

Sharing Stories Sharing Cultures

Modern Authors



Erasmus+

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Hungarian Authors

Juhász Gyula
(1883-1937)



A famous Hungarian poet of the 20th century.

Early Life

- Born on April 4, 1883, in Szeged, Hungary.
- Showed an early talent for literature and poetry.
- Studied Hungarian and Latin at university.

Literary Career

- Became a teacher and journalist.
- Published poems in newspapers and magazines.
- Influenced by symbolism and romanticism.

Themes in his poetry:

- Love and longing.
- Sadness and melancholy.
- Patriotism and admiration for Hungary.

Famous Works

- Known for his melancholic and romantic poetry.
- "Anna" - His most famous poem, about unfulfilled love.
- "Testamentum" - A reflection on life and death.
- "Szeged" - A love letter to his hometown.

Later Life and Legacy

- Juhász Gyula was a master of emotional and heartfelt poetry.
- His poems are still read and appreciated today.



Who was Fazekas Mihály?



Born & Died

Jan 6, 1766 – Feb 23, 1828 (Debrecen)



Profession

Poet, Writer, and Botanist



Military Service

Served as an army private (Hussar) for 7 years before becoming a commissioned officer.

FUN FACT

💡 He was a man of many talents: a brave **soldier** on the battlefield AND a dedicated **scientist** who co-wrote the first Hungarian systematic botany book!

Lúdas Matyi: The Story

An Epic Poem Based on Folk Tales

🕒 Written 1804 • Published 1817

The Setup:

A poor peasant boy, **Matyi**, takes his geese to the Döbrög fair. The cruel local lord, **Döbrögi**, claims the geese are his, seizes them, and has Matyi beaten publicly. Humiliated, Matyi vows revenge: *"I will return this to you three times over!"*



The Three Clever Disguises

FIRST REVENGE



The Tailor

Matyi disguises himself as an Italian carpenter/architect planning a new

SECOND REVENGE



The Doctor

Posing as a famous military doctor to treat Döbrögi's wounds from the first

THIRD REVENGE



The Painter

Döbrögi is terrified and guarded. Matyi gets a friend to distract the

Meet the Characters

• HEROES & VILLAINS OF THE TALE •



Matyi

THE GOOSE-BOY HERO

- 🧠 **Clever:** Outsmarts the rich lord
- 🦊 **Brave:** Seeks justice alone
- 🔄 **Resourceful:** Master of disguise



Döbrögi

THE CRUEL NOBLEMAN

- 👑 **Abusive:** Misuses his power
- 💰 **Greedy:** Steals from the poor
- 😡 **Arrogant:** Underestimates Matyi



The Mother

THE POOR WIDOW

- 👩 **Caring:** Raises Matyi alone
- 🌾 **Hardworking:** Honest peasant life
- ❤️ **Supportive:** Matyi's motivation

Cultural Importance

Lúdas Matyi is more than just a funny story—it is a cornerstone of Hungarian literary heritage and a powerful symbol of social justice.



Symbol of Resistance

First Hungarian folk hero to defeat a powerful nobleman. Represents the cleverness of the common people against tyranny.



Popular Adaptations

The story lives on in film (1949), a beloved animated classic (1977), and countless theater productions across Hungary.



National Curriculum

Every Hungarian student learns this poem. It's an essential part of the national identity and literary education.



“ A Timeless Legend

Fun Facts & Trivia

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT THE LEGEND?



Soldier & Scientist

Fazekas wasn't just a poet! He co-wrote the first **Hungarian Botany Book** with his brother-in-law, identifying thousands of plants.



What's in a Name?

"Lúdas" comes from "Lúd" (Goose). So "Lúdas Matyi" literally translates to "**Matyi with the Geese**".



Four "Acts"

The poem isn't divided into chapters, but into four "**levonások**" (detachments/acts), mimicking a theater play structure.



Postal History

The story is so important that **Magyar Posta** (Hungarian Post) issued special commemorative stamps featuring scenes from Lúdas Matyi, celebrating it as a national treasure.



