



Foreign Rights Guide

Fall 2026



Matthes & Seitz Berlin





Anna Schapiro

Make Yourself at Home, But Don't Forget You're a Guest

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A vivid and eloquent debut novel: How storytelling shapes who we are

At the funeral of her legendary grandmother Sweetie, Anna decides to set out in search of her family's untold stories. Armed with a recorder, she travels to New York and Boston, to Arad and Haifa, visiting distant relatives, college classmates, and friends of her grandparents. In kitchens that are foreign yet familiar, in small living rooms and large nursing homes, she listens intently: every story entrusted to her is about farewells, emigration, and the many different ways of settling in. Each conversation bears witness to the unique life journey of a single person. And yet they all share Anna's story – and form the fabric of a moving historical novel of Soviet-Jewish life in the 20th century.

In her unique narrative style, which blends spoken word with evocative imagery, Anna Schapiro weaves a dense tapestry of memories and anecdotes – drawing from the horrific and, at the same time, the surprisingly ordinary – in which humanity finds solace amidst its contradictions.

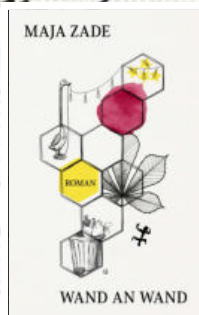
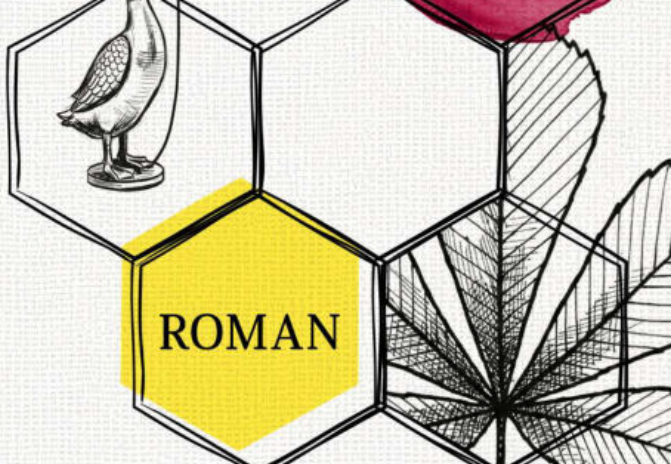
"A great, great asset to literature." – Natascha Freundel, *radio3*

"Not only does the text offer an original take on the world of the family, it is also characterised by its careful and precise use of language. [...] A thought-provoking debut novel that is an absolute must-read." – Tino Schlench, *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*

Novel
Hardcover
238 pages
2026
English sample available

Anna Schapiro, born in Moscow in 1988, moved to Germany with her parents in 1992. She studied fine arts in Dresden and Jewish studies in Stockholm. Work and fellowship residencies have taken her to New York, Warsaw, London, and Mexico. She exhibits internationally and teaches at various universities and colleges. Schapiro was co-curator of the exhibition *Class Issues – Art Production In and Out of Precarity* (2022) at the Berlinische Galerie, as well as founder and co-editor of the magazine *Yalta – Positionen zur jüdischen Gegenwart* (Yalta – Perspectives on the Jewish Present).

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Maja Zade

Wall to Wall

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

**Door to door – and yet worlds apart: one house, many lives,
and a quiet longing for closeness**

An apartment building, two courtyards, a chestnut tree – and a web of lives that run side by side, intersect, and sometimes miss each other. There's Maja, who lives in the rear building and, caught between a writer's block, her best friend's complicated romantic turmoil, and her fear for her terminally ill friend, tries not to get lost in her own daily routine. Below her, where just a short while ago a neighbor's screams brought the police to the scene, Jürgen is daring to make a fresh start with his younger partner – while simultaneously having to deal with a daughter who brings with her claims of ownership and old wounds. Meanwhile, in the front building, a married couple takes refuge in fantasies of a more exciting life, while Kay, a single father, spends his nights dwelling on his past. Their struggles for love, recognition, and identity all play out behind closed doors. And yet their stories seep through walls and windows, intertwining in the courtyard, the stairwell, and by the trash cans, where unexpected connections emerge.

Maja Zade tells the story of a building as a microcosm of a city – and of people who coexist side by side yet inevitably influence one another. A polyphonic novel about closeness and distance, about aging, desire, and the fragile hope that something like a sense of connection can grow out of mere neighborliness.

