



TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
CHEMNITZ

Faculty of Humanities
English Department
Chair of English Literatures

Turning Pages

An Annual Creative Writing Journal at Chemnitz University of Technology

Issue 3, 2021



Univ.-Prof. Dr. Cecile Sandten (Editor)
Dr. Mandy Beck (Editor)



Issue 3, 2021

Turning Pages
An Annual Creative Writing Journal at
Chemnitz University of Technology



TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
CHEMNITZ

University Press Chemnitz

Publishing Details

Bibliographic Information published by Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available online:
<http://www.dnb.de/EN>

General Editors:

Cecile Sandten (cecile.sandten@phil.tu-chemnitz.de)
Mandy Beck (mandy.beck@phil.tu-chemnitz.de)

Emma Fischer (Assistant Guest Editor)

Logo designed by Julia Küttner
Cover photograph *Public Life* by Martina Gloge
Design and layout by Mandy Beck and Cecile Sandten

Chemnitz University of Technology/ University Library
University Press
09107 Chemnitz
<https://www.tu-chemnitz.de/ub/univerlag/index.html.en>

Herstellung:
Bookwire GmbH Frankfurt am Main

Print on Demand
Gedruckt auf FSC-zertifiziertem Papier

ISSN 2629-8384 (print) - ISSN 2629-8392 (online)

<https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bsz:ch1-qucosa2-760938>

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>		5
Shanta Acharya	Something to Do with Love	7
Shanta Acharya	The Awakening	8
Martina Gloge	In the Footsteps of the Khmer	9
Shanta Acharya	If	10
Marvin Bergt	Striding through your own World	11
Paul Onanuga	Nature Regained	12
Natalie Bleyl	Heavy Traffic	13
Marvin Bergt	Stand up!	14
Mahshid Mayar	Epos – or, the Quarantine too Has a Sky	14
Natalie Bleyl	Phil at MdbK	15
Shanta Acharya	Being Alive	16
Ranu Uniyal	Dust my Regrets	17
Harald Linke	Grandpa on his Marks	18
Leo Najasek	3 Day Rain; or Seeing Flowers Bloom in February	19
Paul Onanuga	Silent Conversations	20
Martina Gloge	Under Construction	21
Natalie Bleyl	Lulatsch	22
Cecile Sandten	Sooty City	23
Natalie Bleyl	Stadthalle I	26
Natalie Bleyl	Stadthalle II	27
Cecile Sandten	Walking with Refugee Tales – Walking Inquiry	28
Cecile Sandten	What Grounds Are there for Optimism?	29
Harald Linke	A Friendship's Metamorphosis	30
Andreas Gloge	First Aid Poetry for the Puzzled Heart (Gone down the Gutter)	35
Laura Drechsel	Going for a Walk with Rosi	37
Laura Drechsel	Heavy Weather in the Woods	37
Laura Drechsel	Stag I	38
Laura Drechsel	Stag II	38
Isabel Heinze	Snape as a Student	39
Isabel Heinze	Snape as Professor	40
Isabel Heinze	Snape as Director	41
Michelle Seifert	The Story of an (Extra)ordinary Carrot	42
Martina Gloge	Out of the Box	47

Mahshid Mayar	On the Enormity of the Verbs that Have no Prepositions—	48
Nina-Sophie Raach	Upside down	49
Tobias Schlosser	Logbook Entry 2: Intrigue	51
Shanta Acharya	In Silence	54
Ranu Uniyal	Abide with me	55
Shanta Acharya	Belonging	56
Ranu Uniyal	If only	57
Natalie Bleyl	Underground	58
Konstantin Gora	Of Gates and Guards	59
Martina Gloge	Your Dreams May Enter	61
<i>Bio Notes</i>		63

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to thank Shanta Acharya for providing us with a selection of poems, some of which were published in her latest poetry collection *What Survives Is The Singing* (2020). We are indebted to Ranu Uniyal, who enriches our journal with her unique poetic talent and wit. We would also like to thank Tobias Schlosser, who translated his short story, which was previously published in German, into English for us, as well as Andreas Gloge and Harald Linke, whose entertaining as well as insightful texts we gladly included. We are furthermore especially grateful for Martina Gloge's and Natalie Bleyl's generous contributions of photographs, which have significantly set the tone for the third issue of *Turning Pages*. Finally, we are thankful for Emma Fischer's sensitive and observant proofreading skills as well as her general support as assistant guest editor of this issue.

As always, we would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue of *Turning Pages* with their various texts, images and photographs. We are delighted to present your individual and inspiring pieces to our readers within and outside the university, as well as in Chemnitz and around the world.

Shanta Acharya

Something to Do with Love

Surveying the locked down map of my world,
windows opening to landscapes of uncertainty,
Time dances like a god in the changing light.
Dwelling in possibility, I take nothing for granted –
accept life as it comes, not the way I want it.
Something to do with love, a prayer to protect
us from an innocent touch. As the death toll rises,
so do fear and courage. Key workers keep carrying
on, laying bare the injustices of our world.
Knowing there is no going back, we hang on
with the furloughed, believing in blue skies, bird song,
and spring in the dreadful winter of our hearts.
Hope lives like a virus born with a message –
Life's a gift, a thing of beauty, cherish it.

Shanta Acharya

The Awakening

Keen as a root quickening in darkness,
I was born to witness the world differently.

Wisdom of the universe centred in me,
I see what's hidden, discover what's forbidden.

The astonishing light of my own being reveals¹
secrets sheltering in shadows for centuries.

Yet they call me stupid, moron, pugli –
a child who never grew up, not really.

Having survived so many knives carved
into me, edges sharp as inhumanity,

my pain earns invisible wings for bravery,
badges and medals, stars and ribbons of glory.

Carrying my own paradise in my soul
feels wicked. Breaking free, living like a god,

making my rules – flying, soaring, not forgetting
Icarus' fate, I consider myself touched, blessed.

Letting rip the madness like a river in spate
opens the doors to the world of a wilder self –

much madness is divinest sense, kindles
the love and light shimmering in any truth.

¹ The line, 'The astonishing light of your own being!' is by Hafiz (*My Brilliant Image*) and 'Much Madness is divinest Sense' is by Emily Dickinson (435).



Martina Gloge, In the Footsteps of the Khmer

Shanta Acharya

If

If the universe had not been born of love,
an unimaginable explosion of energy and light –
we would not exist.

If the Milky Way and the dust of dying stars
did not scatter in space, reincarnated in love –
we would not exist.

If the sun and moon did not send their rays to earth,
awakening us to worlds beyond our imagination –
we would not exist.

If our atmosphere did not protect us from radiation
and space debris, gifting us with the gods of weather –
we would not exist.

If our planet did not revolve round its axis,
inner and outer cores locked in embrace like lovers –
we would not exist.

If day and night did not daily renew their vows,
blessing us with warm days and wild nights –
we would not exist.

If water did not enthrall us with the miracle
of creation, the birth of life and evolution –
we would not exist.

If plants did not produce oxygen for no reason
except the inalienable joy of breathing in carbon –
we would not exist.

If every species did not have a purpose for being
here, their survival worthy of celebration –
we would not exist.

If greed and ignorance, pride and power
stand in the path of enlightenment and compassion –
we will cease to exist.

