

CHILDREN'S
BOOKS
FROM ESTONIA
2025



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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Piglet's Great Big Wish

Written by Katrin Tõnisson

Illustrated by Reda Tomingas

Päike ja Pilv, 2024

215x261 mm, hardcover, 32 pp

ISBN: 9789916630501

When Piglet was little, his biggest wish was to be a superpig. He wanted to be the fastest, strongest, and smartest. Unfortunately, it didn't always work out that way. Then, his mom would kiss him on the forehead and say, "You did your very best. You're precious to me." Or his dad would pick him up and say, "You're brave and smart. You can succeed at anything you wish." That made Piglet happy. When he grew up, he became fast, strong, and smart. He was a Superpig, just like he'd always dreamed of being.

Awards:

2023 The Knee-High Book Competition, 2nd-3rd place

2024 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit



Katrin Tõnisson (1981) studied acting at the Viljandi Culture Academy. She worked as a museum educator at the Estonian Theatre for Young Audiences and has been the program director at the Estonian Children's Literature Centre since 2014. Currently, she directs the Centre's program department and contributes to the children's magazine *Täheke*. Her debut children's book, *Piglet's Great Big Wish*, which is a heartfelt story about a sensitive young child, received 2nd and 3rd places in the Knee-High Book Competition.

Reda Tomingas (1979) is an illustrator, author, and animated film director. She graduated from the Vilnius Academy of Arts in animation. Tomingas has illustrated more than 30 children's books and novel covers in Lithuania and Estonia. She has collaborated with children's magazines like *Hea laps* and *Täheke*, and with different museums and advertising agencies. In 2023 she was among one of the winners of the Art of Book competition in Lithuania.



A Little Bit Big

Written by Kairi Look

Illustrated by Anne Pikkov

Koolibri, 2024

215x296 mm, hardcover, 34 pp

ISBN: 9789985053263

Rights sold: German, Lithuanian, Latvian

It's Little Tiger's birthday and guests start arriving first thing in the morning: young and old, friends and family. They romp around all day long and eat a lot of cake. Everyone is having so much fun! But when the Moon rises over the grove and the last visitor disappears from sight, the tiger cub suddenly feels sad. "My stripes have shifted to the left!" he wails to her mom. "Don't worry, it's only because you're growing," she consoles him. Alas, the tiger cub doesn't want to grow up because he's convinced that the grown-ups don't know how to have fun. He just wants to be a little bit big...

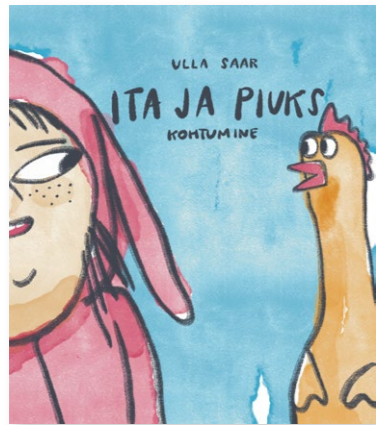
Award: 2024 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books, Certificate of Merit



Kairi Look (1983) is a children's writer and a translator from Dutch. She graduated from the University of Tartu in physiotherapy, and from the University of Amsterdam in children's rehabilitative therapy. She has penned ten books to date, many of which have been awarded and translated into several languages, including Finnish, French, German, and Lithuanian. In addition to this, she writes plays and short stories for the children's magazines *Gecko*, *Täheke*, and *Hea Laps*.

Anne Pikkov (1974) is an Estonian children's book illustrator and graphic designer. She has illustrated and designed books, posters, and graphic identities, and contributed to various magazines. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts with a major in graphic design, and has worked in an advertising agency and at the Estonian Academy of Arts. She has received several awards in annual Estonian book design and illustration competitions.





Ita and Squeak
Written and illustrated by Ulla Saar

Koolibri, 2024
156x178 mm, hardcover, 24 pp
ISBN: 9789985054956

Rights sold: Lithuanian

Ita wants to go with her dad to the hardware store, so she quickly climbs into his cargo bike, and they pedal away. Dad needs to buy paint so he can repaint a wall at home. Ita hopes they buy red paint because that's her favorite color. Once they arrive, Dad immediately vanishes into the maze of aisles and Ita goes to the kids' corner to play. Suddenly, she hears a squeak. When whatever it is squeaks again, she starts to investigate. Who could be squeaking like that? It's Squeak, of course!

Ita and Squeak is a comic book for early readers.



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, she has illustrated over 30 titles, many of which have garnered 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.



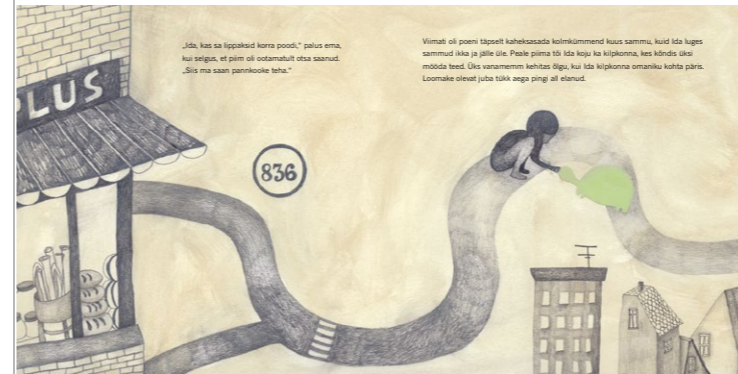
My World
Written by Liis Sein
Illustrated by Maris Siimer

Päike ja Pilv, 2024
215x217 mm, hardcover, 32 pp
ISBN: 9789916630600

Ida lives in a large ten-storey building, next to which stands another, and another, and who knows how many more similar buildings. There is no playground nor are there any trees to climb. Because of that Ida spends most of her time indoors.

One day, when Ida's grandfather asks her to fetch the newspaper from the postbox, she notices a sad-looking potted plant on the windowsill. Next to it stands a sign: "Looking for a new home." Ida decides to take the plant with her.

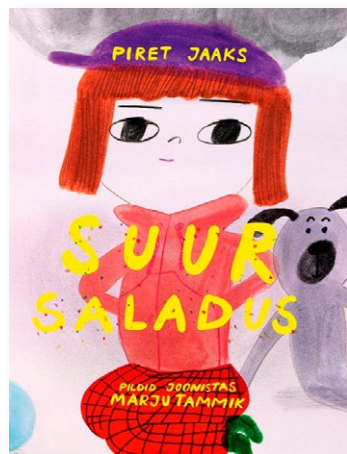
One by one, other things also find their way into her room: a puzzle missing a few pieces, a turtle lurking under a bench, two abandoned parrots, her grandfather's friend's aquarium, and some slightly broken pots and vases she rescues from beside the rubbish bin. Then Ida's mum knocks on her door, asking "What are you up to, Ida?"



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 more than 10 books for children 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 vibrant place.



Maris Siimer (1980) is an artist based in Tallinn. She graduated from the Tallinn University Institute of Arts with a degree in art education program and has taken various courses at the Estonian Academy of Arts. Siimer has been working as a freelance painter and illustrator since 2016. She focuses on the longing to see the invisible in the visible and is fascinated by the idea of creating space in a broader sense.



A Big Secret

Written by Piret Jaaks

Illustrated by Marju Tammik

Päike ja Pilv, 2024

206x267 mm, hardcover, 32 pp

ISBN: 9789916630617

Rights sold: Lithuanian

As soon as Iris comes home from kindergarten, she hides in the corner of her room. She doesn't want to talk to either Mum or Dad. She won't even talk to Aunt Mirjam, who is usually her favourite. You see, Iris has a big secret and all she wants to do right now is to scribble messy lines on a piece of paper with markers. She doesn't want pancakes with powdered sugar or to play sausage roll games. She is not interested in Aunt Mirjam's surprise or playing fetch with her dog Bosse. The secret has made a nest inside Iris and she doesn't know how get rid of it.

Awards:

2024 25 Best Designed Estonian Books, Certificate of Merit

2024 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit



Piret Jaaks (1980) is an Estonian writer and playwright.

