



Dark Nights

Contemporary German Crime Fiction

Dark Nights

Neue Kriminalromane aus Deutschland

This selection of German titles is show-cased at book fairs all over the world on the German collective stands organized by the Frankfurter Buchmesse in 2018.

Authors A-B

Killing Happiness. A Case for Jakob Franck Ermordung des Glücks. Ein Fall für Jakob Franck

FRIEDRICH ANI

2017, HC, 317 pages

€ 20.-

Suhrkamp Verlag, 978-3-518-42755-2

Rights available

The murder of an 11-year-old boy shatters the happiness of all the people who knew him. The hero of Ani's crime series, ex-police detective Jakob Franck, applies his unique intuition to the case, while the special task force makes no progress with its conventional approach. It's a method that provides clarity, if nothing else, even if that clarity is unbearable. Narrated in Ani's inimitable voice – the crime novel as elegy, as a genre of melancholy.

Finsterwalde Finsterwalde

MAX ANNAS

2018, HC, 256 pages

€ 20.-

Rowohlt Verlag, 978-3-498-07401-2

Rights available

A right-wing nationalist government is in power in Germany. Dissidents are being persecuted, and daily life is subject to comprehensive surveillance. People with darker skin colour are being locked away in heavily guarded camps, one of which is located in Finsterwalde in Brandenburg. One group of internees breaks out so they can rescue children left behind in Berlin. In a life-and-death fight, they have to make their way through hostile territory. A robust action thriller and incisive dystopian novel.

The Supplier Die Lieferantin

ZOË BECK

2017, SC, 324 pages

€ 14.95

Suhrkamp Verlag, 978-3-518-46775-6

Rights available

Great Britain in the not too distant future. After Brexit, the next big thing is "Druxit": drug use is to be comprehensively criminalised. A start-up finds new sales channels; drug delivery by drone: effective, cheap and high quality. The old-hands in the drugs business see their livelihoods threatened, and they declare war on "the Supplier" – who, on top everything, also has an unpleasant political agenda. Things get ugly on the streets of London, prowled by racist mobs. A cool and elegant political thriller.

Authors B-C

Dungeon Child Kerkerkind

KATJA BOHNET

2018, SC, 336 pages

€ 20.-

Knauer Taschenbuch, 978-3-426-52093-2

Rights available

It begins with the charred corpse of a woman. Then the body-count starts to mount in the heat of summer in Berlin: decapitated men, strangely displayed. The detective duo Rosa Lopez and Viktor Saizew each have their own hindrances to deal with, but crime make no allowances for that. A hot lead points toward them toward Denmark. Saizew sets off in pursuit – and disappears. A race against time begins. Tempo, dynamism, drive, and a dash of madness are what make this novel so great.

The Right to Punish Das Recht zu strafen

INGO BOTT

2017, SC, 444 pages

€ 13.-

Grafit Verlag, 978-3-89425-495-7

Rights available

A brilliant defence lawyer from Berlin, a public prosecutor on the fast track to the top, and a mean, revenge-driven murderer: these are the three corners of the triangle of forces that form Ingo Bott's debut thriller. What may they do, what can they do and what should they do – and what not – each in their respective roles? A refined, fast-paced novel with an intelligent plot that addresses the moral and ethical implications of our legal system, as well as the role and influence of mass media. A delicious dose of irony, too. Bott is an exciting newcomer.

Death in the Quiet Corners of Life Der Tod in den stillen Winkeln des Lebens

OLIVER BOTTINI

2017, HC, 414 pages

€ 22.-

DuMont Verlag, 978-3-8321-9776-6

Rights available

The Romanian town of Temeswar lies on the quiet side of life. Police inspector Ioan Cozma should have been happy with this. But the murder of a German woman forces him into action. He has to leave his recluse and follow a trail that takes him to Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in Germany, where he's confronted by the *conditio humana* in a big way: hate, greed, violence and humanity. A crime novel with a philosophical lining.