Cultural Identity

The phrase "**Three times acts Lúdas Matyi**" is a common Hungarian idiom today, meaning that justice will eventually be served, no matter how long it takes.



Köszönöm!

(Thank You!)



"A timeless tale of justice and wit that continues
to inspire."

ERASMUS PROJECT PRESENTATION

Do you have any questions?

Irish Authors



Biography

Born: 5 November 1956,
Dublin, Ireland

Worked in family business
and travel agency

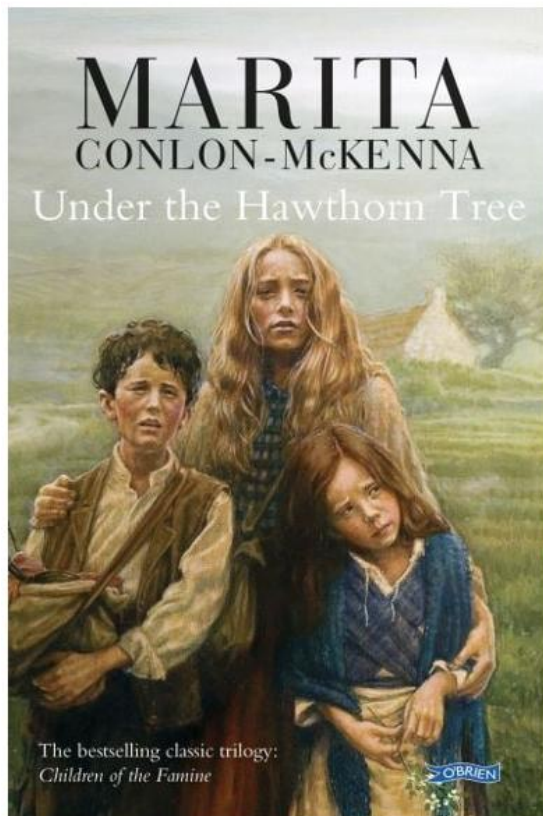
Inspired by Irish history

Lives in Dublin

Former Chairperson of Irish
PEN

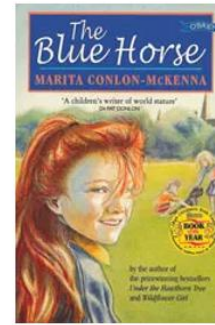
Key Themes

- Irish history (Famine, emigration, 1916 Rising)
- Resilience and survival
- Family and belonging
- Strong female and child protagonists



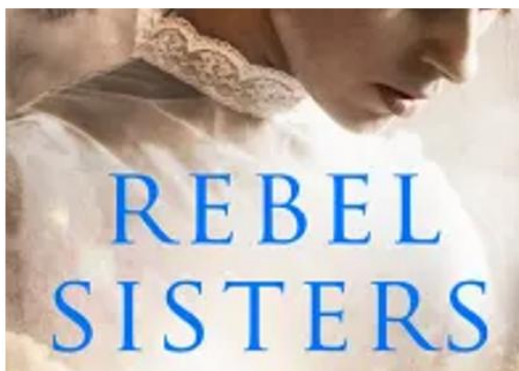
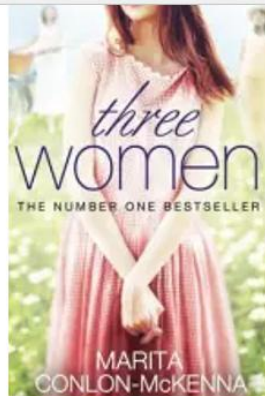
Children's Fiction

Under the Hawthorn Tree
(1990)



Major Works – Children's Fiction

- Wildflower Girl
- Fields of Home
- The Blue Horse
- A Girl Called Blue
- Safe Harbour