She studied theatre at the University of Tartu and is currently working on a PhD in dramaturgy at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. In addition to writing almost 20 plays, she is the author of seven books, including five for children. Two of her children's plays, have been staged at Estonia's most notable children's theatre. Currently, she lives in Tallinn with her family and a hairy Jack Russell terrier.

Marju Tammik (1972) is a fashion artist and illustrator.

She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in fashion design. Tammik's illustrations can be found on posters and packaging, as well as in magazines and books. She is a two-time winner of the Estonian Design Awards Prize. Tammik has illustrated five children's books and has been awarded in the 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books and the Knee-High Book competitions.



The Spot Book

Written by Joanna Liivak

Illustrated by Liisa Kruusmägi

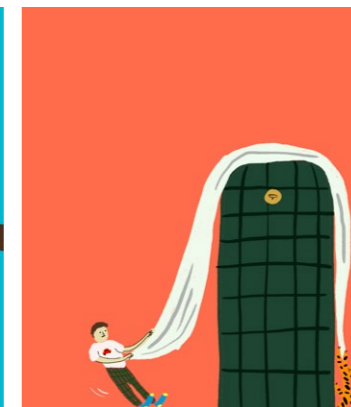
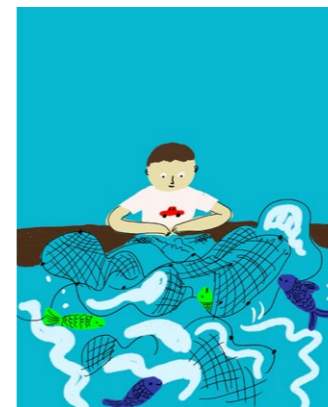
Puänt, 2024

215x256 mm, hardcover, 32 pp

ISBN: 9789916992869

Sebastian is home alone for the first time ever. Well, not entirely alone: his cat Tiger is there, too. Tiger is brave and fearless and has been home alone many times before. Sebastian is afraid. What will he do all by himself? How will he pass the long hours? What if something bad happens? Feeling bored, Sebastian notices a scrap of notebook paper with an interesting spot on it. He realizes it looks just like Tiger's pawprint! The cat jumps onto the desk to check it out as well, but accidentally knocks over a mug. What does the coffee stain look like? Maybe a fly under a microscope? And what shapes are made by the bits of thread in his mom's sewing nook?

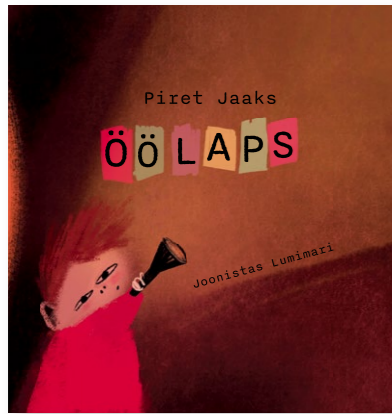
Award: 2021 The Knee-High Book Competition, special prize for idea



Joanna Liivak (1990) graduated from the University of Tartu with a degree in medicine (2017) and completed a residency in psychiatry (2021). Liivak's writing has been published in the children's magazine *Hea Laps* and the youth literary magazine *Värske Rõhk*. *The Spot Book* received a special prize for its concept in the Estonian Children's Literature Centre's Knee-High Book Competition in 2021.

Liisa Kruusmägi (1988) graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts with a bachelor's degree in painting in 2010 and a master's degree in drawing in 2013, in 2011. She has been a member of the Estonian Artists' Union since 2013. Kruusmägi is known more as a painter, though she has also worked extensively in illustration. She has collaborated with newspapers and magazines in Estonia and abroad, including the children's magazines *Täheke* and *Hea Laps*.





Night Child
 Written by Piret Jaaks
 Illustrated by Lumimari
 Pegasus, 2024
 216x216 mm, hardcover, 36 pp
 ISBN: 9789916166284

My mommy isn't afraid of the dark. She actually likes to be up late work the night shift. I don't like the dark at all – there's nothing in it! That makes it the scariest thing in the world. I stay with Grandma when Mom works the night shift. Grandma is wonderful, but her house is very old and very dark. I tell her I want my mommy and she asks if I want to hear a bedtime story. Bedtime stories are my favorite thing of all! Grandma takes out an old book. Dried flowers fall from between the pages. Grandma says the Night Child put them there. The Night Child is the bravest kid of all because they can see what's hidden in the darkness, she tells me.



Piret Jaaks (1980) is an Estonian writer and playwright. She studied theatre at the University of Tartu and is currently working on a PhD in dramaturgy at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. In addition to writing almost 20 plays, she is the author of seven books, including five for children. Two of her children's plays, *Elias from the Mainland* and *The Mumbler*, have been staged at Estonia's most notable children's theatre. Currently, she lives in Tallinn with her family and a hairy Jack Russell terrier.

Lumimari (1976) is a digital artist, designer, and illustrator. She studied photography and film at the Tallinn Polytechnic School and worked as a photojournalist at the national daily Postimees. Lumimari currently works as a freelance Designer and artist for animations, mobile applications, and online content. She has held several individual exhibitions, illustrated six books, and designed cards, calendars, and bed linens. Lumimari's illustrations have warm, soft tones and a contemporary artistic signature.



Our Road
 Written and illustrated by Tiiu Kitsik
 Päike ja Pilv, 2024
 207x277 mm, hardcover, 32 pp
 ISBN: 9789916630570



There's an old gravel road in front of our house. Cars hardly ever drive there because it's dusty and full of potholes. There's a new road a bit further away and that's where all the cars go. Our road might seem ordinary but it's not because when it rains, the potholes turn into amazing puddles. That's when we run outside, all excited, to dig trenches and float boats. One day the roadwork trucks arrive. They fill the potholes, pour gravel over everything, cover the road with asphalt and roll it smooth. It's fun to watch, but it completely ruins our road

Award: 2023 The Knee-High Book Competition, 2nd-3rd place



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





The Best Sandcastle in the World

Written by Tiina Laanem

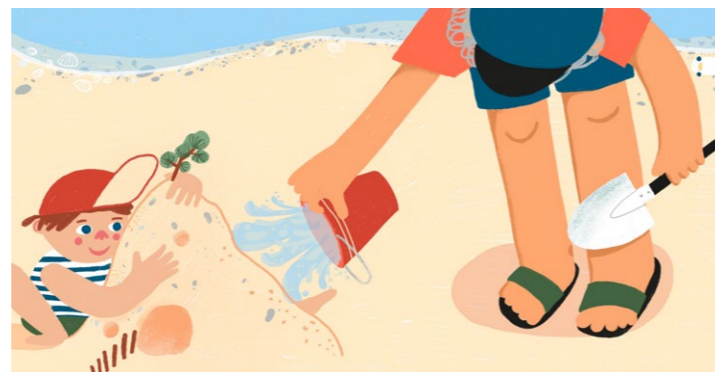
Illustrated by Tiiu Kitsik

Pegasus, 2024

210x213 mm, hardcover, 38 pp

ISBN: 9789916166468

My Papa can't seem to keep his hands still; he's constantly building something. I want to build, too, but they're worried I might saw off a finger or hit my head with a hammer. One day, Papa promises to take me to the beach so I am able to build, too. We make a sandcastle together. After building and building until late in the afternoon, the castle still isn't ready, so Papa promises me we'll come back the next day. We hurry to the beach first thing the next morning, but find the castle completely destroyed. Someone jumped on it and kicked the sand all around. Papa says not to worry, we'll make a new one. So, I wipe away my tears and help. Our new sandcastle will be even bigger and more beautiful than the last.



Tiina Laanem (1974) is an author and playwright. She graduated in administrative management from the Tallinn Technical University and has worked as a journalist at several daily newspapers, as well as an editor for the Estonian Magazine Publishing House. Currently, she is a publisher at the Pegasus Publishing House. Laanem has written award-winning novels, short stories, five children's books and plays for both youth and adults.