The St. Pauli Murders Die Morde von St. Pauli

ROBERT BRACK

2017, SC, 432 pages

€ 9,99

Ullstein Taschenbuch, 978-3-548-28873-4

Rights available

Hamburg 1927, when social change is becoming more and more obvious during the Roaring Twenties, is rocked by a series of murders. The victims' corpses are displayed in prominent places. Is this a gang war? A message to the populace? But how does the murder of an upper-class shipping magnate fit into that picture? The second part of the historical trilogy featuring the criminal investigator Alfred Weber. A critically accurate criminal chronicle of the Weimar Republic.

Beton Rouge Beton Rouge

SIMONE BUCHHOLZ

2017, SC, 227 pages

€ 14,95

Suhrkamp Taschenbuch,

978-3-518-46785-5

Rights available

Public prosecutor Chastity Riley and her sidekick, inspector Stepanovic of the Hamburg criminal police, are up against pure madness. Someone is abusing managers from the publishing world, locking them up naked in cages, in public view. Hamburg's elite are annoyed and scared. With plenty of pace and humour, Simone Buchholz coolly sweeps through the milieu of opinion leaders and puppet masters. She has a sharp eye for the absurd, sad and strange details of daily life.

Satan's Playground Satans Spielfeld

UTE COHEN

2017, HC, 216 pages

€ 21,90

Septime Verlag, 978-3-902711-61-8

Rights available

The underage Marie falls into the hands of a rich businessman in the wealthy, self-absorbed provincial Franconia of the 1970s. He seduces her, rapes her and prostitutes her. But nobody wants to see the scandal; no one wants to help. Marie attempts to defend herself, but on Satan's Playground she's hopelessly out-manoeuvred and the plot races towards catastrophe. A subtle psychological thriller and linguistically original counterpoint to Nabokov's *Lolita*. A biting, provocative debut novel.

Authors C-F

Cambridge 5 – Time of Traitors Cambridge 5. Zeit der Verräter

HANNAH COLER

2017, HC, 416 pages

€ 19.99

Limes Verlag, 978-3-8090-2682-2

Rights available

A classic spy novel by a German historian writing under a pseudonym. Just as the Soviet Union recruited its spies among the British elite in Cambridge University in the 1930s, so today, various secret services are trying to spy on the leading IT researchers there. "Sleepers" and "moles" placed early on now seem at risk, after the emergence of new evidence surrounding Kim Philby and the original Cambridge Five. A clever game of chess across different times.

Poison Flood Giftflut

CHRISTIAN VON DITFURTH

2017, SC, 480 pages

€ 15.-

Carl's Books, 978-3-570-58565-8

Rights available

Intelligent super-gangsters are undermining the stability of Europe. They launch destructive attacks on important transport routes and the centres of power, and even threaten the water supply of large cities. For all their technological advancement, the security forces are powerless. Only Eugen de Bodt, the wholly unconventional detective with the Berlin police, and his weird team have any chance of halting the wave of terror. Grimm comedy, unrestrained action and a very crafty plot.

A Slap in the Face Ein Schlag ins Gesicht

FRANZ DOBLER

2016, HC, 368 pages

€ 19.95

Klett-Cotta/Tropen, 978-3-608-50216-9

Rights available

Ex-cop Robert Fallner takes a job with his brother's security firm, where he's given the task of stopping an insidious stalker who's started following a cult ex-actress. A nostalgic, poetical and funny trip through the West German pop scene of the 1960s and 70s, and an adoring homage to the classics of hard-bitten crime fiction, from Jim Thompson to Elmore Leonard. Great dialogues, strange characters and off-beat locations; and not least, a fabulous novel about Munich.

