

Aleksei Nikitin

title

Park Pobedy

Victory Park

Novel. Ad Marginem. Moscow 2014. 375 pages

Sold to: France, Italy, Ukraine

Apocalyptic sense of doom in Kiev towards the end of the 1980s. The chestnut trees are flowering in Victory Park, where veterans from Afghanistan deal in hashish while repairing the playground equipment for the children and black-marketeers entertain the corrupt police at the little kiosk. However, business seems no longer to be flourishing, its last hopeful petals have fallen, and even the corrupt militia will have a poor harvest this autumn. And all because a murder is committed which throws the old well-greased system out of balance. Suddenly all the old alliances between the serious toughs from the Victory Park, who as young boys all went to the same school, begin to disintegrate. Can all this be because a simple literature student wanted to buy a pair of Puma shoes for his girlfriend – but from the wrong blackmarket dealer?

In Ukraine a simple thriller would not have a chance to get even close to the truth and so this novel raises its sights to become a literary genre painting. With remarkable accuracy the author brings everything to life: from the smallest day-to-day events right up to the dizzy heights of the political stratosphere, all of the organized chaos and entanglements of Ukrainian society that have not disappeared with the demise of the Soviet-Ukraine. Through the prism of the past the reader is shown all the humanity and human failures of the problems of modern Ukraine.

The author has not only a feel for the raw nerves of a fin de siècle, but also the skill to present his hometown of Kiev ironically and season it with original anecdotes and characters. We learn the names of the villages which occupied the left bank of the Dnepr before the prefab housing blocks began their sprawl in the 1970s; why the soviet housing administration disliked pigeon post and in this did not differ from the German invaders during World War II; and how the rumour of a neglected German army bunker can develop into a real hideout for a neo-Leninist combat unit, who at the end of the novel spark off a final Maidan of the Righteous in Victory Park.

press reviews

"The soviet and mystical city Kiev and its inhabitants are very important to this author. He recreates his city, of which he knows every corner and alley, and which he really loves and (not without success) attempts to imbue this love in his readers." – JURY NATIONAL BESTSELLER 2014

"A novel in which the driving force above all is love, finely interwoven with the author's humor." – KULTPROSVET

biography

Aleksei Nikitin was born in Kiev in 1967. After completing his course of physics at the university of Kiev and his period of conscription he established his own company in 1992 and worked on different projects for the Ukrainian oil, chemical and atomic industries. In 2000 he published his first volume of poetry, which was awarded the Korolenko prize by the Ukrainian writers association for the best poetry of the year. In 2002 Nikitin closed his business operations and worked for several years as an IT journalist. Afterwards he dedicated himself completely to his literary activities and has since published several novels. Aleksei Nikitin lives in Kiev.



foreign rights in general

FRANCE

ITALY

UKRAINE

UK/US

awards

National Bestseller 2014

Russkaya Premia shortlist 2013

other works

Istemi (english sample translation)

Mayong

A. Nikitin