Major Works – Adult Fiction

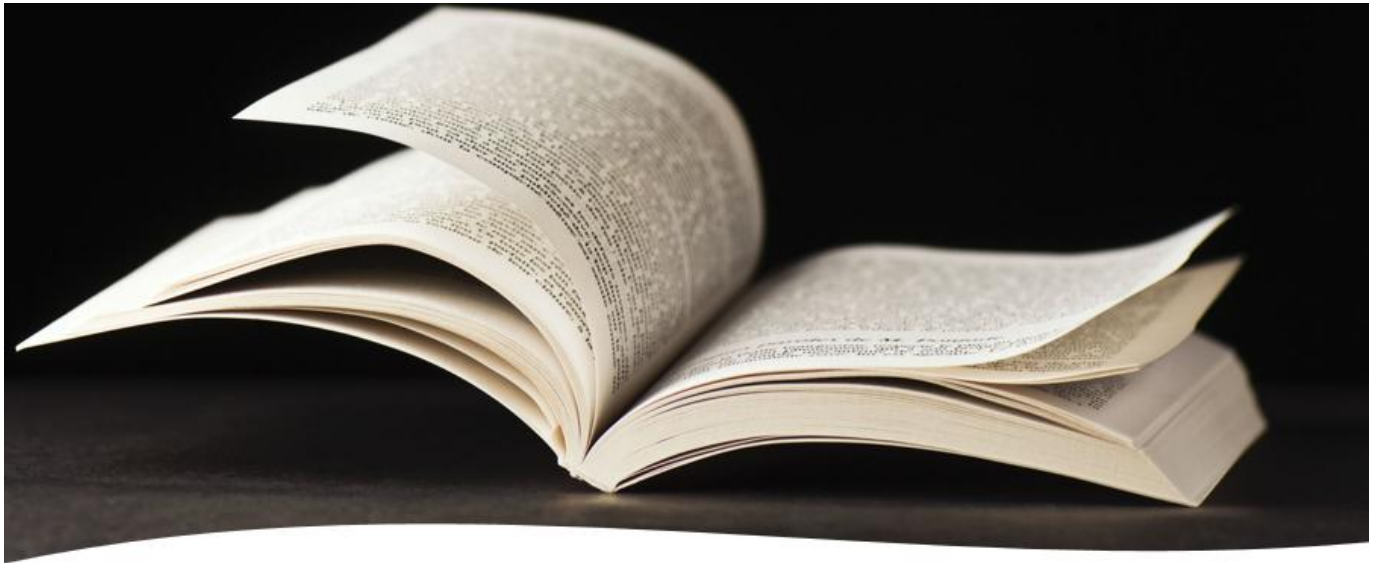
- The Magdalen
- Rebel Sisters
- The Hungry Road
- The Hat Shop on the Corner
- Three Women

- 10

* Child-centred perspective - told by children.

* Strong sense of place - in the Irish landscape and community

* Sense of hope and dignity i.e. themes of survival, family bonds, and kindness are emphasised. This gives her work an ultimately uplifting tone.



Awards & Recognition

- Bisto Book of the Year Award
- International Reading Association Award (USA)
- Austrian Children's Book Award
- Reading Association of Ireland Award



Impact & Legacy

- Books translated worldwide
- Under the Hawthorn Tree studied in schools
- Adapted for television
- Major contribution to Irish literature

Tom Mc Caughren

Irish Children's Writer



Biography

- Born 1936, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland
- Career:
 - RTE Radio and Television, Dublin, reporter, 1968-75,
 - Assistant news editor., 1975-76,
 - Security correspondent, 1979-2000.

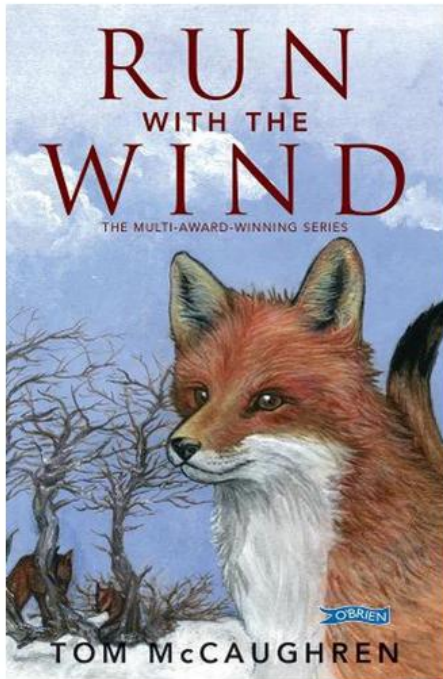
Biography

- Has written over 20 books mostly fiction for children & young adults.
- Also historical and adventure fiction.
- Well known in Irish schools

