

Petar Andonovski

Shoe-Colored Eyes

Novel



PETAR ANDONOVSKI is one of most successful young Macedonian writers. He has published the following books: „Mental space” (poetry, 2008), „Eyes with color of shoes” (novel, 2013), „The body to be lived in” (novel, 2015).

With the his first novel „Eyes with color of shoes”, was nominated for the most prestigious literature prize in Macedonia – Novel of the year, organized by the daily newspaper Utrinski vesnik. Beating the large competition, the novel got to the final circle of three best novels for 2013. Despite the fact that the novel didn't get the prize, the members of the jury emphasized “Eyes with color of shoes” as an exceptional debut novel. Having in mind the reception of the novel, we can say that the audience confirmed the jury's opinion.

Both his poetry and short stories were published in magazines such as Nase pismo, Razgledi, Blesok, and the most recent - the short stories collection was published at raskazi.mk. Andonovski studied „General and Comparative Literature” at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje.

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Reading sample in English available

Shortlisted for Utrinski Vesnik Award



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The novel **Shoe-Colored Eyes** is divided into two parts. When it comes to the content, the first part narrates Emma's story, a middle aged literature professor whose obsession are clean men shoes; she follows the shoe owners with no intention to approach them or to intrude into their everyday life. As the story unfolds, we learn about her rough life with her father, a retired JNA (Yugoslav People's Army) general, whose parenting mainly consists of giving orders to Emma, and one of his basic orders is the one about cleaning shoes. Hence, Emma makes a fetish of clean shoes, as her own psychological attempt to attain the 'good daughter' ideal.

On the other hand, the second part tells the story of the random passer-by, it is about Nestor, former renowned writer; his debut novel has been wrongly understood as being anti-state novel in the former system, so he has ended up in 8-year-long imprisonment. When he goes out of jail, Nestor lives quietly and in a constant paranoia, scared of all the possibilities in the world, and exactly in that moment the withdrawn and harmless Emma notices his shoes. Even though Nestor wants to write his next big novel, he over and over again misses that possibility due to his fear that he will err and will repeat the political plight of his debut novel and that he will again be pursued. As his story unfolds, we learn that his obsession with clean shoes also has Oedipus roots – he spends his childhood with his aunt who is a parallel character to Emma's father.

According to university professor of Macedonian literature Jasna Koteska, Petar Andonovski's novel **Shoe-Colored Eyes** is so far the most complete debut work in her decades-long reading and reviewing newest Macedonian literature.