Marvin Bergt

Striding through your own World

The lonely wolf
Walking through the desolation
Walking on and on
Hearing nothing
Because of being blind
Even though he is not
Does not see the paradise around him
Does not see the abyss before him
Walking, falling, waking up

Paul Onanuga

Nature Regained

From its burrow, the squirrel peeks
as the white walls of winter thaw
and the sun of summer blooms

The squirrel peeks amazed by the lush lawns
unmowed, stunned by the green shoots of fruiting shrubs
and it tiptoes in the tottering rays

A few unsteady trots, indecisively looking across
the deserted Vetttersstraße, wondering, gingerly wandering
a few stares sideways, up, left, right

It races back, a doubting Thomas
rushes into the burrow and returns
disciples in tow

Together, they explore
The familiar terrains which look unfamiliar
littered with an abundance of nuts, and lacking prying eyes

Together they swing on the trees
cop some nuts and nibble
wishing this dream day could go on forever

And together they watch their reflections
on the locked-in windows of the imprisoned enemy who peeks back
restrained by the lockdown terror of COVID-19.



Natalie Bleyl, Heavy Traffic

Marvin Bergt

Stand up!

Just laying here
Thinking about tasks I have
Tasks I gave myself
Tasks that seem manageable

Just laying here
Thinking about tasks I have
Being mad at myself
For being myself

Giving up before even having started
What am I doing?
Nothing, right!
But why?
Might waste a thought on that
Tomorrow

Mahshid Mayar

Epos – or, the Quarantine too Has a Sky

Look up the time.

Lace up the shoes.

Zip up the coat.

Tighten the shawl.

Open the door.

Mask up the face.

Brave the road.



Natalie Bleyl, Phil at MdbK

Shanta Acharya

Being Alive

Moving through the scanner my body lights
up in a scrum of pain, building images

like slices of a loaf of bread of each organ,
coloured spectrum of stories on a CT-scan,

virtual libraries stacked with contrasting
columns of formularies, offering

drafts of the estates of my exhaustion,
maps of my body's imperfection –

un-X-rayed the tempest swelling in my mind,
spasms of hurt bordering on ecstasy,

the way waves of energy dance at the edges
of tiredness, the way autumn colours

seize the day before the grey-white-evergreen
flag of winter hoists itself, before I lose

track of myself, a witch dragging her pain,
splintering down the spine, commanding me

to obey, else rue the day I stopped listening
to my body now branded with the world's

suffering, wiser than the experts who probe
my insides for signs of malaise, failing

to diagnose the cause of my body's grieving,
her mysterious bleeding a way of speaking,

urging me not to drown in man's inhumanity,
heal myself with love, touchstone of the universe.

Ranu Uniyal

Dust my Regrets

I write until the wee hours in the morning.
I have no morning tea to serve.

My son knows this.
As a mother I have failed many a time.

I know there have been days,
full of bile and bitter.

I know this child has given me
sleepless nights. Nights are now

beyond reach and sleep an itch.
I know I am getting old.

My body, drawn, is hiding
scars. My bones will be

of no use to the dogs, they prefer
fresh meat. What use consigning

me to the flames? I am half-burnt.
I have nothing left.

I eat and sleep with one eye open.
My fingers crave for company.

He comes close, unfazed. I recline
and let the avalanche of faith fall on me.

The freshness of his skin
I devour shamelessly.

As I dust my regrets
love lights up the white of my skin.

I write and I know I am not indispensable.

Harald Linke

Grandpa on his Marks

A first streak of light shows up in the east.

Morning sets out to shoo

the companions of secretive darkness:

Give way now!

Daybreak

is painting a smile round my lips,
pours life into age-burdened veins.

I open a window,

turn to my press-ups, my knee-bends,
the early routine that makes me feel better.

A breeze lets me smell the dew on the meadow,
wipes out any signs of doubtful remorse:

Yes, I am ready to meet a new challenge.

Yes, I can see which way to take.

Yes, I have plans to be mastered.

And soon, can't be long now,

till proudly the sun starts its march round the globe,

till larks trill their credo

in a shining rondure of blue.

Then,

how could I moan on my years

while the freshest revival is on?

How could life's finiteness scare me?

As day has begun

I'm part of the world's reproduction.

Now, folks, here I am,

but grey of a long life's unrest,

yet rooted in future like trees in fertile subsoil.

I feel like the birch over there in the meadow

with its boughs reaching high,

swayin' in the breath of the morning,

sweeping the night off the sky.

Leo Najasek

3 Day Rain; or Seeing Flowers Bloom in February

It is February
And I have grown too big for my skin,
My eyes and mouth and heart are empty,
Last year's harvest long gone.
Every morning I wake to the chirping of
Small birds (they are naïve and breakable;
I simultaneously pity and see myself in them)
And go to bed to the self-satisfied laughter of crows.
It has quickly become a tiresome routine.

It is February
And I have taken up biting my nails.
I hate spotting the blood on my cuticles –
It reminds me too much of long hours spent breathing in
Clear graveyard air.
You stand in a circle around me and remind me that
My hands are bleeding
(it was meant to be advice but it stung like a lecture).
Looking you in the eyes has become tiresome, too.

It is February
And I still have not found my way home.
My tears are a constant knot of shame
Stuck in my throat.
I have stopped keeping a spare key under the doormat –
You are trying to find a way in
(it is meant to be gentle but it feels forceful),
My heart already three times too big for my chest.
I pretend not to hear you knocking;
This month has felt like always being a room away from all sound.

Paul Onanuga

Silent Conversations

In the cold alleys
Of deserted Straßen
sullen silence leers.
The leaves of fall
In their browned (dis)graces fall
And litter the stoned streets of Saxony.

And its residents imprisoned
In heated enclosures of white-washed spaces

On the scenic trams of cold Chemnitz
Bricks of stolid teeth break
Into a confusing l i p s p r e a d
Feigned acceptances forerunning the spacing
the shuffle of feet and avoidance
of stares and...

Peeks of exotisch glances.
Inquisitive un-statements.
And the eyes that wish they knew more...



Martina Gloge, Under Construction



Natalie Bleyl, Lulatsch

Cecile Sandten

Sooty City

After a visit to the museum and other sights in town

The tallest artwork
in this city
is already visible
from far away.
And when standing
directly
in front of it,
it is overwhelming
with its 302 metres –
reaching into the clouds.
It is painted in many colours,
and at night it glows so visibly
in pink, green and violet,
as if a jolly giant
had stuck a magic wand
 into the ground.
And even at night
the exhaust fumes
look like purple dots
sprinkling happily
in the dark sky.

Once, there were
so many chimneys
in this town
that people called it
soot-city.

“What is a machine?”
the museum guide bluntly asks.
“Is a wooden spoon a machine?”
He makes a myriad of spindles
dance
on the spinning machine from 1830 –
cotton tufts quickly
turn into yarn.
A similar machine,
smuggled in from England,

was at the beginning
of the all-encompassing
change
of time and life.
The machine
was a sensation,
huge, noisy, dangerous,
replacing
152 spinning women.
The women had become
too slow
to meet the needs of the weaving mills
– the immense hunger for yarn.

Everyone is hungry –
for raw materials, energy, goods, money,
food,
for the promise of happiness.
Karl Marx's grim face
tells also of another story.

Like a snake
the city
sheds its skin,
again and again,
ever-growing into a gigantic
black sooty jungle
of chimneys.
Factories grow
out of the ground,
elegant like castles,
a clock tower in the middle
tells the workers
the rule of the time.
It is the machines
that educate the people.
And some of the opulent buildings
reminds one
of the futuristic,
gigantic scenery in *Metropolis*.
Similar to Joh Fredersen
the moneyed aristocracy
have vast villas built on hills:

Kassberg, Schlossberg, or the "jewel's hill",
as people later called the latter,
former home of the city's most famous
expressionist painter.