Main Themes in His Books

- Animal survival stories
- Nature and the Irish countryside
- Friendship and loyalty
- Adventure and danger
- Respect for wildlife

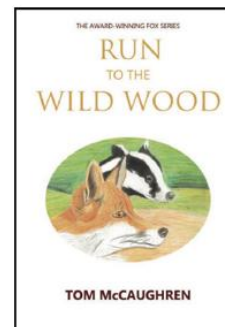
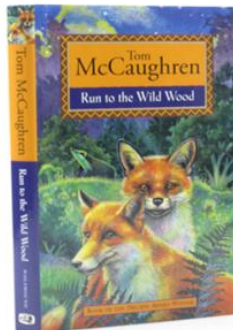
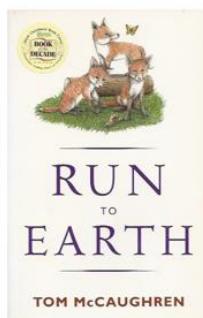
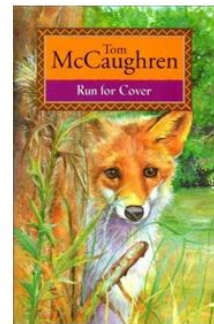
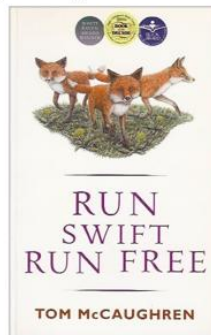
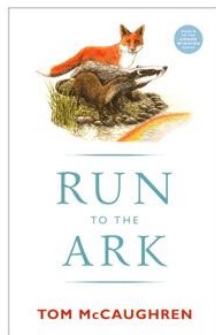


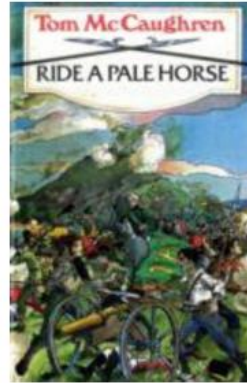
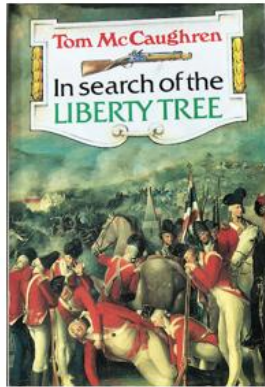


Run with the Wind (1976)

- Story of a wolf named Ryn
 - Escapes captivity to find freedom
 - Themes: bravery, freedom, survival

There are seven books in the series, and they are for the 9-90 age group.





Historical Novels

Two of them are novels set in the period of the 1798 Rebellion when the United Irishmen, inspired by the American and French Revolutions, tried to unite the people of Ireland in attempting to gain independence from Britain. They are: *IN SEARCH OF THE LIBERTY TREE* which describes what happened in his native Ballymena during the Rebellion and *RIDE A PALE HORSE* which describes the attack on the home of the High Sheriff of Kildare by an army of rebels whose leaders included General Joseph Holt, the last Commander-in-Chief of the United Irishmen.

Both books are based on fact and are the result of extensive research. The third book in this category is *RAINBOWS OF THE MOON*, which is a thriller set on the Irish border during the Troubles. Its underlying theme is the need for peace and reconciliation

When his daughters were growing up he realised there were few books for young people written, set and published in Ireland so I decided to write some myself. The result was five adventure stories for the 9-14 age group:

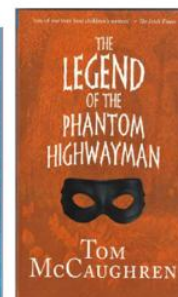
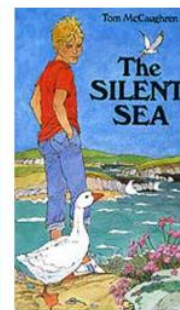
THE LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN KEY,

THE LEGEND OF THE PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN,
THE LEGEND OF THE CORRIB KING,

THE SILENT SEA

& THE CHILDREN OF THE FORGE.