Police Stories Polizeigeschichten

ERNST DRONKE

2018, HC, 192 pages

€ 18.-

Walde+Graf Verlagsagentur und Verlag,
978-3-946896-22-7

Rights available

With his Police Stories, Ernst Dronke (1822–1891), who was well known for his social reportage and collaboration with Karl Marx, laid the foundation for true crime books far removed from the big sensational cases. His stories are an impressive illustration of the social causes of crime and justice in the age of rapid industrialisation. An important and exciting rediscovery of this classic of German crime literature, and a vital milestone in its development.

Brand Brand

ULRICH EFFENHAUSER

2016 HC, 144 pages

€ 17.80

Transit Buchverlag, 978-3-88747-338-9

Rights available

In the wake of the NSA scandal, an old case of espionage resurfaces. At the time, there are questions surrounding a Soviet hydrogen bomb and Chernobyl, and about plots hatched by the former KGB – plots that remain dangerous, even after the fall of the Soviet Union. The events culminate in Mexico in 1985, but history never just stops, it touches us in the present in significant ways. An intriguing novel that oscillates between the historical and the present day; a political thriller as an act of self-reflection for German history.

Deadly Path Totenweg

ROMY FÖLCK

2018, HC, 380 pages

€ 20.-

Bastei Lübbe Verlag, 978-3-7857-2622-8

Rights available

Frieda is a policewoman rising quickly up the ranks. When her father is beaten up and badly injured she returns to her hometown. Investigating her father's case is a colleague who, decades before, had also been involved in the unsolved murder of a young girl whom Frieda had known well. The cold case gets hot again, as the earlier crime is connected to the attack on Frieda's father. A first-rate mainstream crime story with a clever plot, carefully crafted and densely atmospheric.

Authors G-J

All so Bright Up There Alles so hell da vorne

MONIKA GEIER

2017, SC, 352 pages

€ 13.-

Argument Verlag, 978-3-86754-223-4

Rights available

Monika Geier's heroine, inspector Bettina Boll from Pfalz, is confronted with a bizarre case, when one of her colleagues is shot dead in an establishment for forced prostitution. The plot starts to get thicker when a political aspect emerges at the level of secret police. Meanwhile, Boll herself inherits an apparently haunted house, which doesn't make her situation any easier. While solidly rooted in its region, this is far from being just a local crime novel. Cutting edge crime fiction.

Tuscan Confession Toskanische Beichte

UTA-MARIA HEIM

2017, SC, 352 pages

€ 15.-

Gmeiner-Verlag, 978-3-8392-2125-9

Rights available

The trail leads from Lake Constance to Tuscany. That's where a priest sets out, forgetting his mobile phone, after an unknown man confesses to a murder. Once in Italy, the curious priest gets caught up in a terrible intrigue within the Catholic Church, which turns out to be quite a deadly institution. Uta-Maria Heim is well known for her highly literate and original crime stories. She writes intricate and virtuoso novels that skirt the edge of the genre's conventions, without fully abandoning them.

Bist Du glücklich? Are you happy?

KAI HENSEL

2016, HC, 336 pages

€ 20.-

Hoffmann und Campe Verlag,

978-3-455-40588-0

Rights available

"Are You Happy?" is a hot new gaming app that targets people's yearning for happiness, and which to achieve it will transgress all boundaries and break all taboos. Its inventor, Patrick, would be willing to enter a pact with the metaphorical devil, but a secretive woman stalker disrupts the ultimate deal. Things become very bloody. The game turns deadly serious, radically driving all involved to extremes of behaviour. Satirical, insightful and with no illusions about Homo sapiens.

Cold Land Kaltes Land

NORBERT HORST

2017, SC, 400 pages

€ 999

Goldmann Verlag, 978-3-442-48617-5

Rights available

Somebody always profits. There's lots of money to be earned in Germany with drugs, weapons and human beings. Desperate illegal immigrants are there in abundance, who can be exploited without taking any risks. Obdurately overcoming all the reluctance around him, Inspector Steiger attempts to track down one of those profiteers – one who operates as a mysterious background figure, and whose victims don't even exist officially. A policeman himself, Norbert Horst has injected a large dose of realism into German detective fiction.