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



Paul Will Be an Engineer

Written by Ilmar Tomusk

Illustrated by Joonas Sildre

Rahva Raamat, 2024

217x218mm, hardcover, 96 pp

ISBN: 9789916144749

Six-year-old Paul is curious, imaginative, and thirsty for knowledge. He likes learning about all kinds of things, looking into machines, and discovering how things work. Paul also enjoys trying things out himself. A candy-tossing machine, a car-rat car, a marionette, and getting electricity from a lemon are just a handful of his experiments. Paul plans to be an engineer when he grows up. Engineers get to invent and develop different machines and devices every day, and they do so to help make people's lives safer, happier, and more convenient.



Ilmar Tomusk (1964) is a civil servant and children's writer. He graduated from the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute as a teacher of Estonian language and literature, and currently works as Chief Director of the Estonian Language Inspectorate. Tomusk has written more than 50 children's books. His humorous stories, which alternate between elements of realism and fantasy, tell of clever, busy children's everyday activities and adventures.

Joonas Sildre (1980) is a comic artist, illustrator, and graphic designer. He graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design and works as a freelance artist. Sildre has illustrated over to 30 children's books and published the graphic novel *Between Two Sounds* – a biography of the composer Arvo Pärt. Sildre teaches comic drawing in workshops and art schools, has compiled anthologies, and organises Estonian comics exhibitions. In 2013, he became a co-founder of the Estonian Comics Society.





Dachshund and Dane in the Summer

Written by Kadri Hinrikus
Illustrated by Elina Sildre

Tammerraamat, 2024
198x246 mm, hardcover, 78 pp
ISBN: 9789916681794

Dachshund and Dane are best friends. Sure – Sighthound, Corgi, Basset, Boxer, and all the other dogs are their friends, too, but Dachshund loves Dane and Dane loves Dachshund more than anyone else. They know that it's more fun being together when figuring out what's making Basset so tired, listening to the new song that the starlings brought back from the Netherlands, identifying the curious object that Corgi discovered, or taking part in the Be Yourself Competition. And naturally, Dachshund and Dane know that summer is the very best time for getting up to their old tricks!

Dachshund and Dane in the Summer is the sequel to Hinrikus's popular book *Dachshund and Dane* (2020).



Kadri Hinrikus (1970) is a children's writer and journalist. She graduated from Tallinn University in theatre direction, worked as an editor and news anchor on Estonian national television, and currently works as an editor of the children's magazine *Täheke*. Hinrikus has penned fairy tales and memoir-like books about her family. She is also a skilful teller of warm and humorous stories about kids' everyday lives. Her works were featured in the White Ravens catalogue in 2013 and 2016.

Elina Sildre (1980) is an illustrator and comic artist who graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in graphic design. She has illustrated over 40 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 Sweater and the Sun

Written by Andrus Kivirähk
Illustrated by Heiki Ernits

Varrak, 2024
174x247 mm, hardcover, 128 pp
ISBN: 9789985360958

How could one lure the moles above ground? What happens to toothpaste that is slithering out from the house? How do you catch a mosquito on a picture? Is it possible to preserve summer in a jar? Who do you present your useless milk teeth to? Who is hiding inside a Semla bun costume? How did a cloud visit a Midsummer's celebration? What are the odds of a gooseberry asking for your hand in marriage? Which animal is closest to a pickle and what do dragons eat?

These are the questions that *The Sweater and the Sun* will answer but that's not all. Reading this book will not only make you wiser, it will give you invaluable conversation starters at parties. Success guaranteed.



Andrus Kivirähk (1970) is a playwright, topical satirist, screenwriter and author of adult and children's prose. He graduated from the University of Tartu in journalism and is the most leading and prolific figure on Estonia's literary scene today. Kivirähk has won many major awards, including the IBBY Honour List in 2008. His children's stories are known for their rich fantasy and unique humour. Kivirähk's style is straightforward, his stories fast-paced, and their casts of characters colourful and filled with surprises.

Heiki Ernits (1953) graduated from the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute as a teacher of arts and crafts. He has worked as a photographer, art teacher, art director, and film director. Ernits has made over 20 animated films, produced commercials, designed book covers and layouts, and illustrated more than 30 children's books. Highly popular among Estonian children, he has received six Nukits Awards to date.





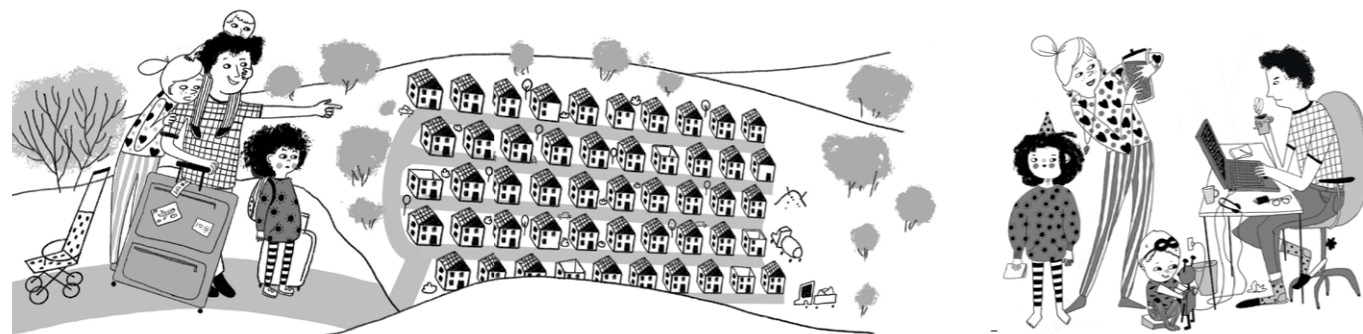
We're Moving Away

Written and illustrated by Tiiu Kitsik

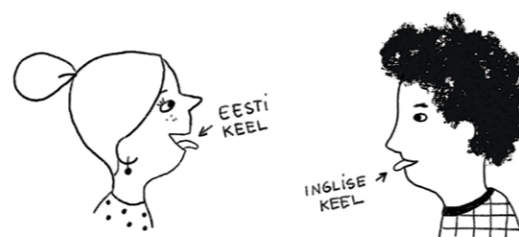
Tänapäev, 2024
175x237 mm, hardcover, 168 pp
ISBN: 9789916175668

Eight-year-old Luise couldn't be more satisfied with her life. She attends a totally normal school with totally normal classmates and an incredibly normal teacher. What's more, Luise gets to sit next to her best friend Arabella, with whom she has amazing times drawing cool space-dog comics or doing other things to pass the time. But when her mom and dad, who up to that point had also seemed nearly normal, decide one day – without almost zero discussion – to pick up and move to Germany, the girl thinks they must be off their rockers. For let's be honest: what kind of a reasonable person would move their whole family to a country where they don't speak a word of the language, all because of a job?! How is Luise supposed to get by and find new friends? And what will become of her friendship with Arabella?

Award: 2023 Children's Story Competition "My First Book", 2nd place



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



6.

Just like that, summer was halfway over, and it came time for us to move away.

Dad flew before us to get everything ready for our arrival. I, of course, hoped he'd gone early to get me a surprise dog and would bring it to the airport to meet us. But just like always, everything went totally different from how I'd imagined it.

Dad showed up at the airport all alone, without even a single dog hair in sight.

My parents chatted about our flight and watched the baggage carousel for our luggage. I felt super drowsy. I'd slept through the whole flight and couldn't tell whether it was all a dream, or we'd actually arrived.

"Oh, it's so exciting – you won't even believe it! We've got a total dream house!" Dad gushed as he guided us from the airport to the tram stop.

We rode for several stops, then transferred to a bus, then walked for quite a long time until we finally came to the top of a hill. In the valley below us was a heap of houses. Well, not a heap, per say, but all laid out in nice long rows. It looked like a bar of chocolate: little squares, all exactly the same size and neatly lined up.

"This is the smart-house village!" Dad cheerfully exclaimed. "Our new home!"

Mom looked a little hesitant. "Which one is our house?" she asked. "They're all identical cubes."

"It's easy: from this direction, our house is in the third row, fourth on the left. No, fifth. Ah, you'll get a clearer picture when we get closer!" Dad said as he picked up the pace, nearly jogging down the hill with the big suitcase rumbling behind him.

Mom struggled with Rudolf's pram while I tried to get a handle on my own suitcase, which was trying to roll away at a breakneck speed and pull me along with it.