Adventure Books



Writing Style

- Clear and descriptive language
- Strong connection to nature
- Exciting plots for young readers
- Often written from an animal's point of view

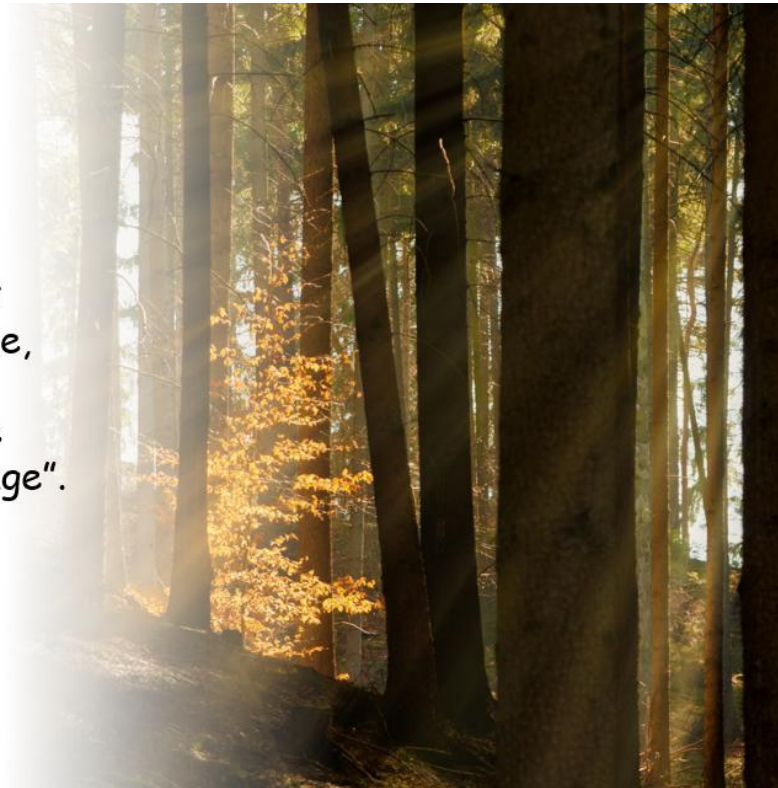


Excerpt – Run with the Wind

"the
countryside
feels as
alive....



"He would run
with the wind,
free and
strong, as a
wolf should".



"The forest
was his home,
and in its
shadows, he
found courage".

"Freedom was worth
every danger."

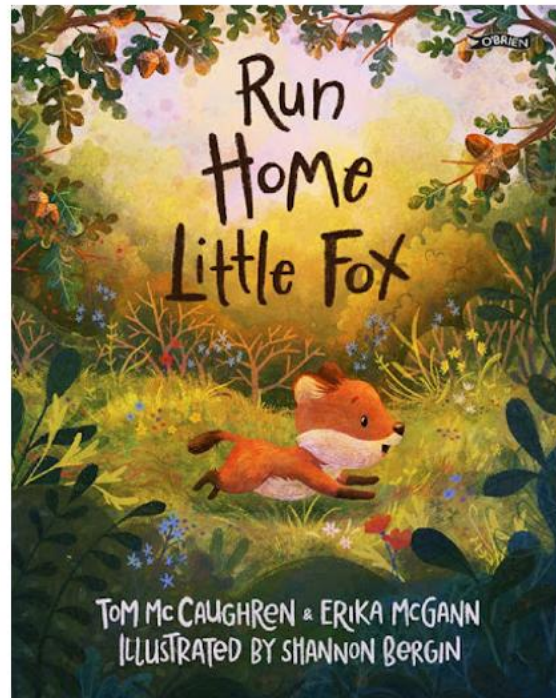


Awards

He has won many awards for literature:

- The White Ravens from the International Youth Library in Munich, t
- The Reading Association of Ireland Award,
- The Irish Book Medal,
- The Bisto/Children's Book Trust Books of the Decade Award
- The Oscar Wilde Society Literary Recognition Award.

