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## Touching story about Vietnamese mother by French author wins Foreign Information Award

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Hạ Phương

### **The biography 'Loan - From the life of a phoenix' by French-Vietnamese author Isabelle Müller has just been awarded the Third Prize at the 10th National Foreign Information Award.**

Being honored with the 10th National Foreign Information Award is not only an important milestone in Isabelle Müller's career, but also a way for her to honor the life of her mother, Ms. Dau Thi Cuc, also known as Mother Loan.

#### **A work of connection**

Isabelle Müller is a French-Vietnamese author currently living in Germany. The biography "Loan - From the life of a phoenix", first published in 2015, tells the story of the ups and downs of her mother - Ms. Dau Thi Cuc (nicknamed Loan), quickly became one of the best-selling books on Amazon Germany and entered the top 5 of the "Kindle Storyteller Award 2015".

This is not only a story about Isabelle Müller's mother, but also her journey to find history and love for her homeland Vietnam as a child living abroad. In Vietnam, the book has been reprinted for the fourth time.



Ms. Isabelle Müller at the 10th National Foreign Information Awards ceremony. Photo: NVCC

When asked about her feelings when receiving the award, Ms. Müller could not hide her emotion. "I feel very happy, especially for my mother. First of all, this is an award honoring the biography of my mother, Ms. Dau Thi Cuc (Loan's mother). I feel very peaceful and grateful to see Vietnamese readers and media recognize her value. I think she is a very simple, small woman, born 95 years ago, but her fate and life are a challenging journey, at the same time reflecting historical events that happened at that time."

Written over 2 years, from Ms. Loan's stories to her daughter when she was a child and 6 months of collecting documents, the book "Loan - Loan - From the life of a phoenix" has brought the most authentic experience of what Ms. Loan has gone through. Those are the difficult years or the pain that tore her to create a peaceful life from deep within. Many very Vietnamese elements through the "role-playing" of a Vietnamese-American, written in Germany, have created a highly connected work, contributing to conveying the Vietnamese spirit to international friends.



**GIẢI  
BA**



**NHÀ XUẤT BẢN TỔNG HỢP  
THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH**

**TÁC PHẨM ĐƯỢC VINH DANH**

**GIẢI THƯỞNG TOÀN QUỐC  
VỀ THÔNG TIN ĐỐI NGOẠI LẦN X**



In Vietnam, the work "Loan - From the life of a phoenix" was reprinted for the fourth time. Photo: NVCC

When asked what made her work win the award and be loved in Vietnam, Ms. Müller said it was due to the combination of the story of a small woman who overcame many difficulties to build a life with a profound message of optimism, gratitude and never giving up.

“In Vietnam, the work has been reprinted four times, showing that Vietnamese readers are very interested in the book. In addition, the message that my mother and I want to convey: That is love, kindness and always taking action, even the smallest things. I think readers have read many articles about the Loan Fund, about how I fulfilled my mother's dream - she always wanted to contribute something to her homeland and help children in the most difficult places. That is why I say “we” - my mother and I, together received this award”.

The award is not only a recognition of the efforts of writer Isabelle Müller in writing books, but also a great motivation for her to continue developing her literary career.

One of her plans is to republish the book in a simpler form to reach young readers, especially Vietnamese teenagers. She hopes that this project will help young people better understand the country's history and the challenges that previous generations have faced, thereby inspiring them on how to strive, how to live and how to look at life.

She also expressed her intention to write more novels combining Vietnamese and Western culture to bring new stories to readers.

**Love for Vietnam**





Writer Isabelle Müller and her work about the life of her mother - Loan's mother. Photo: Ha Phuong

Writer Isabelle Müller talks about her deep love for Vietnam, where her mother was born and spent part of her life. She said that this connection was formed when she was a child. Her

mother often told her about her homeland, the landscapes and people of Vietnam, as well as the Vietnamese songs and music that she loved. Therefore, Isabelle Müller has always had a desire to explore Vietnam since she was a child.

When she first came to Vietnam in the 1990s, Ms. Müller had a very special experience. She shared: "What impressed me most about Vietnam is the kindness of the people, an element that is felt from within and difficult to describe in words". Her love and respect for the country where her mother was born helped her build a special connection with Vietnam. She also said that every time she came to Vietnam, she felt the strong development of the country after the years of war. This is one of the things she admires about Vietnam – its resilience and surprising development.

### **"Loan Fund": Realizing a mother's dream, lighting up the future for Vietnamese children**

One of the things that makes Isabelle Müller most proud is the birth of Loan Fund – a charity she founded to support poor children in Vietnam, especially those from ethnic minorities. The fund is named after her mother, Loan, with the goal of bringing a better future to disadvantaged children through education.

"During her lifetime, no matter how difficult it was, my mother took care of her children so that they could study properly. She also always wanted to do something for her homeland and Loan Fund is the way my mother and I can fulfill that wish, even when she is far away" – the writer, founder of Loan Fund shared. "We want to bring educational opportunities to children who do not have the means to go to school, especially in remote areas of Vietnam."

Loan Fund has been implementing many projects, including building boarding houses for poor students in Ta Van, Ha Giang. In addition, the fund has also awarded scholarships to 250 ethnic minority students studying in Ho Chi Minh City and implemented educational projects for children in mountainous areas in Yen Bai, Lao Cai, Dien Bien, Cao Bang. These activities help students have the conditions to study and have the opportunity to change their lives, thereby creating a brighter future.

In addition, Ms. Müller is also implementing a new project called "Yagi". Having been in the middle of the storm during her days back in Vietnam, she clearly felt the losses caused by natural disasters. The Yagi project will support and help children in difficulty during natural disasters. According to Ms. Müller, the Loan Fund's activities are quite diverse, but the focus is still on education and ensuring educational stability for the most vulnerable children.