We zoomed down the hill to the field of little houses. Down in the valley, they no longer looked like tiny squares, but full-scale buildings. Some were missing a roof, others were missing windows. Even so, they were all similar white cubes. Construc-

tion workers in yellow helmets bustled around, working away like busy bees.

"Alright, now we go down the third street and turn left. The whole neighbourhood is still under construction, they haven't had time to put up street signs or house numbers yet. It'll all be ready soon – it's a work in progress!" Dad said happily as he walked even faster.

We could barely keep up. Once we reached the house, Dad started tapping on a black screen next to the door. It looked like a smart phone glued to the wall.

"Beep-beep-beeeeeep!" went the screen.

"Huh, what's wrong with it? Why won't it let us in?" Dad mumbled, poking at the screen *again*.

"Beep-beep-beeeeeep!" it repeated.

"Do I have to restart it *again*?" Dad sighed.

"Was-da-bla-bla...!!!" someone shouted (or at least something like it) from inside. The shouting was in German, but that's more or less what it sounded like to me: "Was-da-bla-bla...!!!"

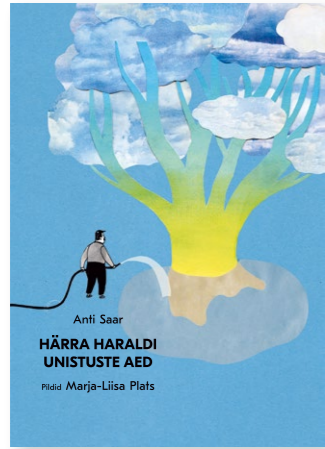
Dad took a giant leap away from the door.

It swung open and out stepped a woman with long red hair. She explained something and smiled. Dad explained something back and smiled. Mom and I couldn't understand a word they said. The woman closed the door again and as it was swinging shut, she called out: "*Tschüs!*"

"That's our neighbour, Tina. Our house is actually the fifth on the left, not the fourth," Dad said, nodding towards the next house down the block.

The fifth house on the left looked like the identical twin of the fourth house on the left. There weren't any signs or numbers on it, either. Dad tapped on the identical screen next to the door and something – I couldn't tell whether the door, the house, or the screen – exclaimed, "Willkommen!" Click! The door swung open, and we moved into our new house.

Translated by Adam Cullen



Mr. Harald's Dream Garden

Written by Anti Saar

Illustrated by Marja-Liisa Plats

Kolm Elu, 2024

216x266 mm, hardcover, 40 pp

ISBN: 9789916983249

Mr. Harald has a garden of dreams; a garden in which he grows dreams. It's as lush as any jungle. Some of the dreams are very old – they were planted by Mr. Harald's parents. Others, he brought in himself. Some dreams are so overgrown that they need to be pruned. Others are so frail that they need constant care and attention. There are dreams that could use some spoiling and dreams that should be trimmed back. And then there are dreams that Harald doesn't quite care to tend to. Amidst that kaleidoscope of dreams grows a single very ordinary pear tree. When it blossoms every spring, Mr. Harald himself dreams of a good pear harvest that year.

Awards:

2024 Raisin of the Year award for the most remarkable children's book of the year

2024 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit

2024 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books, Certificate of Merit



Anti Saar (1980) is a writer and translator who graduated from the University of Tartu in semiotics. He enjoyed immediate acclaim with his first book *The Way Things Are with Us*, which was selected for the 2014 White Ravens Catalogue in addition to receiving several awards in Estonia. Saar immerses himself in the world of children and is capable of glimpsing what is special in ordinary everyday life. His stories, which tend to ricochet from reality, are fluid, witty, and sensitively worded.

Marja-Liisa Plats (1984) is an illustrator, graphic designer, photographer, and singer. 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 Young Authors' Association in Tartu and the Tartu Artists' Union.



Mõnikord, väga harva, külvab härra Harald oma aeda mõne eksootilise unistuse, mille vilju ta veel kunagi maitsnud ei ole. Nende seemneid saab turult. Ja internetist. Osa neist unistustest ei lähegi kasvama. Osa õitseb ja kannab isegi vilja, kuid nende viljade maitse on ettearvatu. Mõni on tõepoolest hõrk, mõni aga lihtsalt läila või nii mõru või hapu, et härra Harald peab suud krimpsutades tõdema: ei olnud unistamist väärt.



Mõned unistused on härra Haraldil kasvuhoones. Niisama unistades neilt saaki ei saa. Härra Haraldil tuleb neid järjekindlalt kasvatada ja kevaditi komposti ja kanakakaga väetada.

Niisugune on härra Haraldil unistus õppida omal käel ära klaverimäng, norra keel ja kükk ühel jalal.



Mona's Mum Celebrates

Written by Liis Sein

Illustrated by Ulla Saar

Pegasus, 2024

170x236 mm, hardcover, 88 pp

ISBN: 9789916166703

Barely any time has passed since Mona had to keep up with her dad's bizarre hobbies, and now she feels like something's wrong with her mom. On one totally ordinary Tuesday, Mom decides that from that point on, every upcoming holiday should be celebrated properly, no matter whether it's a birthday, summer solstice, the first day of school, Valentine's Day, or Independence Day. But there's also Do-Nothing Day, Bird-Drawing Day, Laughing Day, Ice-Cream Day, and Music Day. It turns out there's a reason to celebrate each and every day. Still, Mona's mom decides that Mother's Day should be marked first of all, and waits excitedly for the occasion. It seems, however, like all the planning will fall on Dad and Mona's shoulders.



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 more than 10 books for children 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 vibrant 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, she has illustrated over 30 titles, many of which have attracted 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.



The Charm of Special Days

One totally ordinary Tuesday, Mona's mom decided to take a good look at the holidays on her calendar and start celebrating each and every important day properly. She didn't want to even imagine missing a lazy summer solstice that others sleep through, or Martinmas and St. Catherine's Day, which are started to become entirely forgotten, or overlooking World Gratitude Day, the existence of which she'd only just discovered.

"I think it comes from when I was a little girl," she explained at breakfast. "A need to celebrate dolls' birthdays.

Even though it nearly slipped Mom's mind to celebrate her own birthday, her dolls always had a very festive day on theirs. When she was a little girl, her birthday wasn't a very special occasion: not because her parents didn't want it to be, but because they simply hadn't the means to do much. She received a modest present on her birthday morning, and that was it. The only real birthday party she'd had was when she turned 10: her parents put snacks on the table on the veranda and a couple of close friends were invited over.

"This year, the calendar will be our very best friend," Mom resolved, then looked up all the days of importance in the almanac.

"This year, we're not going to miss a single holiday," she stressed, planning to set some sort of record.

"This year, we're going to have such an exciting time that we

won't even go abroad on holiday!" she exclaimed, cancelling the family's spring break trip to Paris.

Mona was devastated with disappointment, and it took a long time for the realization to sink in for Dad. They'd already done tons of



planning for the trip by reading books, watching movies, and buying tickets to the museum where the *Mona Lisa* had ended up. Alas, once Mom got an idea into her head, the whole family had to go along with it without any arguing.

"Mom, does this mean we're going to be eating cake every day?" asked Mona, for whom celebrating always meant sweets. "We'd be gaining a lot of weight and too full to do anything."

"We're going to eat the best baked goods and drink the best soft drinks, but all in moderation," Mom reassured her as she picked out a new cake recipe from a cooking book.

"But honey, I'm definitely not going to have time to celebrate everything alongside my hobbies," Dad worriedly pointed out.

To him, celebrating meant dealing with all kinds of tiny details.

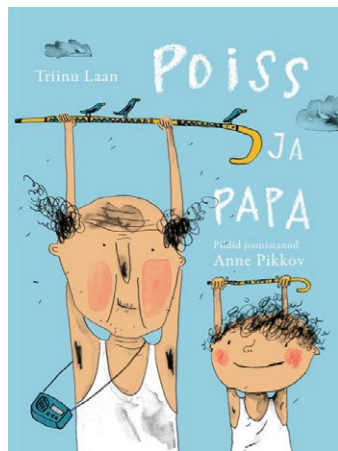
"There'll be activities galore day and night, but all in moderation," Mom reassured him while writing up a list of the things he'd need to get done for the upcoming celebrations.

