



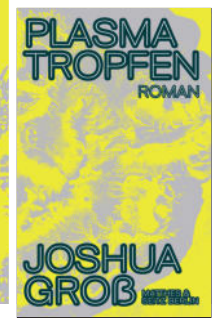
Foreign Rights Guide

Fall 2024



Matthes & Seitz Berlin





Joshua Groß

Plasma Drops

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Magmatic and delicate, iridescent and dark, *Plasmatropfen* tells of love and the normality of telekinetic powers that, despite everything, are not enough.

Helen is a painter. And she has supernatural powers. Two days before the opening of her exhibition, all her paintings are stolen. Instead of trying to solve the case, she flies back to her Greek hometown of Egio. While Helen devotes herself to her artistic work again, her partner Lenell investigates the tectonic boundary on which Egio lies. The couple's private life is turbulent; they are increasingly unable to escape their own wounds and the devastation of the world. And the question that once arose remains: is it possible to strive only for personal fulfilment in the face of the fractures that surround us? And what should we use our own powers for – especially if, as in Helen's case, they are even telekinetic?

Plasma Drops tells of inner and outer fault zones, of plate tectonics and longing, permafrost and art. Joshua Groß does not record what happened, but imagines what could happen in a world that is becoming increasingly surreal and fairytale-like.

*„Joshua Groß captures the tone and soul of a generation that perhaps has as little to gain as it has to lose.“ – Jörg Schieke, MDR, on *Prana Extreme**

Novel
Hardcover
263 pages
2024
English sample available

Joshua Groß, born in 1989 in Grünsberg, studied political science, economics and ethics of text cultures. He has received several awards, among others the Anna Seghers Prize 2019, the Hölderlin Förderpreis 2021, the Literature Prize of the A und A Kulturstiftung 2021 and a residency scholarship from the Literarisches Colloquium Berlin 2021. He was nominated for the 2023 Leipzig Book Fair Prize for his previous novel, *Prana Extreme*, also published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin.

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www.matthes-seitz-berlin.de/foreign-rights



Luise Meier

Hyphae

In "Hyphae" Luise Meier brings together invisible, historical and completely new forms of networking, thereby expanding the possibility space for a different world.

When the first week-long power blackout worldwide occurs in 2025, there is, contrary to expectations, no panic. And even when power grids and supply chains, money flows and the internet finally collapse, it does not mean the end of civilisation. Instead, the people in Luise Meier's multi-faceted novel *Hyphae* begin a search, born out of necessity, for other, even non-human, ways of relating to each other that enable them to survive and care for each other. There is Anne, for example, who tries to keep the hospital running, her fifteen-year-old son Tomasz, who suddenly learns to see the power of nature, or Maja, who keeps a record of all this for the ever-growing encyclopedia that spans the globe.

Like mushroom threads, Luise Meier lays out biographies, experiences, dreams and wishes, interweaves them with unrealised futures and reveals: the world is not coming to an end – rather, it is emerging anew, in radical, all-encompassing connectedness.

As if Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, Donna Haraway and David Graeber had created a utopia together

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Novel
Hardcover
303 pages
2024
English sample available

Luise Meier was born in 1985 in East Berlin. She studied philosophy, social and cultural anthropology and cultural studies in Berlin, Frankfurt (Oder) and Aarhus and writes both fiction and non-fiction. Previously published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin: *Marx Machine* (2018).

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Power Blackout · Community · Utopia · Mushrooms · Drugs · Criticism of Capitalism · Interconnectedness

Seiten des Himmels



Philipp Schönthaler

Pages of the Sky

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A boundary-breaking novel about the subliminal connections between life and literature, poetry and plutonium, biographies and bombs on the threshold of the 21st century.

Novel
Hardcover
319 pages
2024
English sample available

Whilst searching for a lost *Spiegel* article, the narrator in Philipp Schönthaler's new novel unexpectedly receives an invitation to a conference at the Forstell Institute in Nevada. There, in a nuclear bomb-proof archive, not only the specialist publications of natural and engineering scientists such as Wernher von Braun, Robert Oppenheimer and Norbert Wiener are stored. Their poetry, overshadowed by technical masterpieces, is also safely stored there, as if they harboured subliminal alliances between technology and literature, mathematics and fantasy, as if it took novels to land on the moon. In this web of historical events and individual biographies, technical innovations and literary writing projects, the protagonist gradually penetrates further and further to where fiction turns into reality and reality into ever new fictions and all of this becomes legible on the pages of the sky.

Philipp Schönthaler, born in Stuttgart in 1976, was awarded the Clemens Brentano Prize in 2012 for his narrative debut *Nach oben ist das Leben offen*. Matthes & Seitz Berlin has published eight of his books; the essay *Portrait of the Manager as a Young Author* (2016) was translated into English and Turkish. With *Pages of the Sky*, Schönthaler deepens his theoretical exploration of technology and literature with *The Automation of Writing and Literature Counterprograms* (2022) and *How Rational Machines Became Romantic* (2024). He lives in Berlin.


What prompted rocket engineer Wernher von Braun to become a science fiction author? Why did Buzz Aldrin write a novel about extraterrestrials after his return as the second man on the moon? And what is the story behind the poems of nuclear physicist Robert Oppenheimer?

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Fabian Saul

The Grief of the Tangent

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A touch that will never return. This is the grief of the tangent.

What is the ground we walk on talking about? In Fabian Saul's first, deeply human novel, certainties are shaken: a friend dies, a love falls apart. In a world where the stones speak of the past, the protagonist encounters his own feelings in the topography. Everything knows about transience – and knows everything about him.

In cinematic scenes of poetic power, shared cigarettes stand here like pictures next to the sunlight on a morning in Nida, the clear edges of Jean Genet's gravestone stand next to a demolished house in Linienstraße, Nina Simone's last concert stands next to the songs from the wall. Every memory tells of the possibility of a different future: of traces of resistance to the violence of the one, grand narrative. Thus, with every moment, with every new image, something tender and new emerges, searching for a place of empathy and solidarity at the abyss of contact.

"The doctor lifts the blankets and breaks your dead bones until the whole room disappears under fine white dust. 'The poor devil', he says again and again and then enters your number on the death certificate. He hesitates briefly and checks the cause of death in a glossary in which the pages are slowly peeling away from the adhesive. You still had a cigarette and your mobile phone in your hand. Maybe you wanted to call someone."