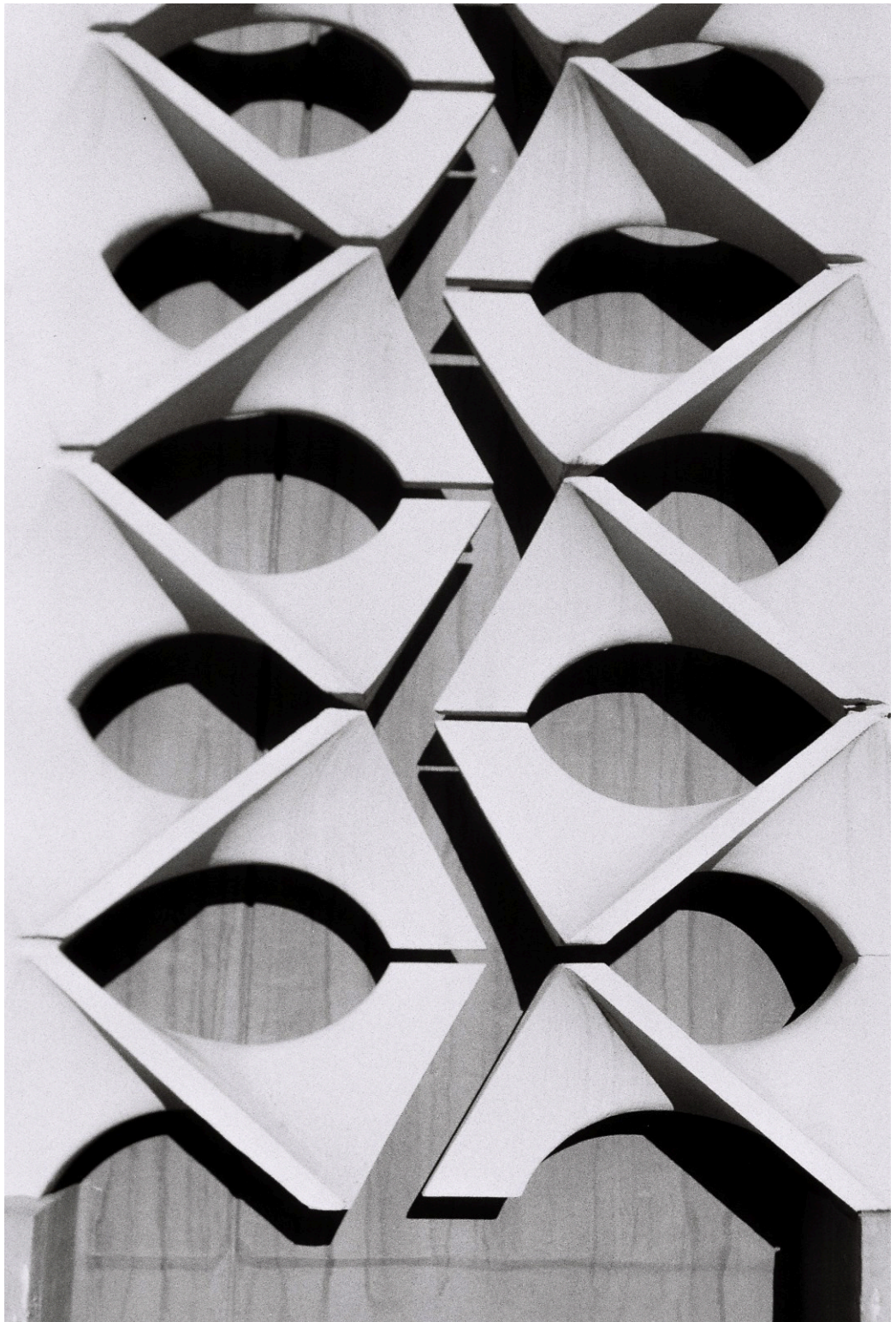
Machines can make
wafer-thin stockings,
they can mill
chunky iron into silvery rings
and finally build entire locomotives,
ships, bikes, cars.

What is left
of this time and age
are the lost places
weed-overgrown
derelict
abandoned
prone to destruction,
demolition,
sometimes reconstruction.
Another snakeskin shed,
leaving behind
a strange feeling
that progress, in spite
of the fact
that we constantly continue,
has come, perhaps,
to a close.

"Mars
is no fun",
Camille sings,
ironically portraying
the idea of man's
expansion into outer space,
leaving soot elsewhere.



Natalie Bleyl, Stadthalle I



Natalie Bleyl, Stadthalle II

Cecile Sandten

Walking with Refugee Tales – Walking Inquiry

walking, breathing, talking
 in an unknown part of the world, away from everything you have ever known,
walking, breathing, fresh air
 outside, in the countryside
walking up a slope, walking down a hill
walking through streets
 in solidarity
eating hot soup from a bowl, you provide
watching the sun rise in the morning
 over the ancient land, historic,
lack in determination
yet, sharing smiles
 feeling safe, suddenly,
for the first time in months
here
in solidarity
 walking
 breathing
 talking
step by step, back to life

31 July 2021



Cecile Sandten, What Grounds Are there for Optimism?

Harald Linke

A Friendship's Metamorphosis

1

Middle of the nineteen-nineties. Anne and I are heading for a short stay with friends. It's not the first time we travel in England but again, my East German background reminds me how special our journey is: Friends in England – only some five years back that would have meant hitting the jackpot! Yes, the end of the Cold War has widened my horizon tremendously!

We've reached the unsealed track down to Bill's realm. Lush meadows are covered over with bluebells, marigolds and the shining red of the early summer's poppies. Bill would say there's nowhere like England.

He runs a dairy farm. Can you imagine my surprise when he told me he was a writer of short stories as well?! "Milking the cows is done by a machine these days", he explained. "And while this is happening, I need something to work my head." Gosh! Literature brought to paper in a cowshed! Stories that have even won him several prizes! And not to forget, Kate, his wife, is a teacher the same as me so when we meet, it's colleagues chatting. I'm looking forward to it.

They know we're going to drop in for another visit.

"Hi, Anne! Hi, Harald! Welcome to Warwickshire's finest."

Handshakes and hugs. "Come in, have tea with us."

Sure, we're in England. Tea is not only a drink, it's a confession.

The farmhouse presents a spacious sitting room whose flair again makes me marvel: the walls are half-timbered, the floor covered with plates of Welsh slate, the ceiling decorated with impressive beams of oak. "From the forest where Robin Hood roamed", Bill proudly said when first we sat here. Wow!

And ah, a tempting smell promises a delicious meal! In Germany, it happens some "wise" people claim the English cuisine is poor. Snooty talk! Once they get to know Kate's art of cooking, they'll feel ashamed.

She rises. "Dinner time. It's nothing very particular tonight, only what we'd have had anyway: cream of tomato soup, cottage pie and a dessert which I got to know when we visited you in Chemnitz last year. Anne, can you guess what it is?"

Her mischievous smile makes the wheels in my wife's head rotate. No chance, she can't remember, but the idea of cottage pie à la Kate is wetting my mouth.

Yum-yum!

We eat, drink, joke, laugh. No get-together of friends can be more inspiring. Finally, Kate comes out with what she's kept to herself so far: *Rumtopf!*

Anne shouts, "Ah yes, that's what we had a year ago!"

"Rumtopf", underlines Kate. She pronounces the "r" the typically English way – and in her farmhouse this sound fits best. She serves a German dessert made with English ambition and a spirit of warm hospitality. We have a first wee dram of it – and no doubt, she's got it!

Anne slaps my shoulder, "Wake up, say a toast!"

Yes, with pleasure. "Cheers to our hosts and all Anglo-Saxons as friendly as they are!"