Mona and her dad tried to take it easy for the very last days they could: Mother's Day was on the horizon and all the other holidays would follow, one after another. Mona chewed on carrots and nothing else just in case, because she'd soon have to eat more cake than ever before. Dad dove headfirst into his new hobbies and put off going through Mom's list for a while. Mona tried to get as much sleep as possible, because they'd no doubt be so busy that some activities would come at the expense of sleep. Dad stashed all kinds of tools and things in hiding places so he could be left out of future undertakings whenever possible.

But Mom paid no attention, hanging a calendar on the fridge that was just as important as a Bible is to some people. Then, she reviewed the family budget and tried to spread costs evenly over all the different holidays. The only tiny exception she made was for Christmas, as it's impossible to avoid spending more on that occasion.

Finally, Mom lined up the whole family and set the holiday marathon in motion. Their cat Rosie stood with them, too, and was the first to scamper towards the fridge.

Translated by Adam Cullen



The Boy and the Papa

Written by Triinu Laan
Illustrated by Anne Pikkov

Päike ja Pilv, 2024
197x257 mm, hardcover, 64 pp
ISBN: 9789916630594

Rights sold: Lithuanian

At first, it was the three of them: Mamma, Papa, and the boy. The boy is the youngest in the family and all his siblings have long since gone off to work or school, so he spends days with his grandparents instead of at preschool. Mamma and Papa don't go to work or school, either, so the boy fits with them as perfectly as jam and pancakes. Then, Mamma gets sick and passes away, leaving the boy and Papa to adapt to life on their own together. The duo exercises till their bones creak, learn how to make the world's best sauce, listen to the symphony of leaves falling in the autumn wind, and collect all kinds of other memories. There's no doubt that together, they can get through even the most difficult moments. They pull it off so well that you could even call Papa an expert life-enjoyer. The boy hopes that someday, he'll be just as good as Papa at doing just that.

Award: 2024 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit



Triinu Laan (1975) is a manager of cultural activities and a children's writer. She graduated in law from the Tallinn School of Economics and received a master's degree in cultural management from the University of Tartu in 2018. She is involved in the translation and editing of Võro-language books, and organizes events aimed at the promotion of the Võro language and culture. As an author, Laan has written five children's books, all of which are in both the Võro (a regional language in South Estonia), and Estonian languages.

Anne Pikkov (1974) is an Estonian children's book illustrator and graphic designer. She has illustrated and designed books, posters, and graphic identities, and contributed to various magazines. Anne graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts with a major in graphic design. Afterward, she worked in an advertising agency and at the Estonian Academy of Arts. She has received several awards in annual Estonian book design and illustration competitions.



Pappa's Creaky Bones

The boy wakes up to the rattling of creaking bones. That means Pappa is already on his feet and exercising in the living room. It's his morning routine. Sometimes, the boy manages to wake up when Pappa is just starting to slowly stretch his spindly legs over the edge of the bed, slip his feet into his slippers, and get up to go exercise in the living room.

Pappa stretches, smiles as he rolls his head in circles atop his long neck, bends this way and that, windmills his arms, and finally does a couple of squats. His bones creak the best when squatting! But squats are also the hardest exercise for Pappa, especially the very first one. He lowers very slowly, sometimes using his cane or the couch for support. It also takes him a rather long time to stand back up.

And that's when the real fun starts: Pappa hangs from a bar installed in the doorway and lets his tall body stretch even longer. Then, he does one-and-a-half pull-ups. That's all he can manage. Pappa's proud of himself, regardless. He says that other people his age are already in the grave and doing zero pullups. Whenever he talks about it, Pappa always emphasizes: "ZERO pullups to my one-'n-a-half!" By the time he's doing morning pullups at the very latest, the boy comes and stands in the doorway, still wearing his locomotive-print pyjamas, and Pappa lifts him up to grab the bar, too. The boy does two-and-a-half pullups and then keeps hanging there, using his legs to swing back and forth in glee.

Translated by Adam Cullen

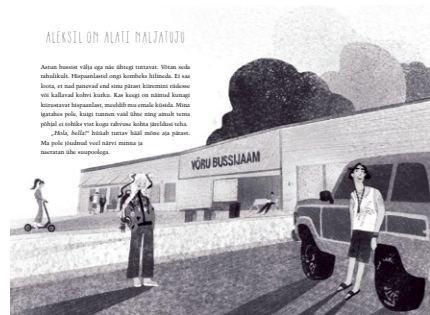




Liisu Runs Away
 Written by Tiina Laanem
 Illustrated by Sirly Oder

Pegasus, 2024
 145x217 mm, hardcover, 152 pp
 ISBN: 9789916167748

To Liisu, it seems like adults are always able to do exactly what they want while kids have to do whatever grown-ups say. Take for example when her mom, who has been galivanting around Europe, suddenly returns home and wants to take over raising Liisu, who has been living with her grandma, a.k.a. Mamma. Or when her dad only starts showing an interest in his daughter after his athletic career comes to an end. Obviously, her mom can move to one end of the country and her dad to the other, and she has no choice but to bounce back and forth between the two. Yet, the last straw comes when her dad invites his girlfriend and her sons to move in. Liisu wants to go back to live with Mamma: Mamma always has time for her, Mamma understands her, and Mamma always discusses things instead of yelling. Liisu knows that she and Mamma can manage anything together. The only question is how to get back to Mamma's home in Finland. Not even that is an obstacle, however, because Liisu has a plan and several friends who will help her carry it out.



Tiina Laanem (1974) is an author and playwright. She graduated in administrative management from the Tallinn Technical University and has worked as a journalist at several daily newspapers, as well as an editor for the Estonian Magazine Publishing House. Currently, she is a publisher at the Pegasus Publishing House.

Laanem has written award-winning novels, short stories, five children's books and plays for both youth and adults.

Sirly Oder (1983) is an illustrator, content creator for social media and visual merchandiser for a bookstore. She graduated in scenography from the Estonian Academy of Arts and has been an artist for a wealth of Estonian theatre productions, TV commercials, and short films. She currently works for the Rahva Raamat bookstore and manages their visual solutions as well as illustrating children's books as a freelancer. She has illustrated several children's books and has been awarded in the 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books competition.



“**W**ere moving to Japan this autumn,” I announced cheerfully. “Or actually, at the end of summer. I don’t remember what day, exactly. Sometime in August. It’ll give me time to find my way around there before school starts. Tokyo is huge. Lots and lots of people live there, and there are skyscrapers everywhere. People scurry around them like ants.”

Sitting next to me is a lady wearing big glasses. Her eyes go wide in amazement. She looks like a cyclops, though she has two eyes and cyclops only have a giant one.

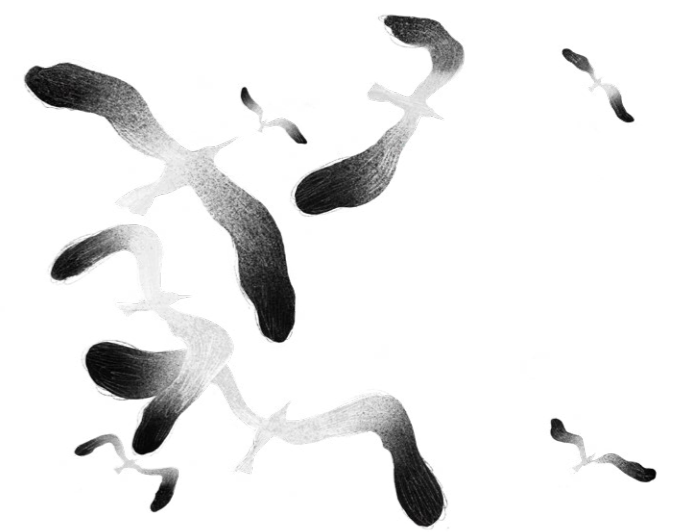
She opens her mouth to ask something, revealing yellowish teeth, but I continue before she can speak. She gulps in air.