Novel
Hardcover
ca. 328 pages
2024
English sample available

Fabian Saul, born in 1986, is an author, composer and editor-in-chief of the award-winning magazine *Flaneur*. The magazine, which dedicates each issue to one of the world's streets, pursues a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach that is also reflected in Saul's work. In addition to his writing, he also works as a composer and songwriter. His music is released under his stage name SAUL. His work has been honoured with the Alfred Döblin Medal, the Roger Willemsen Foundation Scholarship and the Harald Gerlach Scholarship, among others.

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ICH ERTRINKE IN EINEM FLIEHENDEN



Anna Melikova

I Am Drowning in a Fleeing Lake

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A young woman on the painful path to finding herself: The love for her lecturer becomes the narrator's subject matter, as abysmal as only reality can be.

She comes from the Ukrainian Crimea and is completely influenced by Russian culture. At Kyiv University, she meets a woman who is only three years older – and who casts a spell over her for years. It is the narrator's first love, and it is to be her only one. The lecturer, however, insists on her right to love several women at the same time. In order to escape her control, she goes to Moscow after her studies, but she cannot get away from her. With the Maidan protests and the start of the war in 2014, the conflict between them becomes a political one. While the former teacher denies the narrator any identity, especially her Ukrainian one, she not only fights back against her, but also against her father, who is loyal to Russia.

I Am Drowning in a Fleeing Lake is the enchanting self-questioning of a first-person narrator who is shaken by the certainties of her socialisation. From the fragments of her past and the documents of a destructive love affair, she writes a book – and gains her independence in the process.

"I finally had a goal: to prove to her that I could do it, that I could survive. I was obsessed with the idea of transformation. The idea of surpassing myself. From a distance, I could believe that all of this was only happening because I had decided it. They didn't exist – I did."

Novel
Hardcover
ca. 400 pages
2024
Russian original available

Anna Melikova, born in Ukraine in 1984, grew up in Crimea. She is a writer and screenwriter. After studying German language and literature in Kyiv, she worked as a film curator and critic in Moscow. She has lived in Berlin since 2017. She wrote the screenplay for the film *Grand Jeté* (director: Isabelle Stever, première Berlinale 2022). Her prose texts have appeared in various magazines and anthologies. She was a fellow of the LCB in 2022.

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Ukraine · Russia · Relationship · Lesbian · Identity · Politics · Emancipation



Nora Schramm

Hollow Spaces

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

In Nora Schramm's quirky and clever debut novel, a family becomes a mirror of the bourgeois middle class.

When Helene visits her parents shortly before Christmas, the rooms of the familiar house seem strangely hollow, as if they cannot be filled with life despite all her efforts. The reason for her visit is her parents' divorce. The daughter observes their every move with irritation, dissects them with wit and breaks them down into their individual parts, which come together to form a bourgeois family picture: Thomas, the father, is a doctor, but because he doesn't like human bodies, he prefers to advise a pharmaceutical company. His mother, Irene, studied to be a teacher, but after the birth of their only daughter, she decided to make home and hearth her field of work. And Helene herself is a successful artist with solo exhibitions in London and Copenhagen, an assistant and a gallerist. Now she is supposed to help them sort out their possessions as well as the emotional baggage of forty years of marriage. But then her mother falls down the stairs, breaks her hip and her childhood friend Molly, who was thought to have disappeared, suddenly reappears.

With humour and strong images, *Hollow Spaces* tells of the family no longer as a place of psychological abysses, but as the smallest possible social unit, in which the baby boomers' history of advancement is just as recognisable as their children's class advancement - and where sofas, pots and shutters are not just everyday objects, but subtly provide information about values, convictions and certainties.

Novel
Hardcover
237 pages
2024
English sample available
French sample available

Kranichstein Literature Prize 2024

Nora Schramm, born in 1993, studied theories and practices of professional writing in Cologne. Her work has been supported by several scholarships, including the Baldreit Scholarship Baden-Baden and the Spaltmaße Scholarship from the Jürgen Ponto Foundation as well as mentoring from the Literaturhaus Düsseldorf. She received the TEXTSTREICH competition prize for new poetry in 2022. *Hohle Räume* is her debut novel.

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Sociological novel · Daughter · Parents · Divorce · Stairs · Family dynamics · Classism



Levin Westermann

Migratory Restlessness

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

With an angry, tender gaze, Levin Westermann tells of the earth as a place full of sleeping people who are heading for the abyss and threaten to take everything with them

Migratory restlessness is the restlessness of birds in the run-up to their migration, the nocturnal longing, the feeling of hardly being able to resist the call of the distance – which, conversely, means that nothing holds in this place, which is becoming increasingly inhospitable. And the world appears inhospitable, almost lost to the protagonist in Levin Westermann's debut novel – and what people have made of it in their rush for progress. Flanked by disaster reports, reports of pandemics and the climate crisis, dreams of space colonization, he wanders through the landscapes of Switzerland and Germany, past rocket stations and suspicious glances, and records the unbridled destructive rage of humans, a species out of control, who have forgotten that they are not alone on this planet, that they are surrounded by life, and who, despite all warnings, will not stop fanning the flames of this storm. The unrest thus ultimately proves to be an expression of the history of the decay of nature and culture, which Westermann knows how to capture at the tipping point, as a rebellion in the face of impending doom.

“Levin Westermann's Migratory Restlessness is a compelling, a necessary book. It is an invitation to productive, potentially open-ended reading, because sentence by sentence, connections open up that can be pursued.” – Petra Nagenkögel, Ö1 Ex libris

Novel
Hardcover
192 pages
2024
English sample available

German Prize for Nature Writing 2022

Levin Westermann, born in Meerbusch in 1980, studied at the Bern University of the Arts and lives as a freelance writer in Biel. In 2020 he was awarded the prestigious Clemens Brentano Prize of the city of Heidelberg. For his poetry collection *bezüglich der schatten* he received the Swiss Literature Prize 2021.

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TAGE



Millay Hyatt

Days on the Night Train



A literary delight to the full: Millay Hyatt recounts the experiences of a night train life.

