

# Finnish Authors in Leipzig

## Hanna Hauru

The author Hanna Hauru was born in 1978 in Oulu.

She has published four short story collections and three short novels, as well as several texts in magazines. Hauru's stories are about grave, intense themes, in which usually women and children have central roles. The poetic style, she uses to describe misery, her representation of women and sexuality and the setting of her stories in mostly rural areas of North Finland have been compared among others with Rosa Liksom and Timo K. Mukka.

Two of her short stories were published in Germany in the anthology by Helen Moster "Alles absolut bestens bei mir" (publisher Edition Fünf). The texts are from Hauru's short story collection *Liian pienet sandaalit* ("Too small sandals"), that deals with the female body.

Hanna Hauru works as a journalist for the leftwing newspaper Kansan Tahto ("Will of the People").

She teaches creative writing in Tampere and Oulu. She has also taught literary art at an art school in Liminka. Hauru is active in the North Finnish Authors Guild.

## Tuomas Kyrö

Tuomas Kyrö (born 1974) has already published several novels. He is an important and active representative of younger Finnish authors and in Finland he is considered to be the next big discovery of the literary scene. He produces satire programs for TV and is a comic book artist as well. Among others Kyrö received the Kalevi Jäntti-Award, an annual award for new Finnish writers.

His bestseller *The Beggar and the Hare* (original: "Kerjäläinen ja jänis"), was published in German in 2013 with Campe Verlag and was a huge success in Germany as well. The novel was translated into several languages among others French, Italian and Swedish. *The Beggar and the Hare* is a satire about a Romanian beggar who together with a bunny is on a cross-country trip through Finland. In his newest satire *Kunkku* ("Long Live the King", will be released in 2014 with Hoffmann and Campe) Kyrö invents an alternate history for Sweden and Finland.

## Veronica Lassenius

Veronica Lassenius was born in 1975 in Kuusankoski.

She has spent most of her childhood abroad and has studied graphic

and fashion design in France. Together with her husband Pablo Jordi she founded the graphic and animation studio Storfisk and Pikkukala, where among others illustrations, graphic designs, animated games and animated TV-programs for children are produced.

Next to the internationally very successful and awarded series *Saari* ("Island") from 2008, they also produced the series *Fungi* in 2012. In fall 2013 *Fungi! Pyrstöt pyörimään!* ("Fungi – Getting Tails Wagging!") was released in Finland, the first book based on the *Fungi*-series.

The *Fungi*-series is about the daily adventures of the children Frida and Max who live in an underground high-rise together with all kinds of strange neighbours. Lassenius' and Jordi's works have been shown on the Disney Channel and on TV in Sweden and Spain.

### **Aki Ollikainen**

Aki Ollikainen (born 1973) is one of the newcomers in the Finnish literary scene. With his debut *A Year of Famine* (Original: *Nälkävuosi*) he enthused critics and readers alike. The novel is set in 1867 Finland, during the famine of 1867/1868. With his poignant and graphic language he describes the tragic fate of the farmer's wife Marja, who together with her two children leaves her dying husband and walks from North Finland to St. Petersburg in search of rescue.

The novel was published in Germany in 2013 with the publishing house Transit Verlag (Translator: Stefan Moster). *A Year of Famine* was nominated for the Finlandia Award, the most important Finnish Literature Award. Ollikainen's book won among other Best Debut 2012 from the newspaper Helsingin Sanomat and was awarded with the Kiitos kirjasta medallion from the Finnish booktrade.

Ollikainen studied social politics in Jyväskylä. He works as a journalist in North Finland. He is currently living in Sammatti together with his family.

### **Timo Parvela**

Timo Parvela (born 1964) is one of the most popular Children's and Young Adult Fiction authors in Finland. To this day he has published about 50 books in the genre.

The former primary school teacher has won among others the renowned Finlandia Junior Award and has recently been awarded with the LesePeter-Award in Germany. Parvela's books have been translated into 15 languages. His most popular book series is about the primary school student Ella, who with a lot of humour talks about the daily craziness at a Finnish school from the perspective of a naïve child. The author is active in reading promotion and hopes his Ella books create an amusing shared reading experience for children and adults alike. The book series is just as popular in Germany. To this day

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eight Ella stories have been published in German with the publisher Hanser, the ninth volume *Ella Hits the Jackpot* (original: "Ella ja jättipotti") will be released in February 2014. The first Ella film premiered in Germany in December 2013.