Lazare and the Dead Man on the Beach (btb, 2017) Lazare und der tote Mann am Strand

ROBERT HÜLTNER

2017 HC, 384 pages

€ 20.-

btb Verlag, 978-3-442-75660-5

Rights available

A dark French-German story from Sète in the south of France, where Inspector Lazare goes about his job. The plot takes in the Front National, the German secret service, racism, exploitation and industrial interests. Last but not least, it's also about the period of German occupation in France. Robert Hültner avoids touristic clichés. His crime novel attains the level of a cross-border dialogue, transplanting some collective European problems into an exciting crime plot.

DiveStation TauchStation

JÖRG JURETZKA

2017, HC, 272 pages

€ 18.95

Rotbuch Verlag, 978-3-86789-207-0

Rights available

Juretzka's protagonist, Kristof Kryszinski, has long been a cult figure in German crime fiction. In this, his 13th adventure, he has been declared dead and established a new identity for himself in Bottrop, while working for Europol, but he is soon found out. His arch enemies, a Mafia clan from Marseille, are on his tail again. He has to overcome this problem once and for all, so he recruits his old gang the "Stormfuckers", and gets started. This is an excuse for any amount of situational comedy, cracking dialogue and thrilling action.

Authors K-P

Kolbe Kolbe

ANDREAS KOLLENDER

2015, SC, 448 pages

€ 16.99

Pendragon Verlag, 978-3-86532-489-4

Rights available

A novel that pays homage to Fritz Kolbe, who smuggled important material from the German foreign office into Switzerland, from 1943 onward, thereby becoming the Americans' most important German spy during the Second World War. Written as an exciting political thriller with a constant atmosphere of oppression, this is an endless knife-edge ride, with lives at stake. A song of praise to one of the quiet heroes of the resistance against the Nazi regime, one whose impact is only just being understood and honoured in our own century.

Moabit Moabit

VOLKER KUTSCHER & KAT MENSCHIK

2017, HC, 88 pages

€ 18.-

Galiani Verlag, 978-3-86971-155-3

Rights available

Berlin, Moabit 1927. A delightful, short episode from Volker Kutscher's world of Gereon Rath. In a contemporary milieu consisting of burglars and the famous "Berolina" wrestling club, we follow the early story of Charlotte Ritter, daughter of a prison warden, who, after working her way up in life, later becomes Gereon Rath's assistant Charly. The fabulous, detailed illustrations by Kat Menschik lend this chapter of Berlin-Babylon the decisive extra nuance.

On The Other Side Jenseits

YASSIN MUSHARBASH

2017, SC, 320 pages

€ 14.99

Kiepenheuer & Witsch Verlag,

978-3-462-05046-2, Rights available

A medical student from Rostock has joined IS in Syria. After some time, his parents receive a SMS. He wants out. This sparks the interest of a social worker specialised in organising the return of such people, as well as a journalist and the German secret service – all with their own particular motivations. But should his wish be taken seriously, anyway? What else might lie behind it? A highly contemporary political thriller that draws links to Berlin truck-terrorist Anis Amri, in a cleverly constructed plot and commentary on our time.

Cirrostratus Schleierwolken

REGINA NÖSSLER

2017, SC, 320 pages

€ 12.-

konkursbuch Verlag Claudia Gehrke,

978-3-88769-563-7, Rights available

Between the metropolis and the province, commuting back and forth between Berlin and Wattenscheid, Elisabeth, a lesbian, feels she's being stalked. She also feels that her care-needy mother doesn't accept her. At the same time, long-suppressed events from her childhood are coming back to haunt her. A person's immediate social circle can be a dangerous place. Regina Nössler succeeds in igniting seemingly unspectacular things to create nightmarish literature, not unlike Patricia Highsmith. Wilful, original and lots of suspense.

