



by Dana Grigorcea

June 2015 / 263pp

Fiction

prohelvetia

Pro Helvetia supported the English language translation of this book.

The Original Feeling of Innocence

Das primäre Gefühl der Schuldlosigkeit

review

The Original Feeling of Innocence is an ambitious and high-quality work of literary fiction.

Bank worker Victoria has been placed on leave of absence following a bank robbery at which she was present. During the police investigations, Victoria is referred to a therapist, and is free to wander around her native city of Bucharest in the baking hot summer.

Victoria's childhood fascination with chess reflects the complexity of the novel's own moves. A series of non-linear narratives play with the initial story of the bank robbery, without ever fully resolving it. The novel focuses on Bucharest past and present, telling the stories of the narrator and her circle and beautifully evoking the sights, sounds and smells of the city in the intense summer heat. As well as personal stories about Victoria there are tales about figures from Romanian history and anecdotes about well-known public events in Bucharest during the transition from communism, ranging from demonstrations against the Ceaucescu regime through to Michael Jackson's famous tour stop in Bucharest, where he accidentally greeted his fans with 'Hello Budapest'. This is a rich and rewarding read with a deep vein of dark humour that will work well on the international stage.

about the author

Dana Grigorcea was born in Bucharest in 1979 and studied German and Dutch philology in Bucharest and in Brussels. She was awarded

the 3-sat-Prize at the 2015 Ingeborg Bachmann literary contest in Klagenfurt for an excerpt from *Das primäre Gefühl der Schuldlosigkeit*. After many years in Germany and Austria, she now lives in Zurich, Switzerland with her husband and children.

Previous works include:

Baba Rada. Das Leben ist vergänglich wie die Kopfhaare (2011)

rights information

Translation rights available from:

Dörlemann Verlag

Contact: Sabine Dörlemann

Tel: +41 44 251 00 25

Email: verlag@doerlemann.com

www.doerlemann.com

Dörlemann is a Swiss publishing house, based in Zurich. Founded in 2003, it publishes a mix of fiction and non-fiction from both new and established writers. Authors include Sandra Hughes, Jens Steiner and Jolanda Piniel.