Millay Hyatt is a passionate train traveler: it's the charm of the "unpadded encounter with the world" that still makes her swap every airplane for a trip by rail. She knows that you see things differently when you are away from home and on the move, and this is particularly true on the train, at half speed: the train window becomes a temptation, with moving images and entire landscape films running past it. In the carriage itself, we become voyeurs, interested in the most intimate habits of our fellow passengers. We listen to couples arguing, draw psychograms of the people sitting next to us. On rails, a way of thinking is set in motion that disturbs our certainties. As travelers, we enter a school of perception in which our own perspective is placed in relation to others. The train journey promises the happiness of setting off and arriving – and in between the bittersweet joy of self-questioning.

Based on countless journeys of her own, Millay Hyatt draws a literary, allusive cartography of the train journey, in which the dramaturgy of farewells, observed a thousand times, comes into its own, as does the transformation of those arriving home – and at the same time the insight that crossing borders is not a pleasurable experience for everyone.

Hardcover
238 pages
2024
English sample available

Millay Hyatt, born in 1973 in Dallas/Texas, USA, has a doctorate in philosophy and lives as a freelance author and translator in Berlin. Her essays and stories have been published in various media; her book *Ungestillte Sehnsucht. Wenn der Kinderwunsch uns umtreibt* was published in 2012. (Ch. Links). In 2020 and 2021 she received scholarships from the Berlin Senate. She is currently performing in Lola Arias' play *Mother Tongue* at the Gorki Theater in Berlin.

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Anna Katharina FRÖHLICH



Anna Katharina Fröhlich

The Yacht



A splendid novella about the secrets of painting and the art of living

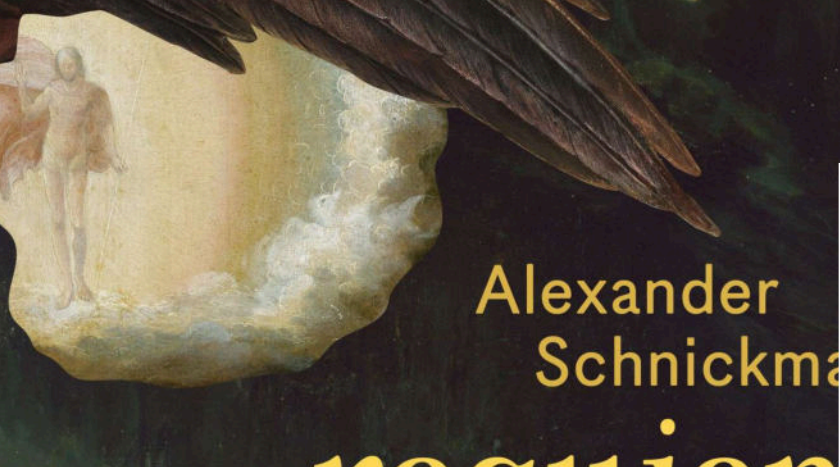
Martha Oberon's midsummer night's dream is to last more than one night: The young draughtswoman from London wants to spend three months in the Italian town of N. to learn how to paint in oil at the Academy of Fine Arts. One evening she meets Salvatore Spinelli, an intangible air spirit and descendant of that marvelous family of good-for-nothings who know how to live and have a lot of time for reading and watching. He takes Martha on a trip to Sicily, where they both get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the fashionable household of their French hosts Madame and Monsieur Tabarin near Palermo. She is a "luxury ascetic", he is a gentleman of serene gentility who pursues shady business. The spirit of money wafts around the summer villa, and down in the bay anchors their yacht, the Devil's Kiss, guarded by the butler Balthasar – a man of evil magic who fatally attracts Martha. In Mrs Moore's studio, not far from the Tabarins, Martha models and learns to paint with oil colours. The doors open for her to the secret of an art that seems to lead away from the zeitgeist to the paradise where we all already find ourselves but don't want to know it.

With a keen yet loving eye and her lavish and elegant narrative style, Anna Katharina Fröhlich not only takes us into the absurd world of the Tabarins, but also into the psychological universe of people Plato would have called "dangerous artists".

Novel
Hardcover
164 pages
2024

Anna Katharina Fröhlich, born in 1971, grew up in Frankfurt am Main and Munich. She has published the novels *Wilde Orangen*, *Kream Korner*, *Der schöne Gast* and *Rückkehr nach Samthar*. Most recently, her novel *Die Yacht* was published by Friedenaue Presse. She lives as a gardener and board member of the Italian publishing house Adelphi between Mornaga on Lake Garda and Milan.

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Alexander Schnickmann

requiem

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

The peace of the dead has never been more light-footedly disturbed: in an intoxicating tale, the sacred and the profane come together, combining seriousness and humour. A debut of rare power.

Novel
Hardcover
173 pages
2024

The Requiem is the last mass you can expect on earth: it is a liturgy for the end. But nowhere is it written that this serious matter cannot also be cheerful.

requiem is a captivating, poetic tale that becomes a lustful dream journey: from a flat with a view of the Teufelsberg, we fall through time, float over mountains and valleys, travel across the marrow and the seas. We reach the dolphins in the Landwehr Canal and Santa Catalina Beach in California – before the gates of the underworld open at a completely unexpected place. And every now and then we blink across to paradise.

Alexander Schnickmann, born in Lünen in 1994, grew up in Bergkamen in the Ruhr region, writes about plants and animals, machines and ghosts and was awarded the Leonce and Lena Prize in 2023. He has published in newspapers, magazines and anthologies. *requiem* is Alexander Schnickmann's debut.

In a breathless story, Alexander Schnickmann shows what literature is capable of. *requiem* is a book for one night and for eternity.

"Schnickmann is a magician of voices and spirits, requiem a playful fraternisation with the world, a sung invocation of wonder and despair. What a renewal of literature!" – Felix Palent, bookshop owner of Knesebeck 11, Berlin

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Irina Rastorgueva

Pop-up Propaganda. Epicrisis of the Russian Self-Poisoning

Irina Rastorgueva describes the incessant propaganda machine of contemporary Russia, its disturbing background and its brutal mechanisms that permeate all social relations.

While within Russia the ban on critical media and the synchronisation of nationalised broadcasters are producing an almost cartoonish narrative about traditional values and the necessity of 'special military operations', carefully planned propaganda campaigns in the rest of the world are working to destabilise democratic societies. A planned madness is sweeping the country. It manifests itself in the inflationary use of euphemisms and hate speech, as denunciation and in a punitive regime that has been thought through to the most subtle level. And it is a madness with a history. For the violence that has a relentless grip on Russian society is a continuation of the paranoid search for enemies, the nightly arrests, searches and torture as well as the gulags from the Soviet regime – in a garish, new guise and fused with the gangsterism of the 1990s.