Latest Book



Conclusion

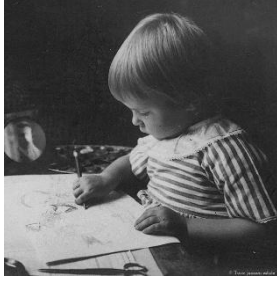
- Important Irish children's writer
- Celebrates nature and bravery
- Encourages respect for wildlife
- Still widely read today



Tove Jansson



Tove Jansson was born in 1914 in Helsinki into a highly artistic Swedish-speaking Finnish family. Her father was a sculptor and her mother was an illustrator and graphic designer. Growing up in a creative household strongly influenced her imagination and artistic development.



Tove drawing as a child.

She studied art in Finland, Sweden, and France and originally worked as a painter and illustrator. During the difficult years surrounding the Second World War, she began creating the characters that would later become famous worldwide — the Moomins.

Jansson was not only a writer but also:

- an illustrator,
- painter,
- cartoonist,
- playwright,
- and visual artist.



Major Works

The Moomin Books

Jansson is best known for creating the Moomins — gentle, white, troll-like creatures who live in Moominvalley.

Some of her most famous Moomin books include:

- Comet in Moominland (1946)
- Finn Family Moomintroll (1948)
- Moominsummer Madness (1954)
- Moominland Midwinter (1957)
- Tales from Moominvalley (1962)



The books became internationally successful and were later adapted into:

- television series,
- comics,
- films,
- theatre productions,
- and merchandise.



Themes in Her Writing

1. Nature and the Seasons

Nature plays a central role in Jansson's stories.

Forests, storms, islands, snow, and the sea are almost characters themselves.

Finnish landscapes strongly influenced her writing:

- long winters,
- isolation,
- forests,
- and coastal life.



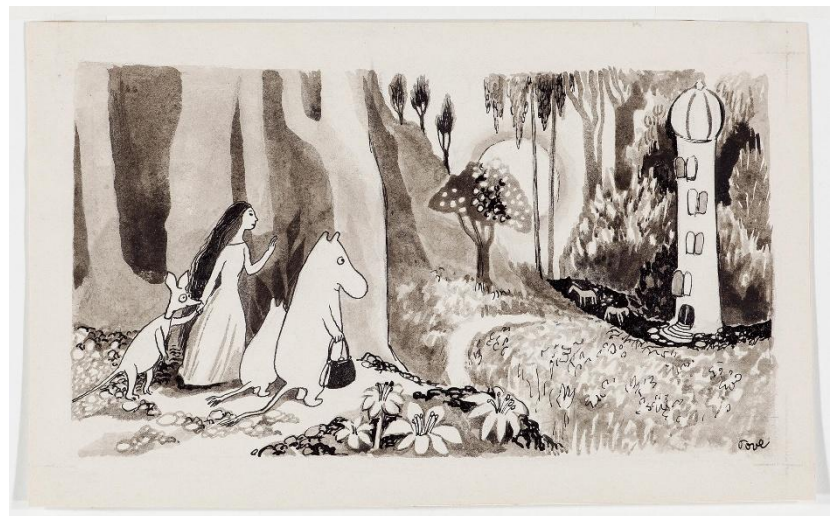
2. Family and Belonging

The Moomin family is warm, accepting, and welcoming to outsiders.

Jansson often explored:

- kindness,
- tolerance,
- friendship,
- and emotional safety.
-

Many unusual or lonely characters find acceptance in Moominvalley.



3. Freedom and Individuality

Characters in her stories are encouraged to be themselves:

- Snufkin values independence and travel,
- Little My is fearless and rebellious,
- the Moomins accept difference without judgment.

This reflected Jansson's own independent personality and artistic lifestyle.



