tartu in geography and currently works as an official in the same city, where he was also named the Writer Laureate in 2021. Voolaid has written a wide range of works: children’s books, historical thrillers, a memoir, a novel, and short-story collections. His writing is playful, rich in fantasy, pursues ideals, and often has exciting twists. Voolaid has recently also collaborated with the Estonian children’s magazine *Täheke*. *The Candy Monster* is his first book for such a young target audience.

Marja-Liisa Plats (1984) is an illustrator, graphic designer, and photographer. She graduated from Tartu Art College as a photographer. Plats has illustrated more than 40 children’s books and collaborates with the children’s magazine *Täheke*. Her works are characterised by perpetual searching and experimentation with a wide range of visual techniques. Plats is a member of the Estonian Graphic Designers’ Association and the Tartu Artists’ Union.





Erik Stoneheart

Written by Andris Feldmanis and Livia Ulman

Illustrated by Eili Lepik-Kannelmäe

Postimees kirjastus, 2022

146x220 mm, hard cover, 320 pp

ISBN 9789916712207

Eleven-year-old Erik may look like an ordinary boy, but he is far from it. If he were, then he'd be saddened by the facts that his parents constantly forget him, that he doesn't have a single friend, and that he has to move into an eerie mansion on a secluded island, which they just inherited from his Great-Aunt Brunhilda. Erik's heart is made of stone, unbreakable, and impossible to hurt. At least that's what he believes, even after meeting a peculiar girl named Maria who also lives in their house.



Andris Feldmanis and **Livia Ulman** have been writing together for film and TV for almost 15 years. Their films include *Compartment No. 6* (winner of the Cannes Grand Prix) and *January* (awards include Best International Narrative at the Tribeca Film Festival and Best Film at the Rome Film Fest). The duo also writes short stories. Feldmanis published an existential sci-fi novel titled *The Last Thousand Years*, which won the Betti Alver Award for Debut Literature. *Erik Stoneheart*, their first co-written book, is based on their children's film of same title, which premiered in Tallinn in December 2022.

Eili Lepik-Kannelmäe (1987) is a freelance illustrator and tattoo artist. She graduated from Tallinn University with a bachelor's degree in art instruction. Lepik-Kannelmäe has illustrated children's books, collaborated with the children's magazine *Hea Laps*, designed novel covers, and designed t-shirts and posters. Her artwork is defined by a desire to create mystical atmospheres and characters.



The Secret Plan

Erik went upstairs, trying not to glance in the direction of the dark door at the end of the hallway, and pushed open the door to his bedroom.

He barely had a split second to make out bright red hair and a dark green witch's cloak before the being charged right at him. Brunhilda was attacking! She crashed into Erik and knocked him to the ground. If the boy had been able to speak, then he'd have cried out: "Why, Great Aunt Brunhilda? Why?! What've I ever done to you?! You don't even know me! And I never wanted to move into your house in the first place!" But not a peep escaped his lips. He tried to shove Brunhilda's soft, white, giant hairy paws away from his throat . . .

Wait, hold on! *Soft, white, giant hairy paws?* Great Aunt Brunhilda was no bunny . . . or a teddy bear. Erik freed himself from the ghostly death-grip and pushed away what he believed was his late relative. Right on the site where the life-or-death

struggle had just taken place lay a huge white teddy bear dressed in a gown and a red clown wig. It stared at Erik with its cute button eyes as if wanting to apologize and insist it had no part in the plan. Erik knew all too well whose idea it had been. He looked back at the doorway. Above it was a clever mechanism with a length of rope that had launched the costumed teddy bear as soon as he opened the door. Erik had no choice but to conclude that the seemingly nasty, angry pipsqueak of a girl who also lived in the house was in fact both actually nasty and angry.

He ran back to the door, flung it open, and shouted into the darkness.

"You can't do anything to scare me! I've got a heart of stone!"

Silence. Moments later, the girl approached from the shadows.

"Huh?" she asked.

The girl narrowed her terrifyingly dark eyes and took another step closer.

"I don't care if you tease me. Or pick fights with me. Or taunt me," Erik said, puffing out his chest.