Novel
Hardcover
348 pages
2026

**Nominated for the Har-
bour Front Debut Prize
2026**

Maja Zade, who grew up in Germany and Sweden, studied English literature at the University of London and Queen's University in Canada, as well as theater production at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. In addition to teaching at the Malmö Academy of Theatre and Edinburgh University, she translates plays. Her own plays regularly enjoy international success. She lives in Berlin and is the chief dramaturg at the Schaubühne. *Wall to Wall* is her debut novel.

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Berlin · Apartment block · Relationships · Writer · Neighbours · Microcosm · Ways of life · Theater

Friedenauer Presse



Helga Kurzchalia *World Clock*



World Clock tells the story of the 1970s and 1980s in East Berlin, weaving together personal experiences with world events: a young psychologist feels her freedom curtailed by the social conditions of the time and repeatedly asks herself what is 'normal' and why the 'normal' often strikes her as so alien. Is it an echo of the Nazi era? Or a reflection of the GDR with its norms and constraints, that sense of confinement? Can therapy change the world, and what does this question have to do with her own background? In her search for direction, she looks at her own life through the eyes of others – when she meets Magda, who smuggled children out of the Jewish ghetto during the war and, many years later, works with autistic children; whilst working at Herzberge Hospital, when she unexpectedly encounters an old school friend in the psychiatric ward, who is a patient there; or at a counselling centre, where she explores the personal scope for change together with families. Time and again, it becomes clear just how deeply the political permeates the private sphere: personal biography becomes a magnifying glass for collective history.

"If you want to find out about life in the GDR, this book is very useful and well written."
– Jörg Magenau, *radio3*

"The Berlin-based psychotherapist and author Helga Kurzchalia gives a very detailed account of a period she experienced first-hand. Her observant style is captivating."
– Cornelia Geissler, *Berliner Zeitung*

Novel
Hardcover
146 pages
2026

Helga Kurzchalia is a Berlin-based psychotherapist and author. Her published works include *Lamas Briefe oder vom Untergang des Kommunismus* (2010), *HIER* (2007), and *Im Halbschlaf* (2000). Most recently published by Friedenauer Presse: *Haus des Kindes* (2021).

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Clemens Böckmann

The Real Life of Alvaro Maderholz

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A novel as if Roberto Bolaño had reinvented the world from the top of a ski jump

At one beginning, whilst plumes of smoke still drift over the Chilean presidential palace and news of Salvador Allende's death is making the rounds, a child's first cry is heard. At the other beginning, the writer Clemens Böckmann, whilst working on a research project in Eisenerz, Austria, stumbles by chance upon the trail of a poet who died in a ski-jumping accident. And in between, the whole story unfolds: the true life of Alvaro Maderholz, who, as he took off from the ski jump, hoped to escape the gravity of his own family history, marked by war, exile and ideology.

Tracing a literary trail across continents, Clemens Böckmann weaves together archive material, passport copies and poems into a polyphonic text about origin and invention, about the power of documents and the seductive nature of storytelling – and, not least, into a crime novel full of twists and turns, feints and leads concerning the temptation to find, amidst the rubble of history, a truth that may always have been fiction.

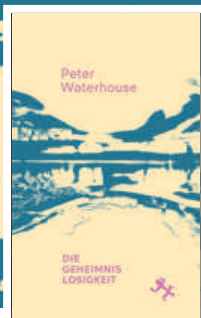
"[Böckmann] reconciles literature's artistic aspirations with its hope for sociopolitical relevance." – Maximilian Mengerlinghaus, *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*

Novel
Hardcover
208 pages
2026

Clemens Böckmann, born in 1988, studied in Kiel, Lisbon and Tel Aviv. He works as an author, filmmaker and editor in Leipzig. In 2023, Clemens Böckmann was awarded the WORTMELDUNGEN Ulrike Crespó Prize for *How I missed the war*. In 2024, he received the Jürgen Ponto Foundation Literature Prize for his novel *Was du kriegern kannst*.

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Chile · Ski jumper · Biographical search · Fact & fiction · Military dictatorship · Family history



Peter Waterhouse

The Absence of Mystery. Walking and Reading Book

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

"You can only see the whole world, and you can only have the whole world, if you speak in commonplace terms."