Bill replies, "And even more cheers to all brave Germans such as the two at our table!"

We make up for everything we forgot to say in our letters, we praise the recently opened Chunnel, we sing English folk songs ...

What an evening! When was I last as happy as in this company?

2

Again, Bill and Kate are in Chemnitz. They know the outstanding sights of the city, so I plan to take them to places in the region around. Chemnitz as a gate to a charming mountainous area! More than that, I hope to play a game with them: As for Brexit, they voted LEAVE! I'll never understand what made them join those EU-slandering guys; now I focus on impressions that show how close to each other our two nations are.

"If the weather allows, I'll take you to Saxony's highest mountain tomorrow." No doubt, the trip will offer me an opportunity to touch upon what I have in mind.

The weather god turns out a Brexit-opponent. The following day is sunshine from the early morning. Most of our way we travel by car, then we change for a steam-driven train, a tourist attraction running on narrow-gauge rails.

The mountain, an overwhelming view, a stylish restaurant where we have a good meal, a walk all round the site – the day is replete with laughter and friendliness, but it seems to be in a hurry. The sun has already vanished behind the mountain top. Time to return to Chemnitz. Kate expresses her thanks for a "wonderful outing." Bill adds, "Yes, Germany together with friends – that's as much as England at its best."

Togetherness. Nothing else is on my mind. I'm thinking of how best to start the topic of Brexit. We've reached the railway-station where we find a group of kids waiting, boys and girls of about fourteen years old. They don't know how to behave in a public place, shriek and fool around. I look for people in charge and

yes, two adults accompany them, but they prefer not to mingle in. – No, no, not with me!

“That’s it for today!” My voice sounds like thunder.

Silence on this platform.

“I know a much better game for you! You learn English at school, don’t you?”

“Yes”, is the shy answer.

Great! Togetherness can now bloom!

“Alright then, let’s see how far you’ve come!”

This coincidence is much better than anything I could have said on Brexit. Within less than no time Kate takes the teacher’s part. How skilfully she proceeds! She helps where necessary and – you wouldn’t believe – young Saxons are talking to an Englishwoman more than sixty years older.

O happy day! It gives more than I could have hoped for! It proves how easily togetherness can be achieved. We do belong together!

Then, a fearless boy asks the one-million question of the day, “Are you for or against Brexit?”

Kate is shaking her head and gives the floor to Bill. Curiosity is in the air. In a low voice, he tries to explain why he chose LEAVE. The youngsters don’t accept what he brings forth.

“But – you look so nice!”

“And your wife is like my grandma!”

“And we’re going to England in summer next year!”

“My mother always buys the jam you make in England!”

“And soccer comes from England!”

“And the Beatles from Liverpool!”

“And the Scots want to remain!”

....

Bill is helpless. He ensconces himself in his national pride, “We are English and in the U.K. we are a majority.”

Now the kids retreat. Whisperingly, they try to find out how much a phrase like “majority” may weigh in this context.

I say thank you to the boy who asked and wish all the group a good journey. The train pulls in. We take our seats on a carriage where nobody else sits.

For more than an hour the conversation is between Kate, Anne and me whereas Bill is thoughtful and quiet. It’s not before we sit down for dinner that he returns to talking. Slowly, as if he wanted to suppress his uncertainty, he murmurs, “If I’d seen this afternoon before going to the ballot box, I’d possibly have voted REMAIN.”

Hey, my friend, is it really you speaking? "Possibly" – that's the optimum! I can't expect any more! English understatement is what he first sipped in from his mother's breast and since then, endlessly, his environs have been hammering it into his brain.

I feel he expects me to react. Quite a challenge!

"Don't rack your brain", I say with a smile, "we're all humans and may fail." Kate is nodding, Bill seems to be less ready to agree.

Only two more days are left before our friends' flight home. Talking to Bill, I notice a kind of mental distance. But why?

3

Theresa in office.

"They've tricked us into it", Bill laments in one of his letters. Bill, the incarnation of English spirit! How deeply must he be shaken, realising those Brexit-preachers have taken him up the garden path!

"All the world's laughing at us!"

Anne feels with him, "It's a shame! And he's a true friend!"

Well yes, but unfortunately, this true friend is English. If he were American or Australian, I'd give him a call and reach him a bucket to spit in all that nationalist muck they fed him with. In Bill's case that won't work. A true Englishman cannot fail. People who aren't English can, but they're what he calls the rest of the world. Kate is different, she looks at things a more realistic way.

Alright, this afternoon I'll reply to his letter. Anne warns me, "This takes a bit of diplomacy!" And that's what I now need! Diplomacy? At a moment when I feel like playing the biggest drum? Will Bill be able to see I take his side when I fire at those know-alls who stage hurricanes of media humdrum to win votes? How many Bills' brains have such hurricanes blown away? Yes, he may call himself a victim, but does he now accept his own failure? Anne smiles, "Let me hear what comes out!" Wait a minute. I need a break to think.

An hour later I'm back at the computer. I remind Bill he trusted in false friends. I make it clear to him he has true friends, some of them even on the continent, friends who are concerned and hope to back him. Reading this, he may still disagree, but he cannot deny it's well-meaning people addressing him. And hopefully, Kate will help smooth Bill's ruffled feathers ...

4

Boris in office.

He rejoices: "The deal is done."

Bill's commentary: "We now have a strong leader."

Ugh!

Friendship may require hard work to do, but I'll try my best ...

Andreas Gloge

First Aid Poetry for the Puzzled Heart (Gone down the Gutter)

Your eyes shimmer like
anapestic amethysts making
my legs shiver every
iambic pentametre of the way.

And while your sighed syllables are
prophecies of trochaic wonders
born in ancient pyrrhic times
I soundlessly whisper into the catalexis
off
beats
to overcome the pervasive patterns which
open up your metrical door for every stranger
with a dactylic promise...

So give me a line-break
of
caesura,
pierce me with your pun;ct.u-at'ion of
headlessly heels over verse
and please, please, please, no more of this
endlessly enigmatic incomplete syntax
like you are tiptoeing
on a twisted wire in a möbius-strip-circus.

Can't you see I am nothing but
an alliterative amorous adventurer and
really not longing for poetic enchantment anymore
in reason or rhyme –
so gimme a dime for every time I drink fine vine
to make me forget
about you –
as I am no longer looking
for sense because I lost
all my senses
in your amphibrachic web
of life lies and pipe dreams
full of howling vowels prowling foully
into my rotating spondaic heart.

Alas, no more stanza needed;
but if there has ever been
some kind of romance in chivalrous balladry
you sucked it all in with your Babel Fish weirdness
and torturing tenderness of illustrious illusions.

Long story short:
I really dig your diphthong, ay!

Laura Drechsel

Going for a Walk with Rosi

L

i

tt

l

e

d

o

g

sniffing.