In her unique tone, which is as precise as it is ironic, Irina Rastorgueva shows the effects of Russian self-poisoning in a montage of newspaper clippings and independent reports, from her own experience as well as from the analyses of authors critical of the Kremlin and loyal to Russia.

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Non-fiction
Hardcover
ca. 260 pages
2024
English sample available

Irina Rastorgueva, born in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in 1983, studied philology at Sakhalin State University and worked as a cultural journalist for several Russian magazines and radio stations. From 2006 to 2015, she was a lecturer in journalism at Sakhalin State University. She is the author of numerous academic articles on the theory and history of literature and journalism in the 20th century. In 2011 she founded the cultural magazine ProSakhalin. She has been working as an author and graphic designer in Berlin since 2017. She writes for the FAZ, NZZ and Osteuropa magazine.

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Milo Probst

Anarchist Ecologies. An Environmental History of Emancipation

Despite the urgency of developing new ideas for the future, it is also worth re-examining the past. After all, past generations did not simply stumble blindly into ecological destruction.

In *Anarchist Ecologies*, Milo Probst shows how anarchists between 1870 and 1920 repeatedly sought new ways of inhabiting this earth and living off its riches. The historian allows a variety of voices to have their say, from celebrities such as Pëtr Kropotkin or the brothers Élie and Élisée Reclus to lesser-known authors such as Jean Grave or André Léo and anonymous authors of newspaper articles. In different ways, they all yearned for a different way of dealing with fellow human beings and the environment: a different use of the earth, different forms of labour and techniques, a different relationship to one's own body. However, this does not necessarily make them visionary forerunners of contemporary ecological thinking. Rather, this book argues – in anarchist fashion – in favour of taking people's ability to experiment creatively and self-determinedly with their environmental relationships seriously.

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Non-fiction
Hardcover
ca. 400 pages
2024
English sample available

Milo Probst, born in Basel in 1991, completed his doctorate at the University of Basel in 2022 on environmental criticism in anarchism at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. He is currently conducting postdoctoral research on the history of women in the German and Italian ecology movements of the 1970s and 1980s. His book *Für einen Umweltschutz der 99%* was published in 2021 by Nautilus.

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Der lange Schatten der Guillotine

Lebensbilder aus dem Paris des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts



László F. Földényi

The Long Shadow of the Guillotine. Life Stories from Paris in the Nineteenth Century

László F. Földényi tells the story of the aftermath of the French Revolution as a montage full of images and asks who we are when we have lost our heads

Even before the French Revolution, there were occasional executions by guillotine, but it was not until 1791 that death on the scaffold was used across the board and for everyone. Until then, social status and the nature of the crime determined the choice of the execution method. Now the industrialisation of killing began. Because everyone becomes equal in front of the guillotine.

And while contemporaries are still puzzling over whether the consciousness of the decapitated can live on separate from the body in the face of all the severed heads, László F. Földényi creates his very own narrative of the long 19th century in his richly illustrated essay – based on our entry into headlessness. At the same time, the new technology of photography was introduced. Only its widespread dissemination made it possible to free the moment from the transience of life, to immortalise it as much as to kill it. This leads not only to a new understanding of time and space, but also to a change in perception itself. From then on, everything appears fragmented, as if the cut of the falling axe continues indefinitely: the bodies, the city, the poetry and the painting. A completely new image of man emerges, which portrays him as a bizarre, violent, headless being and which continues to have an effect right up to the present day.

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Non-fiction
Hardcover with illustrations
ca. 220 pages
2024
Hungarian original available

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Hungarian (Jelenkor Publishing)

László F. Földényi, born in 1952 in Debrecen, is a Hungarian art theorist, literature specialist and essayist. He holds a chair for art theory at the Academy for Theater and Film in Budapest. Since 2009 he is a member of the German academy for language and poetry. His books *Places of the Living Death* (2017) and *Praise of Melancholy* (2019), published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin, have been translated into several languages.

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SUNBATHING



Onur Erdur

School of the South. The Colonial Roots of French Theory

The birth of French Theory in the streets of Algiers

In his history of ideas in eight portraits, Onur Erdur opens up a new geography of French thought that characterised the second half of the 20th century: the theories of intellectuals such as Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard and Hélène Cixous were significantly shaped in North Africa or in the confrontation with the French colonies. Erdur's search for traces leads him to Algiers, where the young soldier Pierre Bourdieu did his military service in the middle of the Algerian war; to the coastal village of Sidi Bou Saïd north of Tunis, where Michel Foucault developed an attitude of philosophical hedonism between sunbathing, walks on the beach and ritualised body culture; or to Casablanca, where Roland Barthes fantasises about becoming a novelist in a kind of enlightenment – and to Jacques Derrida, Hélène Cixous or Jacques Rancière, who reflect philosophically on their Algerian origins.

Onur Erdur's knowledgeable perspective bathes French-influenced postmodernism in the light of the North African sun. Half a century after the publication of the major works of post-structuralism, *School of the South* looks beneath the pavement of the French academy – with the beach of Tunis shining below.

"How can the human experience be brought so close to the spiritual-theoretical that one can be seen to glide over into the other? How is theory created? Like no other movement of the 20th century, French theory in particular developed a style of thought that was against identity and for difference, against the centre and for the periphery, against the hegemonic and for the minoritarian."

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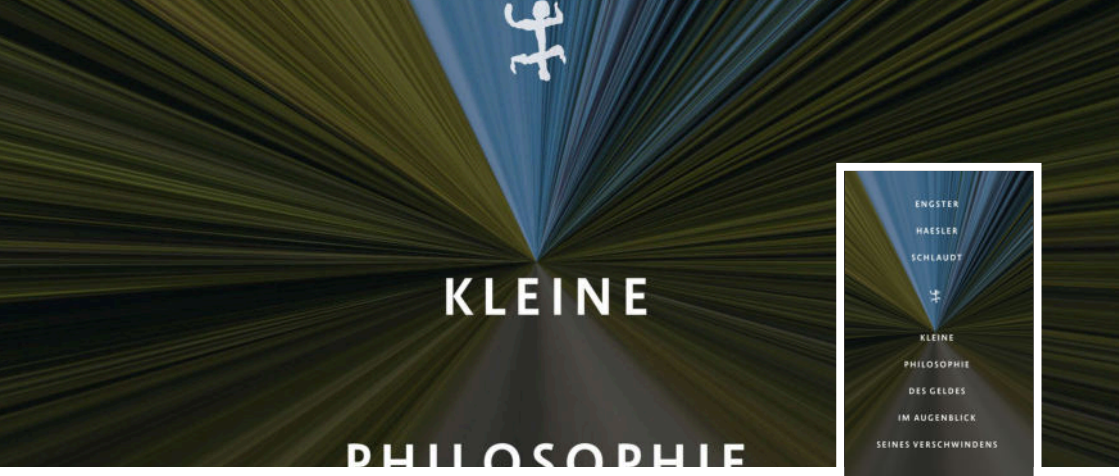
Non-fiction
Hardcover
335 pages
2024
English sample available

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Onur Erdur, born in Diyarbakir in 1984, is a historian and cultural scientist. He researches and teaches at Humboldt University in Berlin on issues relating to the global history of ideas.