“No, I don’t speak Japanese,” I admit, “but I’m going to start studying their hieroglyphics so I can watch movies and read comic books. There’s so, so many. I could sit and stare at them all day long if I didn’t have to go to school. Some kids there don’t even go to school or anywhere else. They’re called *hikikomori* and they just sit around inside. People deliver food right to their door. It’s weird because there are so many amazing things in Japan and all they do is lounge around at home.”

The lady flashes a yellow smile, and I think that there’s got to be a toothpaste in Japan that would whiten her teeth again.

“Sushi,” she says slowly, licking her lips and almost closing her eyes. She continues and says you can’t get a full tummy on those rice rolls alone, though to be fair, they are meant to be a dessert. She tried them with a cup of cocoa at a café in Tartu one time. They were just dandy.

‘Just dandy?!? Must be some local dialect that I’ve never heard before. We were on a bus to Võru in Estonia’s deep south. I’d never seen her before in my life, but we were chatting away like old friends. I was talking more, of course, because she didn’t have anything interesting to say. Her cows prevent her from ever going traveling. She said they never take a day off. They keep her constantly busy with their milk and never rest from making more. She looks pretty exhausted. I won’t ask why she decided to get such selfish animals in the first place. She should’ve gotten a cat, fish, or a turtle instead.



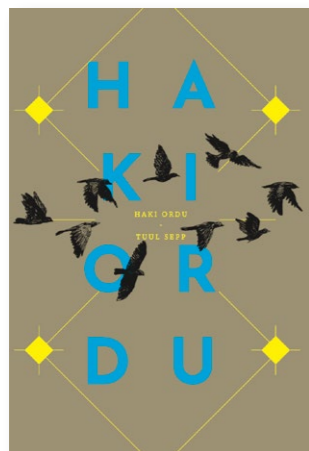
“Japanese food is the best in the world,” I continue. The lady nods, though she probably doesn’t know a thing about them. *My* dad went to Japan and couldn’t stop talking about the cuisine. His go-to meal at home is potatoes and sauce while he raves about sushi and soba noodles.

“I’ll be going to an international school in Tokyo where they teach in English,” I say, filling her in on my future. “But I won’t stay there long. As soon as I get the hang of Japanese, I’m going to have them enroll me in a local school, because maybe I’ll live there forever, you know. And I’ll become an artist, a singer, or a geisha. No, probably not a geisha. They paint their face white and walk around in weird shoes and everybody photographs them all the time.”

The woman nods thoughtfully and asks what my parents might think about me staying in Japan. I shrug. “They’ll be moving back to Estonia in four years. That’s when Dad’s ambassadorship is over. But I might stay if I want to. They respect my wishes and let me have a say in family matters,” I proudly proclaim.

She nods a little sadly and adjusts her glasses. I can understand – her cows don’t respect her wishes at all. It’d make anyone jealous to hear about somebody living the way that you’d like to live but simply aren’t allowed. Your life is constantly dictated by others.

Translated by Adam Cullen



The Order of Jackdaw

Written by Tuul Sepp
Illustrated by Anu Kalm

Rahva Raamat, 2024
170x240 mm, softcover, 264 pp
ISBN: 9789916143902

Reading is 12-year-old Taaniel's favorite activity, and he especially likes fantasy books. When Taaniel falls asleep while reading one night and wakes up with a mark on his cheek from the book, the events that took place meanwhile seem like a strange dream at first. What else could you call a prophecy of civilization's downfall given by human-sized jackdaws in a grey city of asphalt? But when the boy notices a glass sphere filled with curling green fog and a scrap of paper covered in ciphers next to the book, he realizes that the dream was real. Sharing the story with a friend leads to founding the Order of the Jackdaw, in which kids young and old alike have an important role to play. Their mission is to ensure that the city is a nice environment for everyone: humans, plants, and animals alike.

Award: 2024 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books, Certificate of Merit



Tuul Sepp (1984) is a biologist and a writer. She works as a professor of animal ecology at the University of Tartu. She has received several national and international awards for her scientific research and science popularization. Sepp has written nonfiction scientific books for both adults and children and one fantasy book for children. *The Order of the Jackdaw* is her second fantasy book, combining her expertise in urban nature with storytelling.

Anu Kalm (1960) is a graphic artist, illustrator, and art teacher. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts as a printmaker and illustrator, and now teaches at the Tallinn Art School. Kalm has illustrated textbooks and more than 20 children's books, and has collaborated with various Estonian children's magazines. Her works have been included in the White Ravens catalogue twice. A strong sense for graphic art and classic drawing techniques are apparent in her works, which have a pleasant, childlike simplicity.



The bizarre dream that he had just woken him must have come from the book he fell asleep reading. His mind had been filled with heroes' adventures in a dust storm on a barren, sandy landscape until sleep finally and irresistibly yanked him from the pages.

Out of all the wild fantasies that whipped through his head that night, he could remember one with startling clarity. In it, he was walking along city streets that seemed overpopulated and totally desolate at the same time.

At first, he couldn't figure out what made the city feel so empty. Zooming down the wide, six-lane highways were cars that honked at any pedestrian trying to navigate the crosswalks and filled the air with the loud growling of engines. Their tires kicked up dust and exhaust fumes that hung suspended as thick smog for ages. Lining the streets were crowded, grey brick buildings that towered into the slate sky and continued to the foggy horizon. The few open spaces between them were paved over and painted with parking spaces.

The city was packed with people and vehicles. So, why did it still see so empty, even abandoned?

Taaniel wandered the dream city searching for something, doing his best not to breathe in the dusty air that stunk of exhaust fumes. He didn't know what he was looking for, but he had a distinct feeling that something was missing. Something was gone from that city.

Suddenly, two grey birds swooped down from a window of one of the buildings. They flew from left to right across the street. Was that supposed to be bad luck? Or was it when they flew from right to left? He could never remember. Frowning, Taaniel stopped and stared.

Then, he realized what was missing. The birds' unexpected appearance made it dawn upon him. There wasn't a single animal anywhere in the city! He looked around. Not even any plant stood out. Everything around him, as far as the eye could see, was manmade.

The grey birds circled above him a couple times before landing on the right-hand side of the street, perching on a rusty metal grill covering a basement window. Their eyes,

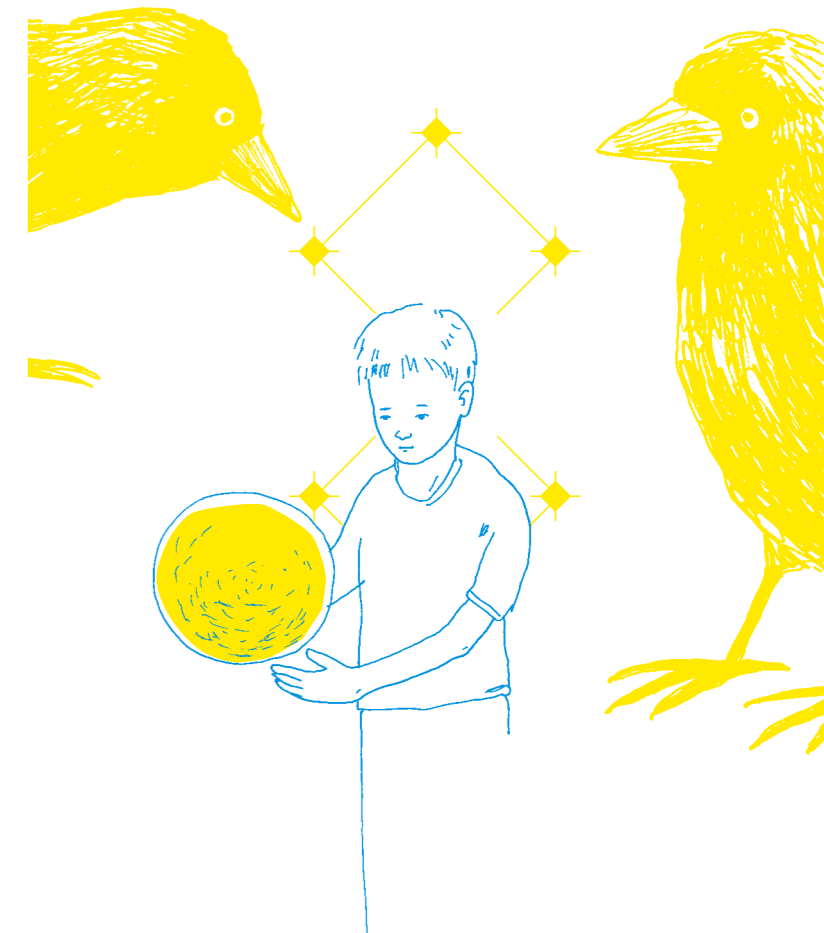
which should have been black, glowed bright green. Then, the birds started to swell. They spread their wings and grew bigger, bigger, until the dark figures in the haze were the same height as him.