### **Susanne Ringell**

The Finnish-Swedish author and playwright Susanne Ringell (b. 1955) is originally from Helsinki and divides her time between there and the archipelago in southwest Finland.

She studied at the Theatre Academy Helsinki and subsequently worked as a playwright and actress in several theatres. She began writing her own material in the 1990s.

Her publications cover a broad range of genres, including novels, novellas and poetry, dramas and radio plays, with a focus on short fiction and poetry. Susanne Ringell is often referred to as a serious humourist, given her tendency to mix earnestness and humour in her works and her willingness to confront even the most serious personal issues, like her own infertility, with a certain sense of self-deprecation. She has received critical acclaim for her linguistic originality and her ability to find just the right expressions and images.

These are just some of the reasons why she was honoured by the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland in 2010. She was also nominated twice for the prestigious Runeberg Prize. To date, very few of Susanne Ringell's books have been translated into other languages. Only one work has been translated into French and another into Serbian.

### **Seita Vuorela**

The young adult fiction author Seita Vuorela (formerly Parkkola) was born in 1971.

She is also a teacher for creative writing and photography. Together with the graphic designer Jani Ikonen she received the first Children's and Young Adult Fiction Award of the Nordic Council in 2013 for her novel *The Reef* (will be published in Germany in 2014 with Ravensburger; original title: "Karikko"). Vuorela is the first winner ever of the prize.

The connection between text and graphic design has an important role in all of her books. Vuorela's books have been translated into several languages among others English, French, Italian and Danish. In Germany her novel *Storm*. (Original: "Viima") was published in 2012 with Beltz & Gelberg. In the story she mixes fantasy elements with a realistic setting – mostly an urban reality.

The typical young adult fiction motive is always central in her books: a young person is looking for freedom and their own way in life.

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## **Comic sector:**

### **Roope Eronen**

Roope Eronen was born in 1982 in Tampere. Since 1997 he has published several comics that were featured in various magazines and anthologies.

Eronen is a member of the artist collective Kutikuti (established 2005) and co-editor of the associated comic magazine "Kuti". Together with the comic artist Amanda Vähämäki he founded the small comic publishing house "Petomies", where some of his own works have been printed. His publications include among others the comic books *Eläimiä - Animals* from 2009, *Koirankakkaa* ("Dog Poo") from 2011, *Offices & Humans - Tie Customexiin* from 2012, and *Advanced Offices & Humans - Menestyksen avain* from 2013 (will be published in French in 2014). One of his comics was featured in the Comic Atlas Finland 2014. Eronen illustrates children's books and has published comic books for children as well. He also makes experimental music and performs with several bands.

### **Aino Sutinen**

Aino Sutinen was born in Espoo in 1983. She is a comic artist and also works as chief press officer at Sarjakuvakeskus, the Finnish comic centre in Helsinki. Sutinen has a degree from the University of Sussex, England, in sociology and in development studies.

Her comics have already been published in several anthologies and magazines. In 2009 her comic *Taksi Kurdistaniin* ("Taxi to Kurdistan") was printed; an autobiographical piece about the journey of a backpacker in the Middle East.

With her comics Sutinen wants to advance the genre of the graphical travel narrative. She often uses political themes in her comics, while processing autobiographical stories at the same time.

### **Ville Tietäväinen**

Ville Tietäväinen was born in 1970 in Helsinki.

He is a graphic designer, illustrator and comic artist. He is considered to be the best known and most important contemporary comic artist in Finland. His first graphic novel *Hymyilevä kuu* ("Smiling moon") was released in 1995. Tietäväinen's second graphic novel *Linnut ja meret* ("Birds and Seas") was published in 2003. The book was released two years later in French.

In 2011 his third graphic novel *Näkymättömät kädet* ("Invisible Hands", will be released in Germany in March 2014 with Avant Verlag) was published. In the novel Tietäväinen tells the story of the Moroccan tailor Rashid who sets out for Europe in order to create a better life for

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himself and his family. Tietäväinen addresses the reality of life for many illegal immigrants and foreign workers in Europe who are confronted with low wages and terrible working conditions but still carry the hope for a better life with them. The book was a huge success in Finland and received the Comic-Finlandia Award in 2012. The previous year Tietäväinen had already received the Award of the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

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