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French theory · Poststructuralism · Deconstruction · Colonialism · Wokeness · Foucault · Derrida



Frank Engster, Aldo Haesler, Oliver Schlaudt
A Brief Philosophy of Money at the Moment of its Disappearance



 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

The disappearance of cash: capitalism at the dawn of a new age

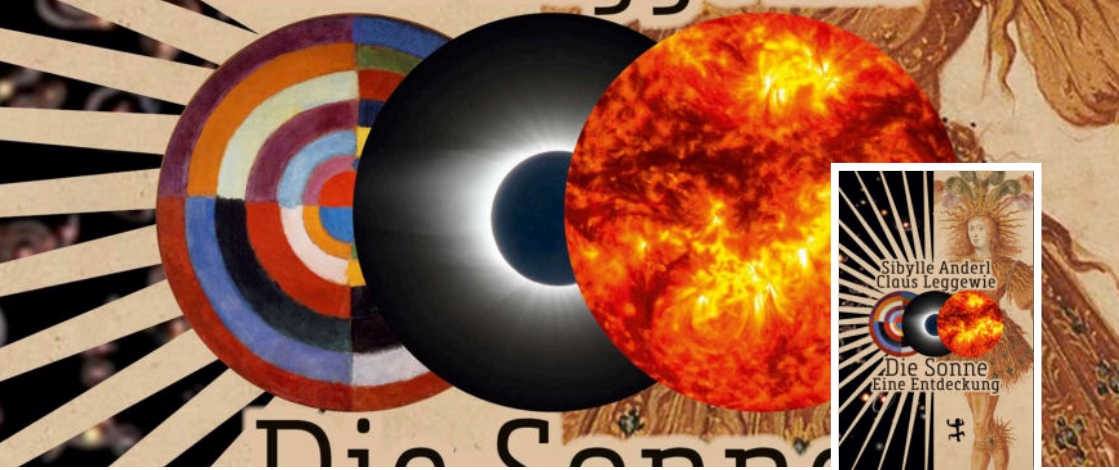
While everyone is talking about the "limits to growth", money is increasingly detaching itself from matter, disappearing from our sensory experience, seemingly expanding all the more powerfully behind our backs and expanding its sinister logic even more unconditionally. Shortly before the process of its dematerialisation comes to an end, Aldo Haesler, Frank Engster and Oliver Schlaudt seize what is perhaps the last opportunity to reveal the logic of money. Their key question is: what are we actually getting ourselves into when we take money into our hands? Money, they say, makes trade and exchange more fluid, allows us to pay off our debts, measure value and make rational decisions by quantifying costs and benefits. But at what price? What does it demand for its services? We think we know what we use money for – but what does money use us for? If we give in to the illusion that we can use money for our needs for free, it has long since foisted its economy, its world and its reason on us. We know that money is by no means economically neutral, but rather fundamentally changes the economy, for example through the emergence of a financial industry. *A Brief Philosophy of Money at the Moment of its Disappearance* shows that it is not metaphysically neutral either.

Non-fiction
Hardcover
318 pages
2024
English sample available

Frank Engster, research associate at Hellen Panke e.V. - Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Berlin, has published on the relationship between measurement, money and time and on the intertwining of cognitive and social criticism.
Aldo Haesler, born in 1954, is a professor of sociology (social theory and social philosophy) at the Université de Caen Normandie.
Oliver Schlaudt, born in 1978, studied physics and philosophy, and holds a professorship for Philosophy and Political Economy at the HfGG - Hochschule für Gesellschaftsgestaltung in Koblenz.

"If you want to escape money, you first have to follow its withdrawal in order to understand this withdrawal – it alone leads 'directly' to the essence of money."

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Sibylle Anderl, Claus Leggewie

The Sun. A Discovery

It is the ball of fire in our part of the galaxy, without it there would be no life on Earth. But our relationship with it has changed in recent years: whereas it used to be the celestial star that promised guidance and defined the day, today it is a threat to us. It ruthlessly burns down whole areas of land and melts the polar ice caps, we seek protection from its rays – and at the same time utopian ideas entwine around it, the seemingly infinite source of energy.

Together, Sibylle Anderl and Claus Leggewie approach the overwhelming nature of our star as a scientific and cultural-historical fact. Anyone who wants to say something about the Sun cannot remain silent about heliocentric cosmologies, solar deities, the functioning of semiconductors, solar geoengineering and nuclear fusion.

“Why discover the sun, which we see almost every day? Well, there is a lot to rediscover: thousands of years of human knowledge about weather and navigation, agriculture and plant cultivation, well-being and much more that today’s people have forgotten or delegated to smartphones and experts. Since the sun has been burning down on us more and more frequently and whole areas of land have become deserted, people have been looking at this source of all life with fear and trying to protect themselves from it. On closer inspection, we discover how imperfect our star is – and how finite.”