Treacherous Naples Trügerisches Neapel

FABIO PARETTA

2018 SC, 384 pages

€ 10.-

Penguin Verlag, 978-3-328-10087-4

Rights available

Fabio Paretta is the pseudonym of a German author, but that doesn't undermine the quality of his Naples-based crime novels. His protagonist, Commissario de Santis, is a plausible figure, as is the story about a murdered schoolboy, who might have been nothing more than collateral damage. Paretta offers us no idyllic Italy here. Of course the Camorra are also active, but the day-to-day crime in the city near Vesuvius is more complicated than just that. Delightfully clever, top quality old-school crime fiction.

Never Niemals

ANDREAS PFLÜGER

2017, HC, 475 pages

€ 20.-

Suhrkamp Verlag, 978-3-518-42756-9

Rights available

Andreas Pflüger's action heroine, the blind police officer Jenny Aaron, is back. She's more than able to make up for her handicap, as her heightened other senses make her a deadly weapon on the side of the police. Actually, she just wants to come to rest, but her worst enemy forces her back into action. He's waiting for a final duel with her in Marrakesh. Pflüger is a master of the high art of the action, and has developed the perfect language for this kind of high-speed thriller.

Authors R-S

Omnipotence Allmacht

MARCUS RICHMANN

2017, SC, 407 pages

€ 16.-

Gmeiner-Verlag, 978-3-8392-2043-6

Rights available

A Russian oligarch is discovered dead in a luxurious villa on Lake Zurich. A good thing that the detective, Maxim Charkow, has Russian origins as this lets him pursue his investigations in Russia too. He's drawn into a weird story that first started in 1959 in the Ural mountains in the Soviet Union and which, even today, still causes ructions in the new Russia. An international setting, international feel, and a basis in historical fact. A political crime novel about power and money, and about strange methods of manipulation.

The Job Das Ding drehen

HANS SCHEFCZYK

2017, HC, 192 pages

€ 10.-

Transit Buchverlag, 978-3-88747-342-6

Rights available

Even ex-terrorists can run out of money. The age of the militant cells is over and life underground gets frustrating. So they decide once and for all to sort some security for their old age. They'll do one last big job. After all, they still know the right routine for that kind of thing. But the enemy is already in their midst, because the authorities never forget. A high-paced thriller about pure madness, played out between Barcelona, Toulouse, Paris and Cologne. Concise, clever and politically insightful.

A Village in Fear Ein Dorf in Angst

WOLFGANG SCHWEIGER

2016, SC, 280 pages

€ 12.99

Pendragon Verlag, 978-3-86532-523-5

Rights available

On his way into a small village in the Bavarian region of Chiemgau, a contract killer dies of a heart attack. No one knows who his intended victim was, but it's clear a replacement killer is on the way. The police investigate feverishly, the press wind up the pressure, and panic breaks out in the village. Schweiger mixes up elements of gangster novels and police fiction, along with a classic village tale. Thus the local scenery gains an added dimension that denies the book the simple label of "regional" crime novel.

Frontlines Fronten

LEONHARD F. SEIDL

2017, SC, 160 pages

€ 16.-

Edition Nautilus, 978-3-96054-051-9,

Rights available

Upper Bavaria: racism and xenophobia have a long tradition here. The situation threatens to boil over when a Bosnian man shoots three police officers and an armed "Reichsbürger" storms a mosque for revenge. This report from provincial Germany is based on a true story. Oppressive and uncomfortable, it nevertheless has its moments of hope. Politically engaged, and with a clear stance, it is a crime novel that aims to influence society. Literature with a purpose, in the best sense of the word.

