



WORKS

1956 Remembering the Good old Times. A Memoir of 1956

1994 My Time With Gombrovich

2004 Questions, For Friends

BIOGRAPHY

1931 (16th June) born in Budapest

1949-1953 graduates in Hungarian from Loránd Eötvös University, Budapest; contributes to Szabad Ifjúság

1956 takes part in the Revolution as a journalist; arrested (Dec.) and sentenced for 8 years

1960 released with amnesty

1960-1967 various literary jobs, translations

1967 contributes to *Élet és Irodalom*

1977-1982 and from 1989, script editor for the prestigious Gergely Csiky Theatre, Kaposvár

1982- freelance writer;

on the editorial board of *Magyar Narancs*

1983-1986 lives in West Berlin

1973-1989 works for the Democratic Opposition, belongs to the inner circle of *Beszélő*

1989-2004 member of the Nation-wide Council of the Free Democrats' Party

13. Oct. 2005 he dies

His prizes include:

1952 Attila József Prize, 1983 The Frankfurter Autorenstiftung's Prize, 1988 Austrian Literary Translators' Prize, 1989 Tibor Déry Award, 1989, 1990 Theatre Critics' Prize, 1991 1956 Commemorative Medal; Order of the Star of the Hungarian Republic with Laurel Wreath, 1993 IBBY Special Prize; Special Prize of the Parnasszus, 1996 The Soros Foundation's Oeuvre Prize

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1976 *Lonci narancssárgában* (Lonci Dressed in Orange; stories, poems)

1978 Történetek egy hideg faházban (Stories in a Cold Hut; stories, poems, plays)

1979 Ürügyeim (My Pretexts; essays and journalism)

1981 A derűlátás esélyei (Chances for Optimism; essays and journalism)

1983 Jönnek a bájos tények (Here Come the Cute Facts; poems; uncensored edition, 1991)

1985 A Maradjhú utcában (In Stay-Loyal Street; stories, poems)

1988 Kilenc dráma (Nine Plays)

1989 Emlékezés a régi szép időkre (Remembering the Good Old Times. A Memoir of 1956)

1989 Bedobom a törülközőt (I Throw in the Towel; essays, journalism)

1989 Megélt gondolkodás. Életrajz magnószalagon (A Life of Thinking. A Biography on Tape. Interviews with George Lukács)

1990 Nem vagyok kikerics (I'm not an Autumn Crocus; poems)

1992 A kalap és a villamos (The Hat and the Tram; poems for children)

1992 A szerző szeretné, ha a pofa feje és a csomó emlékeztetne egymásra (The Author Would Prefer If the Head of the Chap and the Knot Would Take after Each Other; plays)

1993 Üzenet mélyvörös levélpapíron (A Message on Deep Purple Writing Paper; essays, journalism)

1994 E. I. önkéntes, összkomfortos lakásában falatozva, jelentést készít a világ állapotáról (I. E. Volontier, Having a Snack in His Flat With All Mod Cons, Is Preparing a Report On the State of the World; poems)

1994 Én és az Isten (Myself and God; poems)

1994 Időm Gombroviczcsal (My Time with Gombrovich; essay-diary)

1995 A csomó (The Knot; stories)

1996 Az ötlábú bárány (The Five-legged Lamb; journalism)

1997 A szabadság titokzatos bája (The Mysterious Charm of Freedom; essays, criticism, portrays)

1998 Utasok a senkiföldjén, Jóbok könyve (Travellers in No-Man's Land. A Book of Yobs.)

2000 Szögek. Összegyűjtött versek 1952-2000 (Nails. Collected Poems 1952-2000)

2001 Vers-dokumentumok magyarázatokkal 1949-1956 (Documentary Poems With Notes 1949-1956)

2003 Zárt térben (In Closed Space. -Fiction Inspired by Autobiography-)

2004 Kérdések, barátaimnak (Questions, For Friends; poems)

1956 Remembering the Good old Times. A Memoir of 1956

In the years before the change of the regime, Eörsi completed a task he had had in mind. Relying on his old poems and the documentaries he came upon or sought out, he wrote the story of his prison years following the Revolution, the time between 9th Dec. 1956 and 20th Aug. 1960, "so as to be able to think clearly about this period of my life". Facing his own life as well as that of others mercilessly or at times with a milder self-irony, he recalls the proceedings of the interrogations and the trials, the events of the revolution and all the prisons he spent time in (Fő Street, Markó Street, Vác, Márianosztra, the 'Transit' in Kozma Street, all resonant names for Hungarian readers). But the sense of the absurd, familiar from his plays and poems, does not leave him as he interpolates chronology with shrewd remarks on power, on servile attitudes or on self-justification, or when he describes his cells and the bedbugs, draws the portrait of a fellow-prisoner or underlines a psychological detail. Ultimately he swears to be loyal to his dead friends.

1994 My Time With Gombrovich

Reading Gombrovich's diary, while under the impact of the Polish author's text and following the chain of his life, Eörsi wishes to find his mature self and to face the past, his world view, his faith and his friends with a stricter intention than ever. To his own astonishment he finds that the believer's approach who has a reflexive attitude to his own faith is much closer to the way he himself interprets the world than are the people sharing his ideals in theory but living under illusions (as for instance Eörsi's mentor, George Lukács did), or unable to keep that reflexive stance towards their ideas.

"That is how the book is full of the most personal confessions - writes Júlia Szalai -, of the nature of admiration, of irony, of being Hungarian or Polish, of sexuality and eroticism, of a writer's ambitions, of failure, of the once intimate but by now indefensible 'life in opposition', of the relativity of vice and virtue, of aesthetic experiences that have a life-long influence, of nightmares, of frightening revolutions, of the pettiness of large-scale administration of justice, of growing old, of odd pieces of news, of love, of homosexuality, of women and men." The dual diary governed by loose associations mixes the genres of journalism, short story, poem, essay and criticism.

2004 Questions, For Friends

On the cover of his new book of poems written after the collected Nails, a volume covering almost five decades, Eörsi writes, "... it has struck me how the topic of death is spreading on the pages of this book like black ink on blotting paper. The old themes, for instance politics or love, are there, but they are flown round by this blackness. ... In this book, even when I write about the death of others, the unselfish sadness seeps through by a notion that it is partly about myself. ... I seem to have changed, but hopefully not that much as to prevent my friends and enemies from recognising me." The outstanding parts of the book are perhaps the two poems written on the death of György Petri.