Aimless wandering sets not only the body but, above all, the mind in motion – a literary topos that the essays in this volume explore anew as Peter Waterhouse sets out, step by step, to trace the 'unmysterious' or 'hero-less' words. Words such as 'petrol station', 'corrugated-iron hut' or 'fence', which point to places of concentrated aimlessness, to non-places and starting points, and which, in their inconspicuousness and discretion, stand 'open in all directions, open to all reality'. With these in mind, the walk becomes a linguistic stroll not only through real landscapes, but also through memories, and in particular through the texts of those poets who have always accompanied Waterhouse's own writing – Stifter, Goethe, Zanzotto, but above all Gerard Manley Hopkins, one of the most significant British poets of the 19th century.

"For me, these two terms provide a way into Peter Waterhouse's work: The Walker. The Language Walker. The Language-Walking Dissector. The Language-Dissecting Walker."

– Egbert-Hans Müller, *Planet Lyrik*

Literature
Hardcover
302 pages
2026

Peter Waterhouse, born in Berlin in 1956, lives in Vienna as a writer and translator. After studying German and English, Waterhouse was awarded a doctorate in 1984 with a thesis on Paul Celan. As an author, he writes poetry, essays, prose and plays, and also works as a translator from English and Italian. In 2025, his magnum opus, *Z Ypsilon X*, was published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin.

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Walking · Non-places · Translation · Perception · Poetry · Hopkins · Goethe



Viktor Jerofejew

The New Barbarism. A Novel about the Russian Guilt

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A ludicrous novel about the world as a political football of powerful men – for anyone who has the courage to look behind the façade.

In times of a new barbarism, with heads of state and government dividing up the world like mafiosi, Viktor Jerofejew paints a garishly dazzling panorama of human and political abysses, in which truth becomes a game and morality an attitude. While Putin appears as a "ponchik" – an oil-baked doughnut with a hole in the middle, symbolizing a bloated emptiness – the opposition poses as martyrs. At the center is "Russian Guilt", a female allegory of the country and object of the protagonist's desire. With her, Jerofejew's alter ego sets off for "Heavenly Moscow", a surreal landscape between dream, memory, and farce, where history and the present collide. There, Stalin and Rilke, Tsvetaeva and Merkel meet, and even the great Russian classics – from Pushkin to Tolstoy – appear as witnesses to an endless recurrence of violence. In this alchemical mixture of autobiography, essay, and allegory, the image of a country that is breaking apart under the weight of its own mythological lust emerges – and at the same time draws the reader into the maelstrom of its language. *The New Barbarism* is Jerofejew's most radical book: satire, poetry, and a tragicomic declaration of love to a Russia that has lost itself.

"The book is brimming with historical highlights, anecdotes, personal reminiscences and reflections, repeatedly punctuated by satirical undertones, grotesque scenes and scathing accusations." – Eberhard Falcke, SWR Kultur

Novel
Hardcover
448 pages
2026
Russian original available

Rights sold to:
Russian (Vento Digital VD GmbH)
Finnish (Siltala Publishing)
Hungarian (Atlantic Kft.)

Viktor Jerofejew (Viktor Yerofejev), born in Moscow in 1947, became known for his novel *The Moscow Beauty*, which was translated into 27 languages. In 1979 he was expelled from the USSR Writers' Union for his participation in the anthology *Metropol*, which featured texts by various authors that had been banned by the censors. He has lived in exile in Germany since 2022. Recently published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin: *The Great Gopnik* (2023). For further information: rights@matthes-seitz-berlin.de
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Russia · Satire · Putin · Dictatorship · Authoritarianism · Moscow · Stalin



Yevgenia Belorusets

Matches

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Theater to read: the fate of Ukraine in three acts

A basement in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine. Voices can be heard coming from a radio somewhere, reporting on the political situation, the chances of victory in battle, and patriotic duties. Sasha and Alexandra, both seventeen years old, are hiding here. It is pitch dark. They search for matches among old junk but find none. Under different circumstances, this would be the beginning of a youthful love story, but in Yevgenia Belorusets' first play to be published in German, the state of emergency that has gripped her homeland since Russia's first wave of attacks more than ten years ago prevails.

In three acts, *Matches* tells of the search for a way out, of the human tragedy of a chance encounter with hope in a basement, and of the necessity of always and everywhere stockpiling matches, which cannot save you from being completely engulfed by war.