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

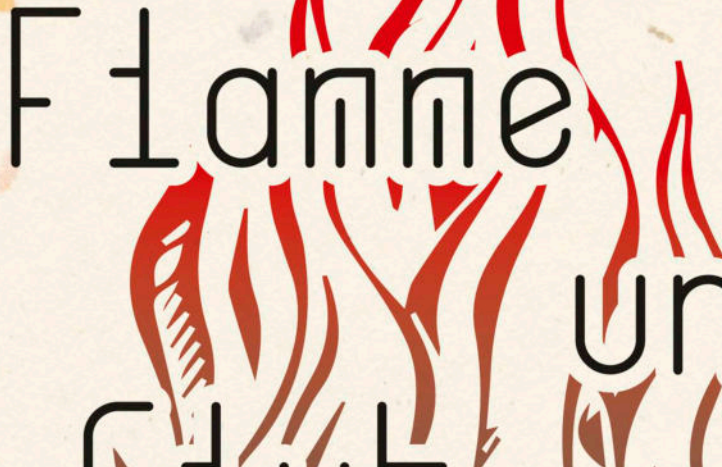
Non-fiction
Hardcover
188 pages
2024

Sibylle Anderl, born in 1981, is an astrophysicist and philosopher. From 2017 she was an editor in the features section of the *FAZ*, in 2021 she became head of the science section in the *FAZ* and *FAS*, and since 2024 she has been head of *ZEIT Wissen*. She has also been co-editor of the cultural magazine *Kursbuch* since 2021.

Claus Leggewie, born in 1950, is a political scientist. He was Director of the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities in Essen from 2007 to 2017 and has since been Head of the Panel on Planetary Thinking at the University of Giessen.

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Philosophy · Astronomy · Narrative non-fiction · Cultural History · Solar Radiation · Climate Crisis



Yngve Ryd

Flames and Embers – Sami Fire Art

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

The forgotten art of making a fire

The knowledge of the art of making a fire is useful for a cozy evening by the fire-place, for barbecues and also helps against annoying mosquitoes. For the Sami people in Northern Sweden, however, it is above all vital for protection from the cold and wild animals in the tundra, as well as for preparing food. The Swedish author and ethnologist Yngve Ryd spent years interviewing mostly older Sami people about their unique knowledge of fire, embers and smoke and gathered their teachings in this sensual and anecdote-rich book. In this way, they not only pass on their wealth of knowledge to a younger generation, but also make it accessible to the whole world. Ryd not only imparts practical everyday knowledge, but also writes profoundly and richly about the relationship between nature and culture and gives a voice to people whose living environment is in danger of disappearing in the coming years.

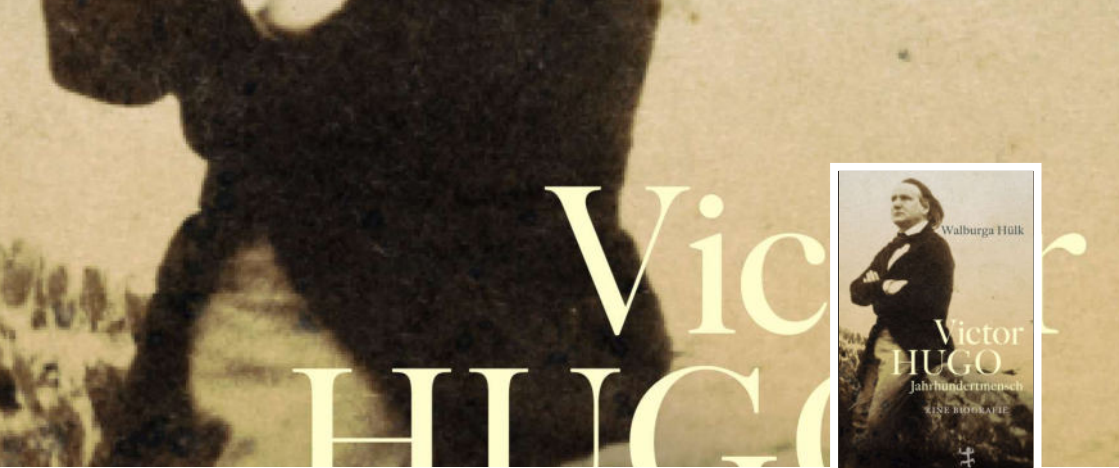
Flames and Embers is a testimony to a cultural practice that spans generations, and its rich images and entertaining stories make it accessible to a wide audience.

Non-fiction
Hardcover
ca. 320 pages
2024
Swedish original available

Rights sold to:
Swedish (Natur & Kultur)

Yngve Ryd, born in northern Sweden in 1952, initially worked as a metal and sawmill worker, then attended the Sami Education Center in Jokkmokk and studied ethnology and biology in Umeå. For his research, he interviewed forest workers and Sami people. These years of intensive interviews resulted in a series of books in which he recorded knowledge and insights that had never before been put down on paper. Ryd was honored for his work with several awards. He died in Jokkmokk in 2012.

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Walburga Hülk

Victor Hugo. Man of the Century

Only Napoleon was more famous, only through him the works of Baudelaire and Rimbaud are conceivable: the life of Victor Hugo (1802-1885), the most important French writer of the 19th century, in an epochal biography.

Hundreds of thousands celebrated the 79th birthday of an icon on the streets of Paris on February 26, 1881. Avenue d'Eylau, which would soon be renamed Avenue Victor Hugo, was filled with the crowd's shouts: "Vive Victor Hugo! Vive la République!" Anyone who is cheered like this can't just be a matter of paper.

Walburga Hülk tells the story of the fate and myth of the *grand homme* Victor Hugo as an intellectual, writer and multi-talented artist – and of his visions and contradictions – in a sensitive and visually rich, elegant and captivating way. He loved pomp and pathos, but in his books, above all *Les Misérables*, which became classics of popular culture, Victor Hugo told the whole story of life.

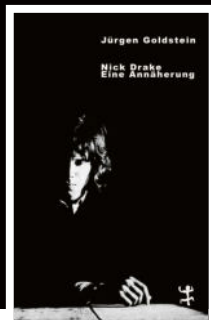
In her biography of Victor Hugo, Walburga Hülk paints a picture of a man and author caught between freedom and exile – which also contains the history of France in the 19th century.

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Non-fiction
Hardcover
ca. 650 pages
2024

Walburga Hülk, born in 1953, was Professor of Romance Literature at the University of Siegen until 2019. She previously taught in Freiburg and Giessen and was a visiting professor at the University of California at Berkeley, the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris and the Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France in Valenciennes. In numerous books and articles, she has repeatedly dealt with the 19th century in France and with literature and art in the modern age.