"Weird dream," Taaniel murmured.

The larger of the two cocked its head and drilled him with its piercing green gaze.

"This isn't a dream," it croaked. "It's a premonition!"

Translated by Adam Cullen



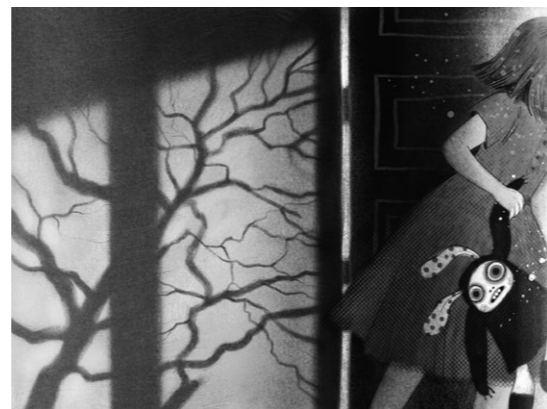


Old Town Detectives: The Paintings of the Brotherhood of Blackheads

Written by Reeli Reinaus
Illustrated by Sirly Oder

Ronk Ronk, 2024
150x222 mm, hardcover, 150 pp
ISBN 9789916980583

Old Town Detectives is a middle-grade series that takes readers to the medieval streets of Tallinn. In its first volume, 12-year-old Rebeka is with her dad at his company Christmas party, which is held at the historical House of the Brotherhood of the Blackheads. Wandering away from the boring event, she goes upstairs to the second floor and meets 13-year-old Gregor. The kids hear mysterious footsteps and spot black-hooded ghosts. When the two find identical notes in their pockets after returning home, they embark upon an adventure, the likes of which they could never have imagined.



Reeli Reinaus (1977) is a folklorist and writer for children and youth. She graduated from the Tartu Academy of Theology, and received a master's degree in Estonian- and comparative folklore from the University of Tartu. Reinaus has worked at the University of Tartu and at the Estonian Literary Museum. She has written more than 30 books for children and youth, and has won numerous awards in the My First Book children's story competition, as well as in the Youth Novel Competition.

Sirly Oder (1983) is an illustrator, content creator for social media and visual merchandiser for a bookstore. She graduated in scenography from the Estonian Academy of Arts and has been an artist for a number of Estonian theatre productions, TV commercials, and short films. She currently works for the Rahva Raamat bookstore and manages their visual solutions as well as illustrating children's books as a freelancer. She has illustrated several children's books.



Rebeka didn't know if she was even allowed to be in that part of the building alone. The thought came the moment she heard footsteps climbing the stairway. She looked up from her phone and waited to see who would come around the corner and appear, but to her surprise, nothing happened. Seconds later, the footsteps repeated. It was as if someone had climbed the stairs and stopped right there.

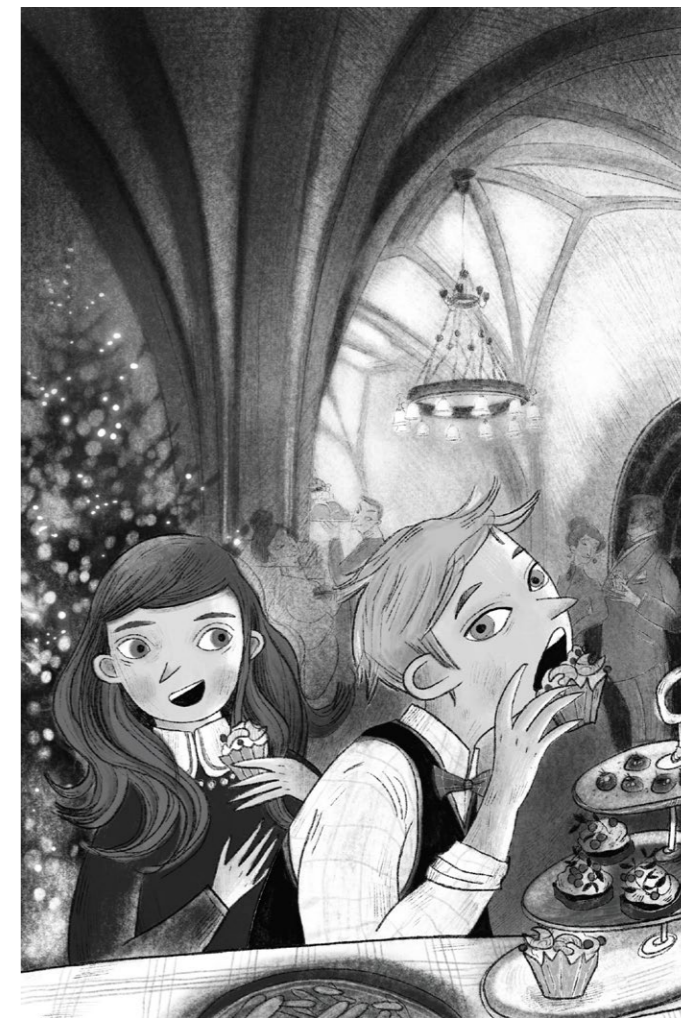
She got an eerie feeling. It was baffling why whoever had been coming up the stairs hadn't come any further. And why they hadn't gone back.

"I'm not afraid," Rebeka murmured to herself and stood up. She'd have to leave her hiding place sooner or later, anyway. The girl took a deep breath and peeked around the corner. No one was there. It seemed odd, because she'd just heard the unmistakable sound of footsteps. And it hadn't come from the foyer below, but right there on the staircase. Still, Rebeka didn't stand around pondering the situation for very long but decided that sounds must travel differently through such an old building and started going back down the staircase. As she put one foot in front of the other, she glanced back for some reason.

And gasped.

She saw, as clear as day, a hooded man... *floating* through the room behind her?

Rebeka rubbed her eyes. It couldn't be real, could it? She'd heard of people hallucinating from hunger before. Breakfast had been her last proper meal, but it'd be weird if that started having an effect already. Either way, she continued hurrying downstairs. Rebeka hoped that the boring speeches part of the Christmas party might be over, and she'd finally have a chance to nibble on something.



But just before she made it back to St. Olaf's Hall, she heard footsteps coming towards her again. Rebeka froze with uncertainty.

Moments later, she found herself face-to-face with a boy. He looked to be about her age or a little older. But most importantly, he wasn't floating.

Translated by Adam Cullen



The Cursed Treasure

Written by **Jana Maasik**

Illustrated by **Katrin Kaev**

Eesti Raamat, 2024

137x211 mm, hardcover, 192 pp

ISBN 9789916127704

Twelve-year-old Robin can't fathom why he got stuck with the last name Pirate. It has nothing in common with his personality and has only led to endless fights at school. When the boy's single mother leaves for the whole summer to work as a chef on a Mediterranean ship, he's forced to go to the island of Saaremaa to help his sick grandpa. After Robin's grandpa reveals a story about a curse surrounding their surname, he decides to find out if there's any truth to the ancient legend. Luckily, he gets help from the spunky Säde, who is vacationing at the neighbouring farmstead, and the local tomboy Kirsika. The kids must work fast, however, because strange men driving a jeep and wielding a metal detector have started poking around the area.



Jana Maasik (1970) is the author of several books for children and young adults. She became a writer in 2012 when her debut novel won a competition. Maasik has received several awards since then, including the 2019 Tartu Children's Literature Award. Lately, she has focused on writing fantasy-rich thrillers for middle-school students. Maasik is inspired by her own characters, who are often witty and rely on their friends whenever they end up in tough situations.

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 ten 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.