Laura Drechsel

Heavy Weather in the Woods

Shhhhhhhhhhh Rustle Rustle Rustle Shhhhhhhhhhh

Drop Drop Drop Drop Drop Drop

DropDropDropDropDropDropDropDrop

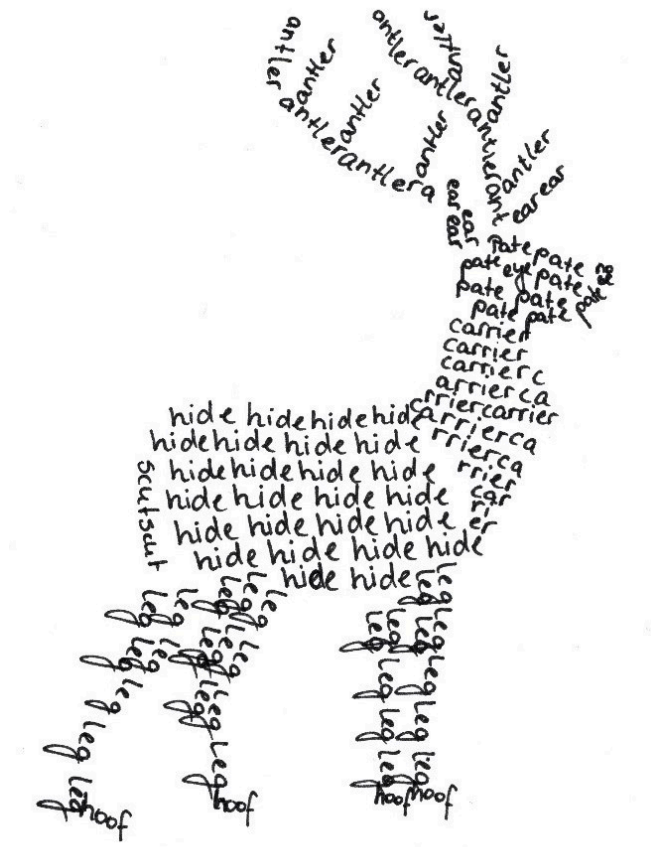
FfffffffffDropFfffffffffffffffffDropFfffffffffffffffff

Krrrrrrkkk Pufffffffffffffffffff DropDropDrop

FfffffffffDropFfffffffffffffffffDropFfffffffffffffffff

Laura Drechsel

Stag I



Laura Drechsel

Stag II

Silently passing the woods

Tenacious

Accompanied by his herd

Capital and majestic

Kindling ferocity



Isabel Heinze, Snape as a Student



Isabel Heinze, Snape as Professor

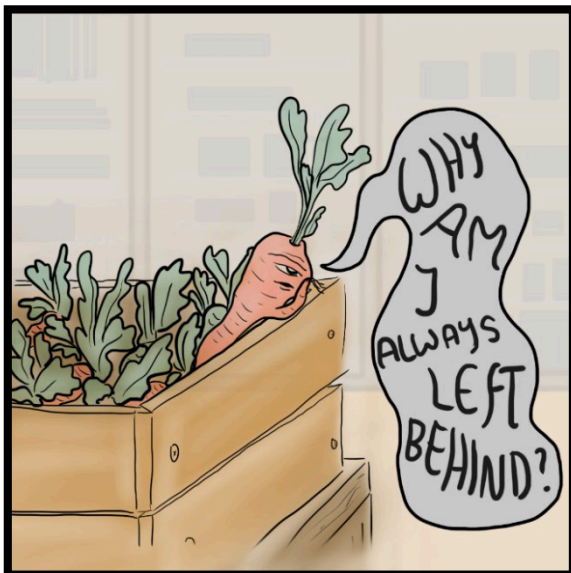
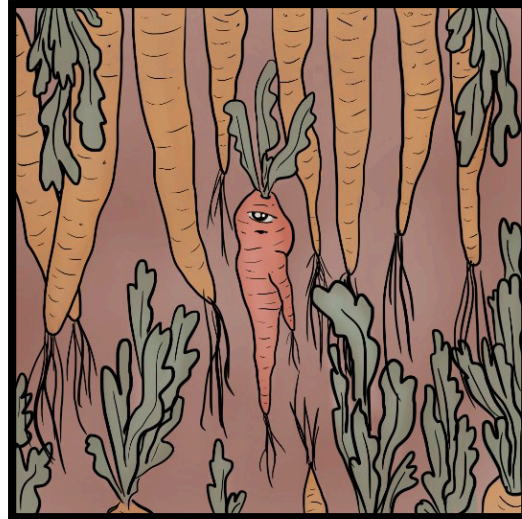


Isabel Heinze, Snape as Director

Michelle Seifert

The Story of an (Extra)ordinary Carrot

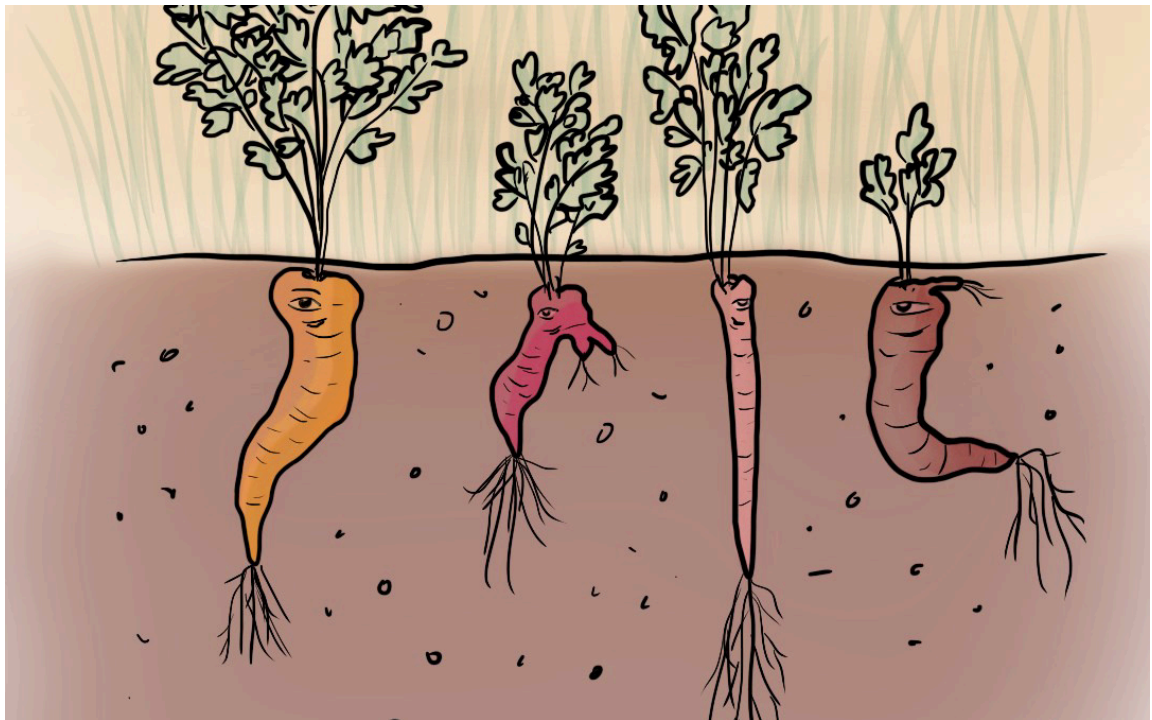
Once there was a little carrot. It lay in the supermarket all day long, waiting to be bought by someone. It happened to be surrounded by huge carrots that were two or even three times bigger. Well, in the eyes of humans those carrots would be considered 'normal' whereas the little carrot would be 'too small'. As it lay there all day long it chatted with other fruits and vegetables.



"Why am I always left behind?", the carrot asked the potato that was laying in the basket next to the carrots' box.

The potato mumbled, "Well, little carrot. I've been here for quite a while and never have I seen a carrot as small as you. I guess you're not big enough for the humans. They want long and straight carrots, those who are of bright orange colour and have no flaws of any kind." It took a precise look at the carrot and said, "See, you are crooked and deformed, you are not the perfect colour and certainly you would not be tasting good", the potato alleged. "But how can you know; how would they know?", the little carrot asked. "And furthermore", it continued hastily, "where I'm from, many different-looking carrots surrounded me."