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Jürgen Goldstein

Nick Drake. An Approach

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A journey to the origins of an immortal legend in British pop music history

In this tender portrait, philosopher Jürgen Goldstein explores his lifelong fascination, Nick Drake, who died young and yet became immortalised through his music. He embarks on a journey through time and space to Drake's grave and places of activity and tries to track down his genius of restraint. He knows that even he will not be able to get to grips with the real: 'We will not be able to fathom a person, but have to keep the image of them in limbo. The facts of their life that can be ascertained must not degenerate into weights that keep our imagination grounded in the facts.' So he sets out to learn to understand passion, devotion and fandom, to fathom why one feels inexplicably drawn to a thing, a person, a music – and to approach the riddle of life and music.

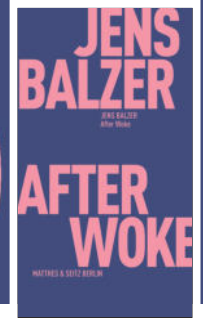
"Drake's music, for all its depth and sometimes harshness, is tempered in a very English way. It avoids drama and ecstasy. It remains as restrained as the landscape from which it originates. And it strikes a note that opens up the presence of the past through the present."

Non-fiction
Hardcover with illustrations
ca. 256 pages
2024

Jürgen Goldstein, born 1962, is a professor for philosophy at the University Koblenz-Landau. His books deal with the emergence of modern subjectivity, the political philosophy of 20th century and the history of nature perception. For his book *Georg Forster. Zwischen Freiheit und Naturgewalt*, he received the Leipzig Book Fair Prize in the non-fiction/essay category in 2016. Most recently, Matthes & Seitz Berlin published 2024 *Menschlichkeit. Vom Plan der Humanisierung der Welt* (2024).

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AFTER



Jens Balzer

After Woke

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Is the 'woke', i.e. identity-political, left on the brink of complete moral bankruptcy?

In view of some reactions to the massacre by the Islamofascist terrorist group Hamas in Israel on 7 October 2023, which was marked by inconceivable cruelty, the question is being asked in many places: is it time to say goodbye to any kind of 'wokeness'? Or, as Jens Balzer explains with a knowledgeable view on the history of this contested term, is it not rather time to reflect on the original impulses of post-colonial and queer feminist theories: on the critical awareness of the fundamentally becoming, hybrid, diverse, ambivalent that precedes all formation of identity?

After Woke impressively points the way past rigidized, essentialist concepts of identity and shows: only by understanding identity as fictitious, fragile and fluid at all times can it become an urgently needed alternative to the reactionary forces of identitarian thinking that are preparing to take control of the world.

"Jens Balzer knows that some things first have to be thought about in a wild way to get closer to the truth." – JUNGLE WORLD

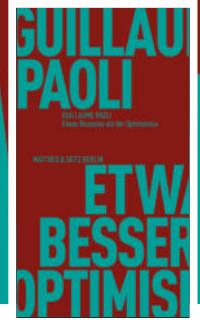
Essay
Softcover
105 pages
2024

Shortlisted for the Tractatus Prize 2024

Jens Balzer, born in 1969, lives in Berlin and is a feature writer for *DIE ZEIT*. His last essay published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin, *Ethics of Appropriation* (2022) has been translated into Italian and Spanish.


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MATTHES & SEITZ BERLIN



Guillaume Paoli

Something Better Than Optimism

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

An incitement to think for yourself – without regards to comfortable habits of thought and lazy compromises

Critical thinking is unwelcome. More and more people are opting out of the constant flow of bad news, while the call is repeated in all tones: 'Optimism is mandatory' – a blatant threat against all those who are read as pessimists. Mood-mongering takes precedence over opinion-forming. However, the prevalence of feelings smuggles in implicit views that need to be exposed. Optimism is not just a state of mind or an attitude, but a concept that goes back to Leibniz's theodicy and demands the fatalistic acceptance of what exists. Taking action against optimism does not mean surrendering to pessimism, but freeing ourselves from this clumsy alternative.

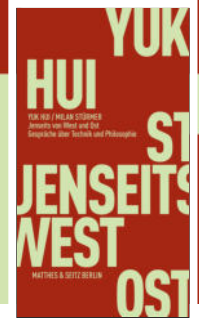
Essay
Softcover
ca. 80 pages
2024

**Günther Anders Prize for
Critical Thinking 2024**

Guillaume Paoli is a French journalist and philosopher living in Berlin. He is one of the founder of the movement of the "Happy Unemployed". Previously published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin: *Mind and Garbage* (2023).

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JENSEITS



Yuk Hui, Milan Stürmer

Beyond West and East. Discussion about Technology and Philosophy

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

From technodiversity via the imagination of futures to the epistemology of capitalism

"The world is the limit and possibility of philosophy. Philosophy that tries to escape the world loses itself in rapture, but if philosophy only remains in the world, then it is a prisoner of this world." This outlines the field of tension in the thinking of Hong Kong philosopher Yuk Hui, which he expands on in the dense conversations with Milan Stürmer published here for the first time. In them, he explores the question of the pluralisation of the concept of technology, which for him is a fundamental question of philosophy in general, reflects on the possibility of science today and develops an epistemology of the unknown. In doing so, he transcends all boundaries between rational, irrational and non-rational. Yuk Hui's thinking is a departure into new worlds, and so his philosophy is always about imagining other futures. With his concept of technodiversity, he imagines a new form of coexistence and an ecology that includes technology.

Essay
Softcover
135 pages
2024

Yuk Hui, philosopher from Hong Kong, studied Computer Engineering, Cultural Theory and Philosophy at the University of Hong Kong and Goldsmiths College in London. He has taught at the Institute of Philosophy and Art Studies at Leuphana University Lüneburg, the Chinese University of the Arts and Bauhaus University Weimar, among others. Yuk Hui is currently Professor of Philosophy at Erasmus University Rotterdam and Professor at the City University of Hong Kong. Hui is the author of several books on philosophy and technology, which have been translated into numerous languages.

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RONIE WAHR HEIT



Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer

Irony and Truth. Theory of a Cosmopolitan Understanding

A new approach to global understanding

'The West considers itself to be matter-of-fact and rational, invokes the legacy of the European Enlightenment, sees it realised in freedom movements and democratic institutions – and is surprised that the values it believes to have realised in this way are not finding favour all over the world.' The fact that the West, and with it its claim to universality, has its limits is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the relation with China. Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer points to a way out of this by no means inevitable confrontation. The key to overcoming the divisive, he argues, lies in irony and distancing – and China is particularly predisposed to this due to its written culture. *Irony and Truth* argues in favour of a new conception of a truly global universalism.

