

“ONE OF THE GREATEST”

With her modern apocalypse, *Om Mørke* (On Darkness), her sixth publication in just four years, Josefine Klougart establishes herself as one of the greatest; she is an almost frightening talent on the Danish literary scene, wrote one enthusiastic reviewer.

Few authors can boast of having received two nominations for the Nordic Council Literature Prize before the age of 30, as Josefine Klougart can. With her debut, *Stigninger og fald* (Rise and Fall) in 2010, it was already apparent that there was something rather special at work in her distinctive prose. With a steady and seductive hand, she returns to the land of childhood in a sensory-filled, fragmentary, almost dreamlike form. Among other accolades, she was presented with the Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Mary's Stardust Award, along with the testimonial, "one of the most important authors, not just of her generation, but of her time". She was also nominated for the Nordic Council Literature Prize, the testimonial for which said: "*Rise and Fall* can be read in many ways. For those sensitive to linguistic articulation, you will lose your breath; for the cool intellectual searching between the lines, you

will begin to feel; and for the blind reader stumbling about, you will begin to see."

Klougart's latest novel, *Om Mørke* (On Darkness), is a story of creation and destruction, in which long and short prose texts are combined, almost in the nature of a cinematic gallery. Zooming in and out, cutting and panning over infatuations, pearls and apple scrumping and also – perhaps particularly – earthquakes, avalanches, torrential rainstorms. And a lot of death; but not just final death and extraordinary destruction but the death that we meet every day in the form of our daily confrontation with changing bodies, rotting fruit and the autumn that is slowly closing in on us. *On Darkness* is an insistence that death, loss, decay and sorrow also hold beauty and are part of the same existence as everything else. "One can speak of unbearable beauty," *Politiken's* reviewer wrote,

throwing six out of six hearts at Klougart, "but one can also speak of a linguistic beauty that makes it possible to bear the unbearable."

Josefine Klougart, born in 1985, studied comparative Literature and history of art. She graduated from the Danish Writer's School in 2010, when she also debuted with the novel *Rise and Fall*, which was nominated for the Nordic Council Literary Prize. Since then, she has published, amongst others, *Én af os sover* (One of Us is Sleeping, 2012), which brought the young author her second nomination for the Nordic Council Literature Prize. *On Darkness* is her sixth publication.

JOSEFINE KLOUGART

Om mørke (On Darkness),
Gladiator 2013, 330 pp. PREVIOUS TITLES SOLD
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"One sees them from above. The skin becomes more skin. Everything is a question of distance, if one comes close enough, everything breaks apart, and when one moves away again, it gathers in new ways, into something one can miss and now truly be fond of. A gradual distance between one and the other. A certainty of direction, what moves, who sees, and what is seen. A feeling of being witness to something disappearing. The eye weeps because it is forever losing something. His legs are bent just like his thoughts, bent around a very small point or an eye. The body can be seen as an embrace of the air. Direction in everything. What are you going to do to me, he thinks. His stomach contracts, as if she has gathered his organs and is now raising them above a precious carpet. One sees the shadow, the two arms and a pile that is raised. The body that streams out like light and discolours things. The air can be seen as an embrace of the body."

Extract from *On Darkness*

"Scandinavia has it's own Virginia Woolf. Few come closer to the human condition than Klougart."

VG, NORWAY