4. Fear and Anxiety

Although written for children, many Moomin stories deal with serious emotions:

- fear,
- loneliness,
- disaster,
- jealousy,
- and uncertainty.

Comets, floods, freezing winters, and mysterious creatures often symbolize emotional struggles or real-world fears linked to war and change.



5. The Sea and Islands

Jansson spent much of her life on islands in the Finnish archipelago, and the sea appears constantly in her work.

The sea often symbolizes:

- freedom,
- danger,
- mystery,
- and self-discovery.



Writing Style

Jansson's writing is known for:

- simple but poetic language,
- emotional depth,
- gentle humour,
- philosophical ideas,
- and imaginative fantasy worlds.



Her stories appeal to both children and adults because they combine adventure with reflections on life, identity, and human emotions.

Today, Tove Jansson is considered one of the most important cultural figures in Finland. Her stories continue to be loved across generations because they combine fantasy with universal human emotions and gentle wisdom about life.

Sunay Akin - Writer and Storyteller



Sunay Akin is a contemporary Turkish poet, writer, journalist, and storyteller from Trabzon on the Black Sea coast of Turkey.

He is especially known for blending history, folklore, humour, nostalgia, and social commentary into short stories and poems that appeal to both adults and children.

Writing style

His storytelling style often feels like a conversation — gentle, imaginative, emotional, and full of surprising historical details. Many of his stories begin with an ordinary object or event and unfold into reflections on childhood, memory, humanity, or Turkish culture.



Themes

- A major theme in Sunay Akin's work is childhood and innocence. Toys, games, imagination, and the emotional world of children appear repeatedly in his writing. He also explores history hidden in everyday life, often connecting small objects or forgotten people to larger historical events. Many stories focus on kindness, empathy, and the importance of protecting humanity in difficult times.
- Nostalgia is another important element in his work. Akin frequently writes about old Istanbul, Black Sea traditions, and disappearing customs. His stories are often humorous and include clever wordplay, but beneath the humour there is usually a deeper emotional or social message. He quietly criticises war, inequality, and the loss of compassion in modern society.

Works

Some of his best-known books include *Ay Hırsızı* (Moon Thief), *Kız Kulesindeki Kızılderili* (The Native American in the Maiden's Tower), *Önce Çocuklar ve Kadınlar* (Children and Women First), *İstanbul'da Bir Zürafa* (A Giraffe in Istanbul), and *Kırdığımız Oyuncaklar* (The Toys We Broke).

Many of these works are collections of short essays, reflections, and poetic stories rather than traditional novels.



Akin's storytelling style is poetic rather than plot-heavy. His work is rich in symbolism, emotional but hopeful, and deeply connected to Turkish cultural memory.

He often takes an ordinary object — such as an old toy, lighthouse, or photograph — and transforms it into a meaningful story about life, memory, or humanity.

Toy Museum



In addition to writing, Sunay Akin founded the Istanbul Toy Museum in 2005. The museum reflects many of the same themes found in his stories: preserving childhood memories, connecting generations, and telling history through objects. Today he is regarded as an important cultural figure in Turkey and a modern representative of the oral storytelling tradition.



A Boy and the Toy Train

Inspired by the storytelling style of Sunay Akin

Every afternoon after school, Emre visited the old train station near his home in Istanbul. In his pocket he carried a tiny red toy train that had once belonged to his grandfather.

One cold evening, while Emre rolled the train along a wooden bench, an old railway worker sat beside him.

"That train looks familiar," the man said with a smile.

He explained that many years earlier, Emre's grandfather had come to the station every day carrying the very same toy train.

"Your grandfather once told me," the old man said, "that toys are made of memories."

Emre looked down at the scratched little train and suddenly understood. It was more than a toy. It carried stories of childhood, family, and the sounds of trains long gone.

That night, Emre placed the toy train beside his grandfather's bed.

Far away, through the dark streets of the city, the whistle of a real train echoed softly in the night.



Cultural Reflection

The writers from Hungary, Ireland, Finland and Turkey share many similarities in the way they explore identity, ordinary people, childhood, folklore, and national culture, but they differ greatly in tone, style, and purpose.