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Essay
Softcover
ca. 140 pages
2024

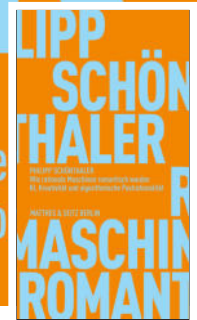
Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, born in 1948, is a sinologist and publicist. He has taught East Asian Studies in Munich and Göttingen since 1981, has been Director of the Herzog August Library in Wolfenbüttel since 1993 and has been Senior Professor at Eberhard Karls University and Director of the China Centrum Tübingen from 2016 until 2023. He has been researching Buddhism and its history for over half a century. Most recently published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin: *Chinas leere Mitte. Die Identität Chinas und die globale Moderne* (2018) and *Der Edle und der Ochse. Chinas Eliten und ihr moralischer Kompass* (2022).

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HALER

PHILIPP SCHÖNTHALER

Wie rationale Maschinen romantisch wurde
KI, Kreativität und algorithmische Postratio



Philipp Schönthaler

How Rational Machines Became Romantic. AI, Creativity and Algorithmic Post-Rationality

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

How creativity has become the benchmark against which artificial intelligence must prove itself

Based on Daniel Kehlmann's trip to Silicon Valley and his attempt to write a narrative with the help of an AI, Philipp Schönthaler shows how romanticism as a cultural interpretation scheme still unfolds its power even where technology wants to appear the most advanced: in visions of a singularity and super intelligence.

While in the 1960s the computer, which was still finding its way into society as an agent of objectivity, transparency and reliability, and the "birth of poetry from the spirit of the machine" stood for an anti-romantic writing programme, today digital technologies are increasingly regarded as opaque, biased and, above all, creative. The contrast between a natural poetry, which allows the act of writing to begin in an ego anchored in the lifeworld, and an artificial poetry, which, in a radical departure from this, binds it to the functional principle of a rule-governed and rationally operating machine, has long since become blurred. But how did it come about that the space-filling apparatuses of cutting-edge technology, which had little to do with the culture of the fine arts, became the blueprint for writing? And what does it mean that computers are now received less through their logical-mathematical functions than through a popular-romantic pattern?

"Artificial intelligences will continue to rely on the romantic idea of an infinite literature in the future, because this is the only way they can provide full proof of their intelligence, creativity and emotionality by drawing on literature and art."

Essay
Softcover
223 pages
2024

Rights sold to:
Chinese Simplex (Orient
Publishing)

Philipp Schönthaler, born in Stuttgart in 1976, received the Clemens Brentano Prize in 2012 for his narrative debut *Nach oben ist das Leben offen*. He lives in Berlin.

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Artificial intelligence · Computer technology · Cybernetics · Machines · Experimental literature



Solvejg Nitzke

Ferns. A Portrait

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

“My awareness of a prehistoric world, of vast ages, was awakened by ferns and their fossils.” – Oliver Sacks

There are few plants that can be said to be most effective in the shade – but this applies to ferns in two senses: as a remnant of prehistoric times, they grow in gardens and forests with little light, and inside the earth, sediments have pressed them over millions of years into coal and oil, the burning of which threatens human survival today far more than its own. The procreation of these plants, which reproduce in secret, has long been the subject of all kinds of speculation. Their seeds were said to have magical properties: that they taught us the language of animals and that anyone who encountered the devil could use them to buy their freedom.

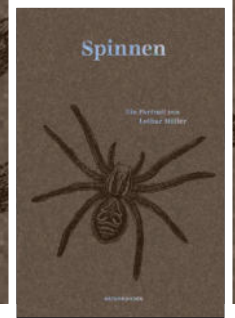
In spring, it is always fascinating to see how each leaflet unfurls individually along the pinnate spindle, revealing its fractal arrangement, which is regarded as a sign of absolute beauty – and may have triggered the fern fever in Victorian England: a passion for the excessive collection and cultivation of these wondrous plants, the creation of fern gardens in tenements and sanatoriums and, last but not least, the import of exotic species from all over the world.

Solvejg Nitzke explores old cemeteries, secret gardens and the backyard of her Dresden home in the footsteps of these legendary secret carriers. The result is an illuminating portrait of a shadow-loving plant that can no longer be overlooked by anyone who has ever bent down to look at it.

Non-fiction
Hardcover with numerous illustrations
ca. 160 pages
2024


Solvejg Nitzke is a literary and cultural studies scholar and currently holds the Chair of Comparative Literature at Ruhr University Bochum. She researches precarious natures in popular literature and culture of the 19th century, climate and catastrophes, science fiction and conspiracy narratives. In 2025 her book *Making Kin with Trees. A Cultural Poetics of Interspecies Care* will be published by Palgrave Macmillan.

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Lothar Müller

Spiders. A Portrait

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

'Hardly any other animal species is more interwoven into the myths, legends and demonologies of all cultures. Few animals trigger a greater range of emotions between disgust and fascination.'

Non-fiction
Hardcover with numerous illustrations
ca. 160 pages
2024

The spider, this eight-legged, hairy creature with its mysteriously immobile eyes, which has lived in caves and on trees for more than 300 million years, has nestled deep in our real and imaginary cellars and attics – and not least in our unconscious. It is their physique that makes them a completely different creature.

Regardless of whether they are webs of lies, figments of the imagination or webs of metaphysical speculation – the silken thread that the spider is able to secrete at lightning speed from glands on its hindquarters inspires us to read this behaviour as a metaphor for diverse and also contradictory practices. And so Lothar Müller weaves a dense web of illuminating and obscure, in any case dazzling interpretations of these strange yet omnipresent animals in his portrait, which is rich in associations: from Kierkegaard, who speculates with them about existence, to Spider-man, who nevertheless never becomes a spider, from Marx, who develops his labour theory of value with a view to the 'Spinning Jenny', the first spinning machine, and to automatic looms, to the Arachne myth as the origin of narrative as resistance, to the artist Louise Bourgeois, who turns them into the great protector as 'Maman' in giant sculptures, whose cocoon offers space for us all.

Lothar Müller writes for the feature section of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, magazines and *Deutschlandfunk*. He has been an honorary professor at the Institute for German Literature at Humboldt University in Berlin since 2010. In 2022, he received the Heinrich Mann Prize from the Berlin Academy of the Arts. His most recent book was *Adrien Proust und sein Sohn Marcel. Beobachter der erkrankten Welt* (2021).

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