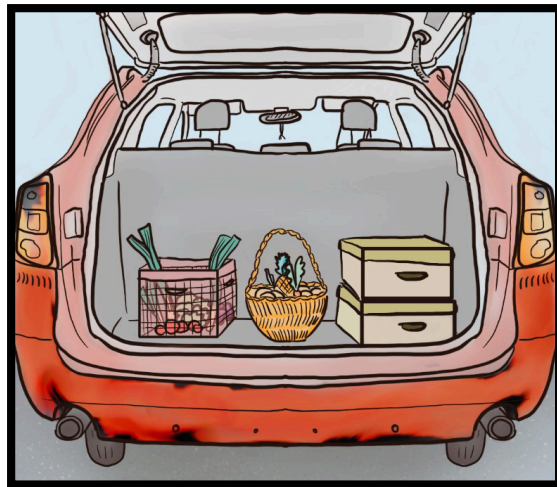
"In fact, there were many smaller carrots, but also crooked ones and straight ones of red and yellow and purple colour! Once my uncle even saw a...", "I get it!" the potato interrupted, "I don't make the rules, but take a look around."

The carrot did as it said. There were many vegetables, tomatoes next to cucumbers, fresh leek next to eggplants and further in the distance it could even spot the funny-looking ginger. "So, what do you see?", the potato asked. "I see many vegetables", the carrot answered. "But if I look closer", it continued, "I can see that they all look the same. They have the same colour and the same size, they probably all taste the same!" The carrot realised what the potato was getting at. It had to admit that it would never fit in. "I remember...", the carrot told the potato, "...that day on the field. They plucked us and the moment they realised that we would be too small, they just threw us away!"

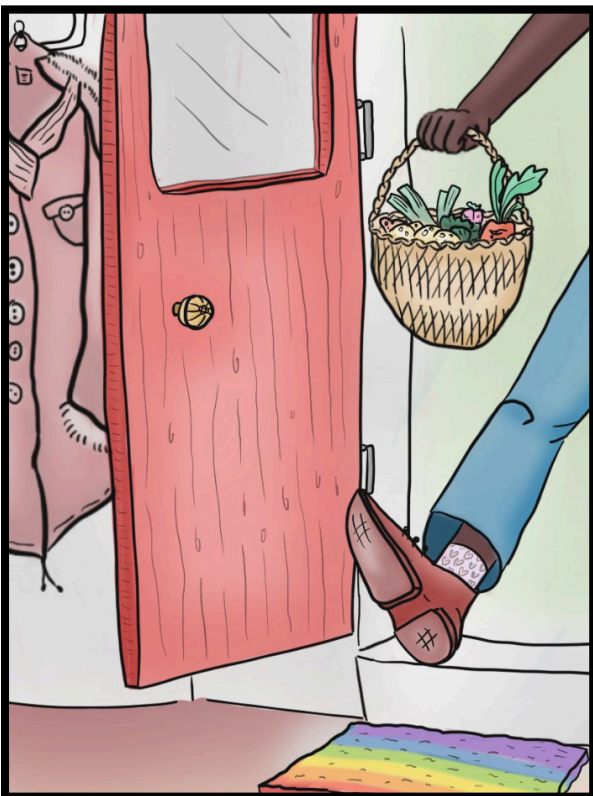
Now the carrot had tears in its eyes. "There must have been some kind of mistake then", the potato said. "But now you are here", it continued, "and we have to make the best of it!" Before one of them could continue the conversation, a hand grabbed for the little carrot's greenery. "I can't believe my eyes", the potato exclaimed, "someone picked you – and only you little carrot!"



"Farewell" the carrot replied. It was already in the trolley making its way to the cashiers' desk. After the person paid for the groceries they went to the car, ready to drive home. After some time, they arrived. The person opened the car and took out the basket in which the little carrot had been placed.



They entered the house and went straight to the kitchen where the next meal should be prepared.



A big bowl of salad was arranged, and the carrot was on top of it, rounding it all up.





The person took a bite of the carrot and froze. "This is the most delicious carrot I've ever tasted!", she burst out.



Presumably, the carrot had to be that tasty because of its size. Since it was so small, all the vitamins were combined.



From now on, the human only bought the smallest carrots, because what appears on the outside isn't always what's inside. All the vegetables that had not been considered to be normal were now put in her trolley. She learned that all the crooked ones and small ones, the ones that are too big or don't have the perfect colour would taste the same, if not better. She cooked the most delicious meals in town. Her secret recipe was: "Trust the unordinary!"



Martina Gloge, Out of the Box

Mahshid Mayar

On the Enormity of the Verbs that Have no Prepositions—

i know these shoes—

they fit my feet.

they hug your toes.

they have no names—

the pair, worn,

almost undone.

always not ours—

almost us:

a pair apart.

Nina-Sophie Raach

Upside down

"I just don't get how someone enjoys being observed while sweating and knotting their limbs around a cold bar", I thought when I passed one of these outside training places. Then, my eye got struck by someone who also seemed like deciding to boycott the originally intended use of this place. A slim boy who had a stained red head was hanging upside down from a silver gleaming high-bar. Carefully, I got closer.

"Aren't you afraid that your head might explode?", I asked.

"Why would I?", he responded, while scanning me with eyes of strangely undefinable colours. As the child obviously was aware of the high blood concentration in his head but simply not bothered by it, I had to think of something else to convince him to return to a more common position.

"Isn't it annoying to see everything upside down?", I mentioned.

"I don't see things upside down, but you do", he said. I couldn't help but curiously stare at him, waiting for the enlightening explanation.

"I learned in school that our eyes see everything upside down but our brain turns the picture around so we are actually tricked by our brain and now I am trying to trick it back and you should join me", the boy happily informed me.

I, being slightly offended by the fact that a seemingly nine-year-old had assumed that I did not know this, decided to do so. While I was desperately trying to bend my knees around the slippery bar like the child had, I couldn't help but be impressed by his persistence and physical abilities.

But the second my head found itself in this unusual position, a million colourful dimensions and solar systems appeared right in front of my eyes and I felt like an invisible weight was lying on my stomach and throwing the helpless rest of my body to the four winds. I just had to close my eyes. I drew in some air, about to announce to the child that the true view was too exciting for both my head and my inner organs.

The spinning stopped.

I dared to open my eyes.

I stood in a seemingly endless hallway. Its grey walls appeared in slight silver, reflecting some light of undefinable origin. The hallway ran out in darkness on both sides. I noticed the child was standing right beside me when a small, soft hand determinedly pulled me into the eternity lying in front of us. I stopped dumbfounded as I realised what I hadn't before: the doors – there were at least a hundred and there had to be at least ten thousand more of them according to my assumption that this hallway barely ever ended.

Confidently, the boy opened a door. Surrounded by orange, friendly light, there stood a tall man who was laughing loudly. It was an insanely great laugh. The way his whole body shook and his eyes were closed in pleasure made me feel so comfortable and welcomed. I could hardly imagine that this man was even slightly aware of the evil in this world. The boy, whom I had completely forgotten about, pulled me further into the room, escaping the man's charisma.

"I want to be this happy", I whispered hypnotised.

"He isn't", the child whispered back and pointed to a hidden, foggy corner of the room. The very same man laid on his back, eyes wide open. The way he almost disappeared in the heavy black around him made my heart drop.

"Is he dead?", I asked the boy.

"No, he is just not watched by anyone", he replied.

Suddenly, we stood in the hallway again and the boy walked towards the next door. "Wait!", I shouted. "How did we get here and why is the man's laugh this bright when he is so sad?" I felt completely overwhelmed.

"I told you", the child smiled wisely. "Our brain is tricking us."