"Belorusets's stories work their way under your skin." – *The Times Literary Supplement* on *Lucky Breaks*

"This is truly great literature. Like a match that brings light into the darkness." – Ulrich Hufen, WDR 3

Play
Hardcover
136 pages
2026
Russian original available

Yevgenia Belorusets is a Ukrainian photographer, artist and writer who lives between Kyiv and Berlin. She is concerned with the intersections of art, media and society, and involved in a number of cultural and political initiatives. Her first book *Lucky Breaks* (2019) has been critically acclaimed and translated in 10 languages. Most recently published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin: *Modern Animal* (2024).

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KAFFEEKIRSCHEN leuchten



Nicola Denis

Where the Coffee Cherries Shine



A moving story about new beginnings, longing, and memories

1953, in the German economic wonderland: A young woman from Ludwigshafen stands with her newlywed husband at the railing of the ocean liner that will take them from Hamburg to Colombia. He is expecting his first job as a geologist in the Andean city of Tunja, while she looks forward to her uncertain future as a “temporary emigrant” with equal parts joy and concern – separated from her protective extended family in her religious parents’ home, having sacrificed her music studies and unfamiliar with Colombian culture and history. In Tunja, they are confronted with the often colonial attitudes of the Germans living abroad, who mostly remain silent about the past. While her husband conducts research in the field, the young German woman is busy furnishing her new home and finds connections as a chamber musician. She maintains her “bond with her homeland” in her letters on airmail paper, which express longing and self-assertion: collected in twelve folders. With these documents, fragments of stories, and photo albums, as well as on a trip to Tunja with two of her children, the narrator follows in the footsteps of her parents and grandparents a good seventy years later. A meticulously and sincerely crafted literary dialogue between the generations.

“In terms of language, this novel is simply a great aesthetic delight. In every line, one can sense the alert, trained mind of the multi-award-winning translator, who, as she carefully weighs up every word, delves ever deeper into her parents’ lives.” – Silke Arning, SWR

Novel
Hardcover
340 pages
2026

Nicola Denis, born in Celle in 1972, lives in western France as a literary translator and author. She has translated works by Éric Vuillard and Honoré de Balzac for Friedenauer Presse. In 2021, she received the prestigious Prix Lémanique de la traduction, and in 2023, the Eugen Helmlé Translation Prize. *Where the Coffee Cherries Shine* is her second novel.

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Columbia · Family history · Emigration · Letters · Foreignness · Colonialism · Longing · Women



Millay Hyatt

How Many Days Must I Walk. Being a Guest in Unfamiliar Neighborhoods



The joy of walking and hospitality

Millay Hyatt embarks on a journey into the unknown: she sets off on foot from Berlin heading east to explore the boundaries between capital city and province, strangers and friends, history and the present. Without a smartphone, but with Fontane in her backpack, she lets herself be recommended from door to door – from left-wing housing projects to city-escape shared apartments to retired mayors and cigarette sellers at the Polish market. She stands in front of closed farm shops and the open arms of her hosts, who are rarely confirmed more than a day in advance, each day an improvisation and an experiment. She runs through sun-drenched forests, gets lost in deserted landscapes, is rescued by a forestry worker, spends the night in medieval towers, and marvels at the fractures and beauties of the Brandenburg and West Pomeranian provinces.

How Many Days Must I Walk is a literary travel essay about hospitality and being a stranger, about city and country, borders and transitions. Millay Hyatt weaves personal experiences with philosophical reflections, history with current conflicts. The result is a multi-layered book about the joy of being welcomed by strangers – and an invitation to embark on an adventure right outside your own front door.

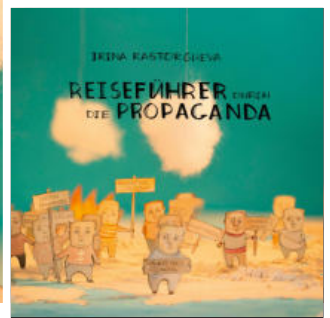
"Millay Hyatt is a sensitive observer. She captures the unseen, the unfamiliar, the seductively different." – Tagesspiegel

Literary essay
Hardcover
224 pages
2026

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. 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. Previously published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin: *Days on the Night Train* (2024) was awarded the Ilse Schwegcke Prize 2025 and will be published in English translation by Haus Publishing.

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DIE PROPAGANDA



Irina Rastorgueva

A Guide to Propaganda in Europe

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Hand-drawn enlightenment in the age of manipulation

Propaganda is not some distant spectacle – it takes place right here amongst us. More subtly than posters and slogans, it shapes language, the media and public debates – from Europe to China, from Russian narratives to the populist strategies of Western politics. At the heart of this book lies the current shift to the right in Europe: how do language and perception change as populist rhetoric seeps ever deeper into our everyday consciousness? How do actors use manipulative narratives to secure political power – and who benefits from this?

