

Ice Cold Crime LLC, a new Minnesota-based publishing company specialising in Finnish detective novels, is publishing ***Helsinki Homicide: Against the Wall*** by Jarkko Sipila this month - June 2009.

Following in the footsteps of popular Scandinavian writers, Jarkko Sipila is introducing his critically acclaimed "Takamäki" series in the United States. Sipila, 45, is a Finnish author and journalist. He has been reporting Finnish crime news for MTV3 TV News and the *Helsingin Sanomat* newspaper for almost 20 years. He has written 11 novels and co-wrote a TV-series "Detectives Don't Sing" based on the Takamäki books. The pilot episode drew almost a million Finnish viewers.

Helsinki Homicide: Against The Wall (Seinä Vasten), the winner of the 2009 Finnish Crime Novel of the Year Award, is the first of Sipilä's nine Takamäki novels to be translated into English. (The translation is by Minnesota translator Peter Ylitalo Leppä.) Through realistic characters and complex plots, the author discusses current topics surrounding Finnish society and unveils glimpses into his esoteric homeland.

If you want more information about the company or book, Ice Cold Crime's president, Jouko Sipila, can be reached at jouko@icecoldcrime.com. or at 952-353-4804.

Book Review:

Helsinki Homicide: Against the Wall

by Jarkko Sipila
Reviewed by Ulla Suokko

Thank goodness it is summer in New York City! Otherwise the tangibly dark, cold and merciless Helsinki underworld in late November in Jarkko Sipila's ***Helsinki Homicide: Against the Wall*** might get me depressed.

Mr. Sipila has not only established himself as one of the top crime journalists in Finland, but also as one of the leading crime novelists, and now his latest detective novel is available in English in Peter Ylitalo Leppä's translation, published by Ice Cold Crime LLC.

While certainly no travel advertisement for Finland, this book is skillfully composed and intelligently written in its slow-moving tough-guy tenor. True to his genre, Mr. Sipila hooks the reader by zooming through the windows of a tight timeline and feeding the pieces of the murder puzzle bit by bit through the eyes and minds of his characters. All the characters seem to share the gloominess of the November chill. Each of them plays his or her part on either side of the law, but are evidently trapped in a passionless reality. They inhabit a loveless and cynical world in the grey area between good and bad. In this web of crime and corruption there are no winners.

Clearly drawing from his background as a criminal reporter, Mr. Sipila's observant style of writing offers many facts to support the credibility of his story. He creates an illusion of hard-boiled realism pointing to some obvious flaws and weaknesses in the modern society and its institutions.

The main character, the undercover officer Suhonen, is a seasoned cop who embodies, both as a man and as



a policeman, the fading line between virtue and honor on the one hand and ruthlessness and debauchery on the other. Appropriately, his personal life is a mess, no less defined than the reality he has to deal with on the job as he infiltrates the criminal world. He doesn't hesitate to call the shots without consulting his boss or informing his teammates. Suhonen gets the results, but at what cost. He is brilliant in his quiet, detached, no-nonsense Finnish way.

Although Mr. Sipila's characters remain a bit distant, and the novel's austere tone achieved through use of short sentences was somewhat off-putting at first, I have to confess that I ended up finishing the book on one sitting, having to find out who-did-it-and-why, as the morning light and the awakening birds welcomed me back to a new day in New York City.

(See advertisement for the book on page 14.)