After us the Penguins. A Crime story at the End of the World Nach uns die Pinguine. Ein Weltuntergangskrimi

HANNES STEIN

2017 HC, 208 pages

€ 19.-

Galiani Verlag, 978-3-86971-156-0

Rights available

A special kind of "locked room" mystery: the governor of the Falkland Islands is found murdered inside a locked room. This is doubly troubling, in view of the fact that humankind has almost entirely died out. Only on this small group of islands does anything resembling civilised life continue, something the inhabitants ignore with stoical calm. But a murder is shocking nonetheless, and an investigation is called for. A glorious delight.

The Golden Glove Der goldene Handschuh

HEINZ STRUNK

2016, HC, 256 pages

€ 19.95

Rowohlt Verlag, 978-3-498-06436-5

Rights available

The Golden Glove is the name of a local pub in Hamburg which gained a questionable fame in 1976, when it was the hunting ground for real-life serial killer Fritz Honka. Strunk's novel centres on the women who were his victims, and on the regulars at the pub. It examines drunkenness and exclusion, sex and death, violence and crime, rich and poor, perpetrators and victims. The low pub represents the world in a nutshell. Written with fury, minutely observed, reconstructed with historical accuracy. A dark novel from a dark place.

Authors T-Z

Soul-foe Seelenfeindin

SABINE TRINKAUS

2017, SC, 336 pages

€ 14.95

Emons Verlag, 978-3-7408-0083-3

Rights available

To psychiatrist Nadja Schönberg, Konstanze Friedrich just seems to be a slightly different, but quite fascinating case in her daily work at the clinic. But the more deeply she probes into her patient's world, the more the boundary between insanity and reality seems to disintegrate. Does he really exist, this man who's threatening Konstanze and who said he'll kill her? After all, except for a lost dog there's no real evidence that she's really in any danger. A trip to the darkness of the soul's abyss.

Pommerenke. A True Crime Novel Pommerenke. Ein True-Crime-Roman

MIRON ZOWNIR & NICO ANFUSO

2017, HC, 408 pages

€ 23.-

CulturBooks Verlag, 978-3-95988-023-7

Rights available

Journalist Billie is working on a biography of the mass murderer Heinrich Pommerenke (1937 – 2008). The proximity to evil does not leave her untouched. The closer she gets to Pommerenke's personality, the more she disintegrates herself, sliding into a world of madness. A dark, virtuoso novel about the apparent objectivity of true crime books, and about the poison of violence and death which leave nobody untouched or undamaged.

The Accident in the Rue Bisson Der Unfall in der Rue Bisson

MATTHIAS WITTEKINDT

2016, SC, 224 pages

€ 16.-

Edition Nautilus, 978-3-96054-018-2

Rights available

A fatal car crash keeps Lieutenant Ohayon busy. Was it perhaps a murder, in fact? At any rate, there's less harmony among the victim's friends than they pretend there is to the Lieutenant. This clique of aspiring young people in the small French town has its darker secrets. Quietly and without bravura, Wittekindt's novel sets off in pursuit of the truth. But the truth resists, remains deceptively vague. A subversive novel about the illusion of "enlightenment".

Planning and organisation:

Frankfurter Buchmesse GmbH

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D-60311 Frankfurt am Main

book-fair.com

buchmesse.de

Selection, title annotations:

Thomas Wörtche, Berlin

Design, setting:

weirauch-mediadesign.de

Sakari Learns to Walk Through Walls Sakari lernt, durch Wände zu gehen

JAN COSTIN WAGNER

2017, HC, 240 pages

€ 20.-

Galiani Verlag, 978-3-86971-018-1

Rights available

In Turku, Finland, a man is found sitting naked in a fountain. With a knife in his hand. Then suddenly he dies. This is the mysterious opening to the latest case for Wagner's protagonist, the empathetic policeman Kimmo Joentaa. The affair leads to a family calamity, and ends in tragedy and suffering. But also a brief moment of Utopian happiness. A favourite of newspaper arts sections, poetically sensitive descriptions of highly problematic people faced by extreme situations. Noble and distinguished.

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Federal Foreign Office

Contact

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