The first thing I noticed was that my back hurt terribly. I blinked. A familiar face was very close to mine. It was my mother. "Hey you, what on earth were you up to?"

"What ...", I stuttered. "Where did the child go?"

She laughed. "What child? Oh, Honey, you are in the hospital. Someone found you lying at that outside training place. You must have fallen down and passed out. Can't you remember?" She touched my cheek lovingly and shook her head. "The doctor said I can take you home but you need to rest for some days."

"It is just a mild concussion", someone else said while coming closer. "Just avoid high bars within the next two weeks, can you do that?" The person who belonged to this voice smiled at me very, very brightly.

My jaw dropped when I realised his insane similarities to the laughing sad man I just had dreamed about.

Tobias Schlosser

Logbook Entry 2: Intrigue²

Babette looks at her SUV which she has parked in her garage entrance, and she is getting incredibly angry. She came home late last night and was just way too lazy to get her car into the garage. Besides, quite a lot of petals of her front garden's magnolia stuck on her vehicle's tyres and she just didn't want to carry the mushy petals into her garage. But now, Babette faces the whole lot:

"It really is a disgraceful world", she tells herself, "in which even pigeons only live to be a nuisance to my inner peace!"

Babette has once heard that pigeons are the rats of the skies, but she has always known it better: In truth, pigeons are the mafia of the skies! On a mild evening in summer, she noticed such poultry with a violin case in its beak flying through the twilight, ready to carry out diabolic orders. There wasn't a gun in its violin case. No, that is something Babette would have adored to see because she worships everyone who knows how to defend themselves. Pigeons have a way more dreadful weapon in their cases: laxatives.

And so it went: Last night, the pigeon that is pulling all the strings flew to the magnolia in Babette's front garden. There, a legion of cheerful pigeons was waiting on the branches of the tree for the drugs. They took all the pills at once and shitted fervently on the windscreen of Babette's SUV.

Babette is wondering in bewilderment who is the real scoundrel behind this perfidious plan. Who on earth pays pigeons to do something like that?

Babette assumes that the lobby of the great titmouse is behind it all. The coal tits, she recently learnt from her daily newspaper, are in danger of extinction. A deadly lung disease goes around in the great titmouse world, and all male tits are about to die from it. At least, this is what she read. The bird influenza seems to have its origin in Greece. This is the place where spiders that carry the germs of the disease inside came from. They nest in tropical fruits and were brought to Central Europe where they now survive because of climate change. They offer themselves as sacrifices and are eagerly pecked by the great titmouse. Of course, the spiders only do that just to kill all the male coal tits. Surely, the spiders are all feminists which don't stop at anything in their blind hatred of men, analyses Babette logically. Almost Christian, this thought of self-sacrifice.

² The short story "Logbook Entry 2: Intrigue" first appeared in German in the short story collection *Babette Postfaktisch* in 2020. The English translation was provided by the author.

In former times, Babette loved the dear coal tits very much. But the facts don't speak in their favour: Whoever isn't tough enough to show some fight against invasive feminist insects from Greece doesn't deserve any better than to go straight to hell. That's just tough luck. And now, the coal tit feels like shit.

Suddenly, Babette hears in her head the voice of her despicable daughter-in-law Maude, a real know-it-all whom Babette loves to call *child of the thistle*: "You know, spiders are actually no insects ..."

These words make Babette even more furious.

But back to the coal tits:

Surely, they engaged the pigeons to take revenge on Babette because they read in the tabloids that climate change is all the SUV drivers' fault. The newspapers are altogether full of that nonsense! Spiders are here because of climate change and that is why they infect the non-weatherproof male coal tits. Ergo, the unstable and vindictive coal tits blame Babette for their distress.

Babette looks at her SUV and thinks about getting an underpaid Borasisi who is cutting asparagus from the nearby fields. He could clean up her vehicle at an affordable price. The misery in her front garden is, after all, beyond any words.

Babette isn't just furious about her SUV being covered with shit. She also is angry about the accomplice: the malicious magnolia. As if its slippery petals weren't enough already! After a way too short flowering season the magnolia just let everything fall and causes Babette to regularly slip on its petals.

At first, Babette took delight in the tree because the magnolia stood erect like a soldier right before another invasion of an oil-exporting country. In addition, some of the petals land on the pavement and cause some hippies passing her house to slip every now and then. But Babette has been worried about that for a long time. What if one of these hippies would sue her? What if one piece of this hippie riff-raff would break his neck and Babette wouldn't be able to simply blast him because it is still bright outside? These days, the hippies don't drink just at night. They also roam around drunk as a skunk during broad daylight.

Well, the magnolia, it really has some annoyances, Babette thinks. She should have gone with good German trees, like oaks or the linden trees. No way is she going to have a birch in her front garden! That's the Russian national tree: gawky, gangling and gaunt. "No wonder they have so many ballet dancers over there", Babette growls out.

Moreover, Babette once saw how her more than dearest neighbour Waldemar, a loyal friend of the Latest Prussians and founder of the local one-man crime watch, slipped on the slimy petals. That happened when Waldemar recovered from his hip surgery and after his fall, he was back in hospital in no time. This gradually spoiled Babette's joy of having the tree. Furthermore, the magnolia served as an accomplice of the pigeon mafia last night. Babette would have never dreamed that one day a tree would betray her.

It doesn't matter whether you are young or old, hippie or righteous, the malicious magnolia is just another revolting egalitarian, she thinks. It makes everybody fall over.

Babette is getting her chainsaw.

Shanta Acharya

In Silence

(From *What Survives Is The Singing* (2020) by Shanta Acharya)

When fate deals you a losing hand, play in silence.
Luck favours those who mend themselves in silence.

Remember precious lessons learnt in defeat –
pearls of experience purchased in silence.

A game of chance, nothing in this world is real,
our stories shadows passing in silence.

Be the flame of a candle to what blows you –
life is the greatest gift bestowed in silence.

Days are restless until your heart finds a home,
a sky where you can be yourself in silence.

Earth's grand gardens may beckon you in your dreams,
love's a patch of green that flowers in silence –

a shade that shelters you in times of crises,
a place you keep returning to in silence.

To hold, be held the Beloved eternal –
believe in the splendour of grace in silence.

*Silence is the keeper of keys to secrets*³ –
Shantih that passes understanding in silence.

³ The line, 'Silence is the keeper of keys to secrets' is from "Things" by Agha Shahid Ali, *Call Me Ishmael Tonight* (W.W. Norton & Company, New York/London: 2003).

Ranu Uniyal

Abide with me

Of love I can give you splendid accounts
Without any signs of fatigue

Of courage I am proud to behold and will not
Let you relinquish the taste of it

Of smiles I am more than willing to offer
Even if your cup is full

Of hope I will make you see how it lies
Dormant in these testing times

Of faith I shall read tales of Sindbad and Jataka
And redeem it for life

Of friendship I will waltz smoke rant
And share all in one go

Of life I shall remain silent
And let you explore.

Shanta Acharya

Belonging

(From *What Survives Is The Singing* (2020) by Shanta Acharya)

To be touched with tenderness,
the curve of your thoughts explored,

shapes they sing in, syllables uttered,
meanings inhaled the way elephants

smell water from a distance.
If only words were licked, turned over,

nuzzled as a matriarch might linger
on the bare bones of an ancestor

lost in a deep, long meditation on a half-
recognised kingdom, every desire a covenant,

when the herd stop to mourn one of their own,
scan the horizon lit by distant flashings

from the past, reading the land as they rumble
on with their journey to a new home.