The man, t-shirt flapping in the breeze, had laid out a checkered blanket at the edge of the seaweed mound, though he certainly hadn't come to sunbathe. He hammered a few pegs into the sand with a rock and then, carrying some kind of gadget, started pacing around between them. It looked like he didn't want to miss a single meter. After checking one square, he hammered new pegs into the sand and started all over again. Säde knew all too well that grown-ups do bizarre things sometimes, but she thought they at least enjoyed the unusual activities or hoped to get something out of them. This guy definitely wasn't having a good time. And what could he get out of plodding back and forth like that?

Säde then heard clear, insistent beeping. The man stopped, bent down to pick something up, and flung the little thing far out into the sea. A few steps later, the beeping started again. The man appeared to have found something worthwhile this time. He scraped at the sand with the toe of his sneaker and inspected the spot. Still nothing. He went over to the blanket, fetched another peg with a ribbon tied to it, tapped it into the sand where the gadget beeped, and carried on sweeping it back and forth.

"It's like he's on an Easter egg hunt," Säde said, frowning. "But who hid something there? And what?"

The girl watched the oddball work for a while. When she turned around to go tell Grams about everything she'd seen, she nearly bumped right into Robin.

"He's a treasure hunter," Robin said, not taking his eyes off the man.

Säde's mouth dropped open.

"Really? You mean there's hidden treasure here?"

"Shh. Not so loud. Yeah, maybe. Leigar said that there were some men who came here a few years ago, too. They're looking for the Pirate family treasure."

"The Pirate family? Why doesn't your grandpa go and dig it up himself, then? His last name is Pirate, isn't it?"

"Leigar says they won't find anything."

"That means he knows something that those men don't," Säde suggested.

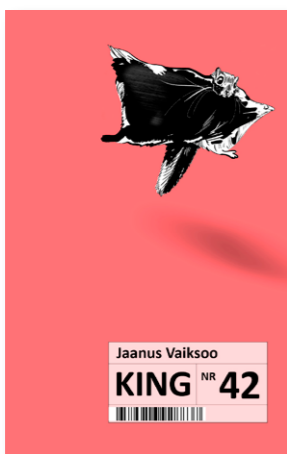
"I guess so."

It was an interesting bit of information. Säde wrinkled her brow thoughtfully.

"I don't get it, though. Why am I just hearing about this now?" she asked Robin. "Anyway, we've got to investigate what this treasure is. Where is it, if not here on the beach? And what does Leigar know?"

Translated by Adam Cullen





Shoe #42
Written by Jaanus Vaiksoo
Illustrated by Katrin Kaev
 Ärkel, 2024
 150x222mm, hardcover, 144 pp
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Paul Fifth is baffled why he didn't turn down Hugo's proposal to spend spring break on a trip searching for flying-squirrel nesting sites with a local professor of zoology. It's nice to hang out with Ats and Minna, of course, but tramping through a dense forest and hunting for yellowish droppings under big aspen trees isn't quite his cup of tea. Then, he discovers a little silver heart amidst the moss. None of them has any idea how it could have ended up so deep in the woods. When the kids also find strange ropes tied to the trees and size-42 boot prints nearby, they have no choice but to open a new case file.



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 ten 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.



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Minna had never run so far so fast in her life. The path was familiar, but she still had to leap over fallen trees and ditches and push her way through the undergrowth. She'd let go of Valter's leash so they didn't get each other caught on anything. At that wild pace, Mina would definitely have won the school's spring cross country competition, but now, much more was at stake than some race. She'd discovered the stolen jewellery in a hollow in a tree just minutes before, and now, she needed to act as fast as she possibly could. They couldn't call the police from the woods – nobody's phone could pick up a signal. Minna, Paul, and Ats had agreed that the boys would stay in place and keep watch just in case while she called the police the second she found cellular service. Ats stashed the cookie box containing the jewellery in his backpack.

Valter ran out of the woods to the road and started greedily lapping up water from the ditch. Minna quickly caught up and took out her phone to check the signal, but... the battery was dead. Dang it! She could barely hold herself back from angrily flinging the phone into the ditch. How hadn't she noticed it earlier!? Running back to Ats and Paul to get one of theirs and then running here again – that would only waste time. Or what about returning and getting the boys to come back with her? Was there any point in hanging around the woods, waiting to see if the thieves showed up? What was the best move to make? Valter also stared at Mina questioningly.

"Well, Valter? What are we going to do?" Minna asked, scratching him behind the ears.

Valter thought for a moment before jumping over the ditch and climbing the side up to the road. That was their decision. Minna went behind the willow bushes where they'd hidden their bikes. Right now, it seemed smartest to pedal home as fast as she could and call for help from there. She tried to reassure herself that the half-hour of lost time wouldn't make any difference, anyway. The crooks had hidden the jewellery in the hollow days ago and it was hardly likely they'd return to get it

now, in broad daylight. The police would certainly have time to dispatch a patrol car and nab the thieves when they showed up.

Minna started pedalling towards the village. Luckily, she had the wind at her back, the sun was shining, the weather was pleasantly warm, and Valter was trotting steadily alongside her. Minna unzipped her windbreaker and felt much more relaxed.

"Everything will be fine, everything will be fine, everything has to be fine," she sang to herself.

Translated by Adam Cullen





Iris, Beauty, and the Instagram Photos

Written by Reeli Reinaus

Illustrated by Marja-Liisa Plats

Ronk Ronk, 2024

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Iris's whole life revolves around Instagram. She's constantly thinking about how to take photos that will keep her followers' attention, because if she gives them their next dose of content, they'll give her hearts in return. And hearts equal attention, approval, and love. It's the feeling that she's important, that she's noticed, that she matters. But when she randomly meets a boy named Joonas in the woods, she starts to realize that despite her incredible number of followers, she doesn't really know who she actually is or what she actually likes. Iris isn't even sure if she should try to find out... And if she does, then how should she do it? If she ends up discovering the truth, then what's she supposed to do with that knowledge?



Reeli Reinaus (1977) is a folklorist and writer for children and youth.

She graduated from the Tartu Academy of Theology, and received a master's degree in Estonian- and comparative folklore from the University of Tartu. Reinaus has worked at the University of Tartu and at the Estonian Literary Museum. She has written more than 30 books for children and youth and has won numerous awards in the My First Book children's story competition, as well as in the Youth Novel Competition. The author has a flair for penning stories about children's everyday lives and problems, crime novels, and fantasy works.

Marja-Liisa Plats (1984) is an illustrator, graphic designer, photographer, and singer. 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 constant searching and experimentation with a wide range of visual techniques. Plats is a member of the Young Authors' Association in Tartu and the Tartu Artists' Union.



Content, Iris watched the cascade of incoming hearts for a while longer, then clicked on the next account.

Roman's.

Roman Roomets was the most popular guy on Instagram at that moment. In Estonia, of course. But his followers were from all across the globe, because each and every one of his posts was in English.

Iris scrolled through his photos. They were all perfect. The colours were right. The lighting was right. And the boy looked flawless when he smiled his slightly shy grin. Maybe that was the reason for Roman's popularity: he didn't come off as conceited or provocative, but sincere and even a little modest. He didn't need much apart from his boy-next-door looks and superstar smile. And Iris was 100% sure that Roman was perfectly aware of it. That's precisely what sells. Simplicity. And it sells well.

Translated by Adam Cullen

After entering her bedroom, Iris closed the door and sat down at her laptop. She uploaded the pictures she'd taken in the woods from her phone to her computer and started looking through them. Her favourite was one where she was standing with her back against a tree and her face was a little blurry. For some reason, the camera had focused on the woods behind her, and that's exactly what made the picture so cool. She selected it and another in which she was looking up and the branches cast shadows over her face, neck, and low-cut dress. Iris made both a little darker so that the colours' contrast had a slightly unearthly and mysterious effect. And she quickly thought up a string of hashtags: #forest #naturebeauty #forestfairy #totalfreedom #portrait.

Then, she posted the pictures to her Instagram account. The first hearts came just moments later. Iris took a sip of juice, which she'd totally forgotten while wrapped up editing, and smiled in satisfaction.

Iris Ingrid had given her followers their next dose of content. And they were giving her hearts in turn. Attention. Approval. Love. The feeling that she's important, that she's noticed, that she matters.





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