With a keen eye and a skilful hand, Irina Rastorgueva – following the success of *Pop-up Propaganda* – guides us through the mechanisms of modern manipulation: she shows how disinformation works – and what ways there are to counter it. *A Guide to Propaganda in Europe* turns education into a craft – both literally and figuratively. Every page of this hand-drawn book takes a stand against automated troll factories and the linguistic erosion of democratic values.

“The book examines right-wing propaganda in Europe, the rise of right-wing populists and the far right in European politics. It explores various propaganda systems and the influence of Russian propaganda in the European media landscape, and seeks to highlight ways of recognising such information and developing critical thinking.”

Comic
Hardcover with collages
ca. 320 pages
2026

Irina Rastorgueva, born in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in 1983, studied philology and worked as a cultural journalist for several Russian magazines and radio stations. She is the author of numerous academic articles on the theory and history of literature and journalism. Since 2017 she has been working as an author and graphic designer in Berlin. She writes for the FAZ, NZZ and Osteuropa magazine. Her previous book *Pop-Up Propaganda* (2024) received the Leipzig Book Fair Prize 2025 and has been translated into Hungarian and Russian.

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Right-wing populism · Disinformation · Manipulation · European countries · Media · Civic Education

Wie KI unsere Wirklichkeit, Moral und Gesellschaft neu berechnet



Mads Pankow

The Probable Truth. How AI is Reshaping our Reality, Morality and Society

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

The end of our conceptions of reality does not merely signify loss, it can also serve as a starting point for new orders

Our sense of truth is under pressure: fake news, echo chambers and hallucinating language models are undermining well-founded, fact-based explanations. Yet this development is no accident. A look back at history shows that every new media technology has always transformed how truth emerges and what is deemed to be true – from language and writing, through the printing press and the internet, to artificial intelligence. AI no longer recognises facts or causal relationships, but calculates answers solely on the basis of statistical probabilities. This leads to errors and hallucinations – and yet its results are often more accurate than human explanations, for example in medicine, science or forecasting.

Mads Pankow's 'Media History of Truth' situates us in a phase of transition – from a rule- and argument-based order to a society in which models, forecasts and correlations are beginning to determine our thinking and actions. Can we imagine a world without explainable truth, without formalised morality, without laws and rules? The machines can.

"Artificial intelligence shows that one can be right without knowing why. This is not a technical curiosity, but a challenge to our world view. When probabilities become more reliable than reasons and facts, a society that has hitherto sought to explain, justify and substantiate the truth begins to change. This shift cannot be prevented, but it can be shaped."

Non-fiction
Hardcover
284 pages
2026

Mads Pankow, born in 1985, is a journalist who explores the social implications of digital technologies and artificial intelligence. He works at the intersection of media history, philosophy of technology and contemporary analysis, and from this perspective contributes to public debates on artificial intelligence, media transformation and social order. Pankow founded the magazine *Die Epilog* and hosts the podcast *Mensch, Maschine!*

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M

TRIBUNALE SOZIALER MEDIEN



Rupert Gaderer

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Reaction Machine. Social Media Tribunals

Hate, insults, propaganda: How can conflicts on social media be effectively curbed?

Non-fiction
Hardcover
248 pages
2026

Social media has spread into the furthest corners of our lives. It structures the flow of information, channels attention and contributes to the formation of a highly reactive public sphere. This reactionary machine produces fake news, stokes hatred and leads people to publicly attack and insult one another, and to set up tribunals.

Rupert Gaderer uses literary texts, theatre pieces and essayistic interventions, as well as court cases, self-help guides and 'shitstorm' simulations, to show how digital conflicts are aesthetically reflected upon, reproduced or criticised: in paranoid observation logs, in counter-attacks against haters, in poetic forms of digital insult, in literary hate speech on stage, and in analyses of right-wing ideologies. In doing so, this book outlines, not least, aesthetic strategies of resistance against the destructive dynamics of social media – moving beyond resigned lamentations about the coarsening of debate culture and illusory demands for a complete disconnection from the internet or a sweeping legal curtailment of the platforms.