"Ha, I sure believe *that*!"

Although it sounded sarcastic, Erik felt like she really did believe it a little. Or was at least somewhat confused by what to think of him.

"Feelings are pointless anyway. I don't let them affect me . . ." he continued.

"Not even pain?" the girl growled, digging her sharp fingernails into his arm and refusing to let go. She stared straight into his eyes, hoping to squeeze out even the tiniest little tear; even the tiniest little wince.

But Erik's face didn't betray a single emotion. It only became a little sweatier and a tone redder.

Finally, the human vice tired out on her own and released her grip.

Translated by Adam Cullen



Shoe #41

Written by Jaanus Vaiksoo

Illustrated by Katrin Kaev

Ärkel, 2022

142x215, hard cover, 190 pp

ISBN 9789949727261

Paul Fifth and his best friend Minna are on a roll again. This time they are visiting Paul “The Shoeman” Bachmann and his fiancée Katja in their recently purchased country house. As expected, there won’t be any lazy summer days tanning on the beach. Rumours about poisoned bees are spreading and Paul and Minna dive into the case. They come across old hand-written letters sent from Siberia as well as a piece of plywood with “Shoe #41” burned into it. Could the discoveries have anything to do with the poisoned bees? That’s what the kids need to figure out, and ASAP.

Shoe #41 is the third book of a trilogy. The first, *Shoe #39*, won the White Ravens Award in 2020 and the Annual Children’s Literature Award of the Cultural Endowment of Estonia



Jaanus Vaiksoo (1967) is a children’s author, literary scholar, and instructor. He graduated from Tallinn University in Estonian language and literature. Vaiksoo has written over 20 books of stories and poetry for children and has contributed to the children’s magazine *Täheke*. The psychological intricacy of Vaiksoo’s characters and their depiction through the author’s warm humour offer support to readers of sensitive ages and help them on their path to adulthood. The first book in the Shoe trilogy, *Shoe #39*, was listed in the 2019 White Ravens Catalogue.



Katrin Kaev (1965) is a book designer, illustrator, printmaker, and calligrapher. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic art and has worked there as an instructor. Kaev has illustrated eight children’s books, textbooks, and magazines, and has designed nearly 300 books and magazines in total. She has been awarded in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children’s Books and the 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books competitions. Classic pen-and-ink drawing and realistic sketch-like illustrations define Kaev’s style.



Chapter 11.

The sun was shining and only a few tufts of cloud drifted lazily across the midday sky. Paul and Ats unrolled an old rug beneath the apple tree, flopped down on their backs, and let themselves unwind. Paul was on his phone. Ats took out a packet of serial stories clipped from old newspapers that they’d found in a folder in the old house and was about to delve into *In the Footsteps of the Vikings*. Alas, the blissful summer idyll didn’t last for long: Minna emerged from the threshing barn with a sickle in one hand and an axe in the other.

“Enough lollygagging!” she declared resolutely. “We’re not running a holiday home. Time to get to work!”

Paul and Ats stared up at her, bewildered. The sunlight disappeared and was replaced by Minna’s threatening shadow.

“Around here, we don’t let women do the work while the men all sunbathe. Paul, you go and cut down the nettles next to the barn and Ats, you clear the aspen brush from around the house.”

“You’re a tough old gal,” Ats groaned as he sat up. “I was just about to start studying here.”

Minna raised the axe.

“I’ll show you an old gal! And first, you’re going to study clearing brush from the yard.”

Paul leapt to his feet and tugged his friend’s sleeve.

“Cut it out, that’s not funny! Women are in charge these days.”

Ats set the newspaper clippings on the rug to get up, but a sudden gust of wind scattered them across the yard. All three rushed to catch the pages before they blew away.

“Check out what I found!” Paul exclaimed. “It’s an old letter.”

“Here’s another!” Ats said, picking up two yellowed papers.

Minna carefully fished a third from the lilac bush. It turned out that the folder had contained someone’s old correspondence in addition to the newspaper serial. Fortune smiled upon the boys as Minna’s zest for yard work dissolved in a flash. She collected all the letters, sat down on the rug, and started poring through them. Ats and Paul tried to get the serial pages back in order.