Only she with the majestic tusks pauses
to taste sorrow, celebrate the chance encounter,

stroking, twirling, twisting, feeling,
her sensitive trunk caressing the carcass

as a blind person memorises a face,
touching, smelling, kissing, holding

on to memories that travel from bone to bone
like words from mouth to mouth.

Ranu Uniyal

If only

Stitch not
the wounds
show the
space that is

hollow
fear not
lest they
draw you

inside and
you dread
sipping the
abominable sweat

nothing ever
sinks
only brave
Nachiketa's voice

remains inside
the chest
clogged by
the vertebrae

of questions
of soaring spirits
Yama had
no knowledge

if only
the wise
had spared
their guts

life would
not have
plunged
into darkness.



Natalie Bleyl, Underground

Konstantin Gora

Of Gates and Guards

"I want her back", the man pleaded helplessly. "Please", he begged, "why can't I go back?"

He tried to slither through the strong arms of the guard, who stood his ground, eyes shining with fierce determination. The guard respectfully held the man at bay, keeping him just out of reach of the pompous gate to the past.

"You know that it is not possible", the guard replied.

"There has to be some way I can go back", the man said with hope.

"There isn't", the guard grunted and pushed the man away with gentle ease.

The man looked up at the beautiful arch and the supporting pillars enclosing the gate fully. Behind its durable yet inviting bars a long path was lined with several other gates. Each of them was fitted with a guard and presented a different situation, mood, and, ultimately, past.

All the ones that came before, he thought reflectively, not capable of looking away.

The past held his attention for a long time, and the golden glow of the former gates, the ones he had passed at certain times before, lingered in the air like sweet scents of hope in spring. With his gaze completely transfixed at the wonders of the past, he approached the gate sullenly, only to be stopped harshly by the guard, "Move on", he told him once more, slightly more energetic than before.

The man looked up to him, for his size was at least double his own, not understanding. "Why are you here?" he asked him presently.

The guard answered firmly, "I am here because you need me to be."

The man did not try to hide his surprise, as he claimed, "I did not ask for this, if you were to do my bidding, you would let me through there!" Upset, he pointed toward the gate, which almost seemed to glow as bright as a warm smile that can melt one's heart.

"You cannot understand it now. But you will in time", said the guard.

"What is that supposed to mean?" The man was confused.

"From your current perspective", he paused, before looking at him for only the second time, "you have certainly not given any order yet."

The man watched the guard's face intently, having shown subtle emotion, or at least something that resembled it. As if to explain, the guard added, "You have not, but you will", before resuming his unrelenting stare into the void distance.

The man waited some moments and then continued his questioning of the guard, "Say, if it were not for my order, would I be able to go back?" Subtly, he indicated the gate.

"I suppose. But it is not my duty to know, only to guard."

The man nodded understandingly and glanced at his wristwatch, which did not show him the current time. Helplessly, he looked around, but only the gate and the

ones far behind were visible, connected by a straight path. Facing away from the gates, he sighed and stared into the void of unknown nothingness. It seemed to be the right path to take, the man decided wistfully. Before leaving, the man turned around once more and regarded the guard with a knowing glance. Then, he vanished from the scene to move on.



Martina Gloge, Your Dreams May Enter

Bio Notes

Shanta Acharya, born and educated in Orissa, India, won a scholarship to Oxford, where she was awarded a doctoral degree in English. She was a visiting scholar at Harvard University before joining an American investment bank in London. She is the author of twelve books. Her doctoral study, *The Influence of Indian Thought on Ralph Waldo Emerson*, was published in 2001. A poet, novelist, reviewer and scholar, her poems have been widely anthologised appearing in major publications in the USA, UK, and India. The author of twelve books, her latest poetry collections are *What Survives Is The Singing* (2020) and *Imagine: New and Selected Poems* (2017). Her novel, *A World Elsewhere*, was published in 2015. She is working on her second novel and her eighth poetry collection. For more information visit her website: www.shanta-acharya.com

Marvin Bergt is a bachelor student of English Studies at the University of Leipzig.

Natalie Bleyl is a master student of English and American Studies at Chemnitz University of Technology.

Chelsea Burris is a master student of English and American Studies at Chemnitz University of Technology.

Laura Drechsel is a student of Educational Studies for Elementary Schools at Chemnitz University of Technology.

Andreas Gloge is a freelance radio playwright and novelist and a member of PAN (Phantastik-Autoren-Netzwerk e.V.). He is best known as the screenwriter of the successful radio play series *Gabriel Burns* and *Point Whitmark*. For further information feel free to pay him a visit: www.andreasgloge.com

Martina Gloge is a digital creator and editor. She is also a freelance photographer, loves to travel, to read and to write and has an M.A. in Ethnology and in German Language and Literature. If this got you curious visit her website: www.martinagloge.com

Konstantin Gora is a bachelor student of Media and Communication Studies at Chemnitz University of Technology.

Isabel Heinze is a pupil at Carl-von-Bach-Gymnasium Stollberg. She has been creating digital art since 2015.

Harald Linke is a retired teacher of English. He also deals with Shakespeare and is known for his translation of the Sonnets.

Mahshid Mayar is a cultural historian, literary critic, and poet. Currently, she is a lecturer at the department of American Studies at Bielefeld University, Germany.

Leo Najasek is a bachelor student of English and American Studies at Chemnitz University of Technology.

Paul Ayodele Onanuga teaches in the Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University Oye Ekiti, Nigeria. In his creative writings, he engages in nature, his Yoruba roots as well as the outcomes of human social interactions. As a

fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, he spent time at Chemnitz University of Technology.

Nina-Sophie Raach is a bachelor student of British Studies at Leipzig University.

Cecile Sandten holds the chair of English Literature(s) at Chemnitz University of Technology.

Tobias Schlosser is a trained bar tender who holds a PhD in English literature from Chemnitz University of Technology. He works as a teacher and bookkeeper, and published his first short story collection *Babette postfaktisch* in 2020. Besides writing fiction and academic texts, he studies psychology at the FernUniversität in Hagen.

Michelle Seifert is a bachelor student of European Studies at Chemnitz University of Technology. Find more art by Michelle Seifert on Instagram: @bndngspirit

Ranu Uniyal is Professor of English at the University of Lucknow, India. She is currently Head of the Department of English and Modern European Languages. She writes funny poems when she is hurt and sad poems on days full of laughter.

Turning Pages is an annual journal of bright voices from all over the world in creative and original writing in English in short fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and drama, as well as in drawings, art projects and many other related genres by students, academics, and writers. It is a production of the Chair of English Literatures at the English Department at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany, and the first journal of its kind at the university.

Turning Pages can be read in both ways, literally and metaphorically, implying that we need to turn the pages, that we need to demonstrate that literature has something to say and that it can also be interventionist as it shows how we can use our own imagination for the better. Therefore, *Turning Pages* will make readers not only literally browse through a variety of texts and turn pages, but it also seeks to reflect situations, events, experiences, or emotions that turn the page for individuals, or groups of people.

The third issue of *Turning Pages* is about facing and overcoming personal struggles as well as the challenges of the present time by venturing out into public life again, after months of isolation and standstill. A range of contributions by professional and published authors such as Shanta Acharya, Ranu Uniyal, Andreas Gloge and Tobias Schlosser, but also a selection of pictures by photographers such as Natalie Bleyl and Martina Gloge enhances and complements the multifaceted textual and graphic pieces by students and first-time writers.



TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
CHEMNITZ

Chair of English Literatures
<https://www.tu-chemnitz.de/phil/english/sections/englit/>

Chemnitz University of Technology
09107 Chemnitz
www.tu-chemnitz.de/index.html.en

University Press Chemnitz
ISSN 2629-8384
4,00 €