Rupert Gaderer, born in Vienna, teaches and conducts research at Ruhr University Bochum and co-leads the project 'Virtual Worlds of Conflict: Forums and the Dynamics of Tribunalisation' within the SFB 1567 'Virtual Life-worlds'. He has extended his research into complaints and grievances to include digital and extra-institutional conflicts. His most recent publication is *Querulieren. Kulturtechniken, Medien und Literatur 1700–2000* (2021).

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Social media · Fake news · Far-right extremism · Hate speech · Online backlash · Democracy · Censorship



Philipp Schönthaler

Animals in Space

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Is it possible to imagine human existence without animals?

Wherever one looks, animals have always been there – geographically, evolutionarily, and even in the vastness of the cosmos, they have always been one step ahead of humankind: as mediators between Earth and the heavens, as projections of distant planetary inhabitants, and, ultimately, quite literally as pioneers of space travel. Even before Yuri Gagarin orbited the Earth and Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon, fruit flies, the rhesus macaques Albert I-IV and the most famous space animal to this day, the dog Laika, had already thrown open the gates to space. Yet in the visions of the newly reignited Space Race, there is now almost no trace of animals. Instead: microbes and plants, closed-loop systems and technically optimised habitats. What appears to be a gain in efficiency marks a profound break. For with the disappearance of animals from visions of the future, the image of humanity is also shifting.

Philipp Schönthaler's *Animals in Space* is more than a story of spectacular missions. It is a fascinating exploration of our age-old relationship with the animal world – and an uncomfortable question for the future, both in space and on Earth: what happens to our concept of humanity when we lose those living beings with whom we share our origins?

Non-fiction
Hardcover
ca. 200 pages
2026

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 ten of his books; the essay *Portrait of the Manager as a Young Author* (2016) was translated into English and Turkish. In *Pages of the Sky*, Schönthaler deepens his theoretical exploration of technology and literature that he started in *The Automation of Writing and Literature Counterprograms* (2022) and *How Rational Machines Became Romantic* (2024). Most recently published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin: *Mysteria Hysteria* (2026).

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Space travel · Absence of animals · Vision of the future · Space Race · Species extinction · Morality



Fynn Ole Engler

Thinking with Einstein

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Albert Einstein and the art of connective thinking in times of global crises

Albert Einstein is regarded as one of the most significant scientists of the modern era. He achieved world fame as a physicist. His thinking has been the subject of numerous studies. Even his brain has been studied – in the hope of getting closer to unravelling the mystery of his extraordinary mind. Yet Einstein's genius lay not in his anatomy, but in his keen sense of tensions, contradictions and conflicts. He discovered and created them as persistent, protracted and therefore creative problems – not only in physics, but also in his engagement with political, religious and cultural issues.

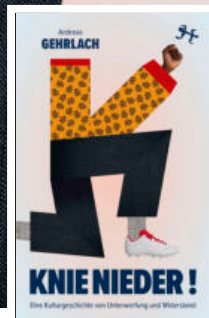
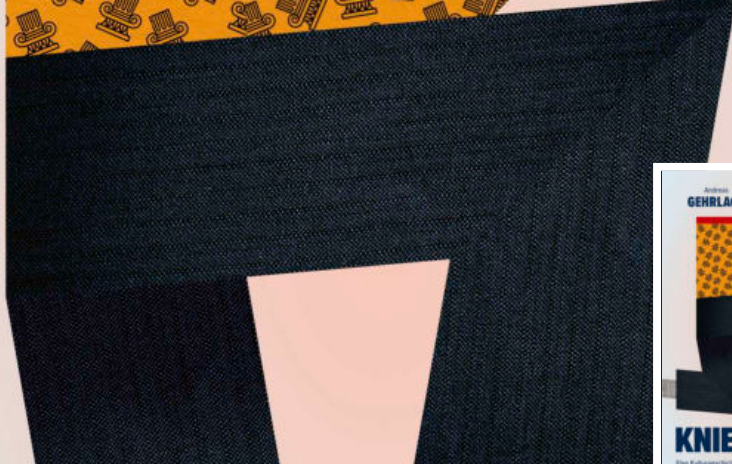
In seven vignettes, Fynn Ole Engler traces Einstein's train of thought in science, whilst also shedding light on his reflections on pacifism, politics, ethics and religion, drawing on numerous sources. He reveals the intellectual richness of an inspiring figure who still has much to tell us today about the art of unifying thought in times of global crises.