“Read it to us, too,” Paul said.

“The handwriting’s just awful. I think it’s written in pencil,” Minna murmured, trying to decipher the writing. “Hello, Vallo! I’m in far-away Siberia now. We spent two weeks in cattle wagons to get here. There were 45 people in each. All we were given to eat was some gruel-like soup. You and I will never see each other again. They read the sentence after we arrived: life-long exile. Snow is still on the ground here. The place is called Ashtak, in Novosibirsk Oblast. We were brought here on a big motor sled. It’s a lumber camp deep in a taiga forest. My mother and sister and I live in a large barracks. There are eight other people in our room. There is nothing to eat. We’re hungry all the time. In the evening, my sister and I play with the deck of cards you gave me for my birthday.

How are you? Summer break is coming up soon. I don’t know if I’ll ever be able to go to school again. Have you caught any pike in the river yet? Say hello to Juku and Meelis for me. Rein. May 15, 1949.”

Minna set the letter aside and everyone was quiet for a while. None could have expected anything like that. It was sent seventy-three years ago to the same Vallo Tagamets whom Ene had mentioned earlier.

“So, that means Rein was deported. He was writing about being taken away to Siberia!” Minna said, shaking her head in disbelief.

It was incredible to be holding a letter once written by a boy who was deported so far from his home.

“Wait, so they even deported little kids?”

“Of course they did!” Ats snapped, irked by Minna’s question. How could she not know such things!

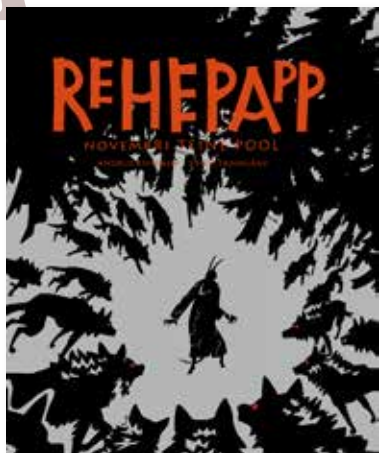
“I told you about how my grandma was eight when she and her mom and her brothers were taken away. Grandma said there was even a woman with them who gave birth to a son in the cattle wagon.”

Minna leapt angrily to her feet.

“What?! Sending a pregnant woman to Siberia!? That’s awful! What kind of people could do such a thing?”

“Grandma always said that Stalin wasn’t a person, but a monster.”

Translated by Adam Cullen



November (Part II)

Written by Andrus Kivirätk

Illustrated by Veiko Tammjärv

Kratt Werk Kirjastus, 2022

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Over 20 years, Andrus Kivirätk's *November* has claimed its rightful place among Estonia's literary classics. The dark fantasy's characters spend their days outwitting the devil and pilfering one another's possessions. Unimaginable scenes of Márquez-like magical realism take place in a setting populated by mythical beings such as sea cows and hundred-legged lynx. All the while, the text takes an honest and unvarnished look at the pains of being human, as well as how ridiculous that suffering can be.

Veiko Tammjärv has cast the acclaimed work in a visual form that never compromises the fantastical reveries of the original. Equal parts robust and existential, the graphic novel conjures a world that is easy to lose oneself in and haunts the reader like the recollection of a dream – a memory that, albeit unsettling, is fascinatingly accurate and magical.



Andrus Kivirätk (1970) is a playwright, topical satirist, screenwriter, and author of adult and children's prose. He is the most commanding and prolific figure on Estonia's literary scene today. Kivirätk has won many major awards, including a place on the IBBY Honour List in 2008. His children's

stories are known for their rich fantasy and unique humour. Kivirätk's style is straightforward, his stories fast paced, and their casts of characters colourful and filled with surprises.

Veiko Tammjärv (1967) graduated in graphic design from the Estonian State Art Institute in 1996. During the 2000s, he developed a unique experimental pictographic style and published comics in collections and art magazines in Estonia and abroad. He has released two graphic novels and displayed works at comics festivals in Brussels, Treviso, and Helsinki. Currently, he works as the creative director of an advertising agency. His graphic art has received several awards and he has been on the juries of various art competitions.





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