Similarities in Themes include:

1. Strong Connection to National Identity and Culture

All of these writers reflect the traditions, landscapes, and values of their own countries.

- Juhász Gyula often wrote about the Hungarian countryside, melancholy, patriotism, and the emotional life of ordinary people.
- Fazekas Mihály, especially in *Lúdas Matyi*, celebrated rural Hungarian life and folk justice.
- Marita Conlon-McKenna explores Irish history, family life, and survival, especially during the Great Famine.
- Tom McCaughren draws heavily on landscapes, wildlife, & folklore.
- Tove Jansson reflects Nordic nature, isolation, winter, and quiet resilience in the Moomin stories.
- Sunay Akin celebrates Turkish history, Istanbul, childhood memories, and cultural storytelling.

All of them preserve cultural memory through literature.

2. Focus on Ordinary People

These writers often centre stories around everyday characters rather than kings or superheroes.

Examples:

- poor villagers in *Lúdas Matyi*,
- children surviving hardship in Marita Conlon-McKenna's novels,
- lonely or thoughtful characters in Jansson's stories,
- ordinary people connected through memories in Sunay Akin's writing.

This makes their work accessible and emotionally relatable.

3. Childhood and Innocence

Childhood is a major theme for several of these writers.

- Tove Jansson presents childhood as imaginative, emotional, and philosophical.
- Sunay Akin often connects toys and memories with deeper emotional truths.
- Marita Conlon-McKenna uses children's perspectives to explore historical suffering and resilience.
- Tom McCaughren frequently writes animal and adventure stories for young readers.

Childhood becomes a way to explore human kindness, fear, courage, and identity.

4. Nature and Landscape

Nature is central in all four literary traditions.

- Finnish literature often portrays forests, snow, lakes, and isolation.
- Irish writing emphasises rugged coasts, farms, storms, and wildlife.
- Hungarian literature often reflects plains, villages, and rivers.
- Turkish writing frequently uses cities, the sea, seasons, and marketplaces.

Nature is not just scenery — it shapes the emotions and behaviour of characters.

Differences in Writing Style

1. Tone

Hungarian Writers

- Juhász Gyula is lyrical, emotional, melancholic, and reflective.
- Lúdas Matyi is humorous, satirical, and focused on justice and revenge.

Irish Writers

- Marita Conlon-McKenna writes emotionally and realistically, often with sadness and hope mixed together.
- Tom McCaughren tends to write adventurous and nature-focused stories with warmth and excitement.

Finnish Writer

- Tove Jansson combines simplicity with deep philosophy. Her stories appear gentle but often explore loneliness, anxiety, and belonging.

Turkish Writer

- Sunay Akin mixes humour, nostalgia, poetry, and historical storytelling in a conversational style.

2. Use of Fantasy and Folklore

- Tove Jansson uses fantasy creatures like the Moomins to explore human emotions.
- Lúdas Matyi is based on folk traditions and exaggerated comic storytelling.
- Irish writers often use realism mixed with folklore and mythological influence.
- Sunay Akin usually stays closer to real life but adds magical or symbolic meaning to ordinary objects and events.

3. Purpose of the Writing

- The purpose of Juhász Gyula writing is emotional.

- The purpose of Fazekas Mihály's writing is folk justice and satire
- The purpose of Marita Conlon-McKenna's writing is historical understanding and empathy
 - The purpose of Tom McCaughren's writing is adventure, wildlife, and Irish tradition
 - The purpose of Tove Jansson's writing is exploring emotions, identity, and belonging
 - The purpose of Sunay Akin's writing is preserving memory, culture, and imagination

Conclusion

Despite coming from very different countries and cultures, these writers reveal many shared European literary values:

- respect for storytelling,
- connection to landscape,
- importance of memory,
- sympathy for ordinary people,
- interest in childhood,
- preservation of folklore and culture.

Together, these writers show that while European cultures are different in language and history, they often share similar human concerns about family, identity, memory, justice, and belonging.

