

Leena Lander



(b. 1959) is one of the world's best-known Finnish authors, and her novels have been translated into more than 20 languages. Two movies based on her novels, *The House of Dark Butterflies* and *Tears of April*, rank among Finland's most-watched domestic films. *The House of Dark Butterflies* is the first work of contemporary prose to have been translated directly from Finnish into Arabic.

In **LEENA LANDER**'s novels, historical events and societal themes join together with touching individual destinies and tales of growth. The narrative perspective undulates between growing closer and distancing itself. The novels often move in two times, in the past and in the present, posing a timeless question: are we all prisoners of our past?

The prose is vivid, clear and powerfully voiced, with character profiles and storylines remaining unbroken. The story's twists unfold in a beautifully traditional way. In the background of Lander's novels, a gentle, ageless humanism shines through.

LATEST PRODUCTION AND TRANSLATIONS:

Kuka vartijoita vartioi (Who Watches the Watchmen?), SILTALA 2015 (German)

Liekin lapset (Children of The Flame), SILTALA 2010 (Dutch, French, German)

Käskey (Tears of April), WSOY 2003 (Albanian, Czech, Dutch, French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Swedish)

Iloisen kotiinpaluun asuinsijat (Abodes of the Happy Homecoming), WSOY 1997 (Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Swedish)

Tulkoon myrsky (Let the Storm Come), WSOY 1994 (Danish, Dutch, French, Italian, Norwegian, Swedish)

Tummien perhosten koti (The Home of Dark Butterflies), KIRJAYHTYMÄ 1991 (Arabic, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, French, German/Germany, German/Austria & Switzerland, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish)

MOVIES BASED ON NOVELS:

Käskey (Tears of April), 2008

Tummien perhosten koti (The Home of Dark Butterflies), 2008

On Leena Lander's books:

"The novel's stunning force arises from its humanistic overall perspective, from how exactly the same children exist on both sides and between the camps, until they collide, wrestle, surrender and are kneaded into contorted forms – adults, citizens, enemies."

– ANTTI MAJANDER, HELSINGIN SANOMAT

"When you begin reading Leena Lander's *Children of the Flames*, it's as if you stepped onto the shores of a crystalline lake. It is easy to breathe in the text, to admire its straightforward beauty and yet know the whole time that under the surface lies much to be discovered."

– HANNELE PUHTIMÄKI, POHJALAINEN

AWARDS AND NOMINATIONS:

Sokeain kuunnelmapalkinto
(The Radio Play Award presented by
the Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired) 2004

Finlandia Prize nominee 2003

Pro Finlandia Medal 2000

Prix Nordique 2000

The European Union's Ariane Prize nominee 1997

Nordic Council's Literature Prize nominee 1996

Suuren Suomalaisen Kirjakerhon tunnustuspalkinto

(The Big Finnish Bookclub's Recognition Award) 1994

Finlandia Prize nominee 1994

The Nordic Council's Literature Prize nominee 1993

Uudet kirjat -tunnustuspalkinto (New Books' Recognition Prize) 1992

Thanks for the Book Award 1992

Finlandia Prize nominee 1991

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GERMAN (LUCHTERHAND)

"Kuka vartijoita vartioi?"



ON CHRISTMAS EVE 1895, the Finnish frigate *Palme* launches a distress call in the Irish sea, outside the entrance to Kingstown harbour. Fifteen volunteers go to rescue those on board the stricken vessel. The storm overturns their rescue vessel, and the rescuers perish, but all those on the Finnish ship, including the captain's wife and young daughter, are rescued and brought to safety on Boxing Day.

The *Palme* accident was a major media event of its day, and an aid fund established after the tragedy manages to raise a staggering sum in just a short period of time. The captain is persuaded to join forces with the business men managing the fund. A spiral of greed and corruption develops, in which a son oppressed by his strong-willed shipowner father tries desperately to make amends for the losses he has caused. The captain's wife is faced with resolving the dilemma of whether you can have love without respect. The *Palme's* first mate must choose his own direction: will he be faithful to the truth or to his employer.

Who Watches the Watchmen? portrays the events of two weeks at the turn of the year in 1895 and 2012. In the present of the story, the accident is investigated by the granddaughter of a stowaway who became the ship's wheelhouse boy, along with her retired commodore husband. They have travelled to Ireland for the Christmas period to find out what happened to the boy who ran away from a Finnish orphanage and hid away on a ship about to leave the harbour.

Strictly based on true events, the novel provides a captivating portrayal of the human mind, when navigation deceives and the varied excuses provided should also conceal a long-smouldering love triangle.

Praise for *Who Watches the Watchmen?*

"Leena Lander brings together a thickening and sprawling narrative. Plausibility and imagination unite, almost to the advantage of the former!"

– TEPPU KULMALA, SAVON SANOMAT

"Lander has recaptured the atmosphere of a bygone era with her rich and sure-handed narrative, as well as her strong character depictions. Natural phenomena mirror human emotions, as in a good nautical novel at least. ... Although there are glimpses along the way, the finesse of the novel is revealed in its entirety only at the end, in the high-tempo twelfth night descriptions, and the ingenious present-day closing of the novel!"

– MARI VIERTOLA, TURUN SANOMAT

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