Non-fiction
Hardcover
158 pages
2026

Fynn Ole Engler, born in Wismar in 1971, works as a philosopher of science at the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Rostock. From 2006 to 2024, he conducted research at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin. His work focuses on the evolving relationship between reason, science and history. His most recent book, *Gespaltene Vernunft* (co-authored with Jürgen Renn), was published by Matthes & Seitz Berlin in 2018.

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Theory of Relativity · Anti-Semitism · Second World War · Exile · Pacifism · Zionism · Nuclear Energy



Andreas Gehrlach

Kneel! A Cultural History of Submission and Resistance

From antiquity to Black Lives Matter, from Enkidu to Colin Kaepernick: wherever there has been subjugation, resistance has always been possible

When Alexander the Great sought to introduce the act of kneeling in reverence at his court in the fourth century BC, a far-reaching dispute flared up over what constitutes religion – faith or practice. In the Middle Ages, Christian monks in monasteries cleverly circumvented the hours of gruelling prayer by using the time spent kneeling to take a nap. And when the American footballer Colin Kaepernick knelt during the singing of the US national anthem in 2016, this not only brought the demands of Black Lives Matter to the fore, but also made it clear: those who kneel are not submitting; they are challenging authority. This unusual cultural history explores submission and domination through what is only seemingly the most unambiguous of all gestures.

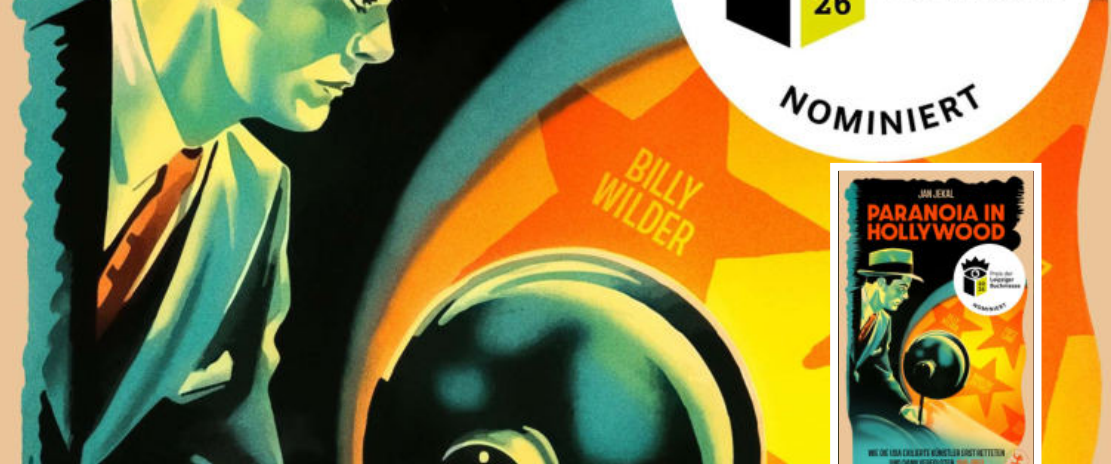
Andreas Gehrlach demonstrates, with both expertise and empathy, that kneeling is no mere curiosity but lies at the very heart of the symbolism of power. To this end, he draws on scenes of kneeling from the last five thousand years, showing with each one anew that resistance is something entirely human. Perhaps even what makes us human.

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Non-fiction
Hardcover
ca. 420 pages
2026

Andreas Gehrlach, born in 1981, studied literary studies in Tübingen and is the Academic Programme Director at the International Research Centre for Cultural Studies in Vienna. His work focuses on modern and ancient cultural theories, precarious, criminal and political economies, and he conducts research into the history of hierarchy and its challenge.

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Jan Jekal

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Paranoia in Hollywood. How the US First Saved and Then Persecuted Exiled Artists. 1941–1953

The grand panorama of “German California” shows the glamour and misery of artists and intellectuals in exile in Hollywood.

Santa Monica, Pacific Palisades, or Beverly Hills – these are the illustrious names of the Californian idyll where they found refuge: filmmakers and actors, writers and intellectuals who had to flee Europe from the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s. They formed a solidarity-based community of exiles: Bertolt Brecht, Helene Weigel, and Hanns Eisler; Billy Wilder and Vicki Baum; Fritz Lang and William Wyler; Thomas and Heinrich Mann. Anyone who had a name in Berlin, Vienna, or Prague followed the call of Hollywood’s booming film industry. But this romantic “Weimar on the Pacific” is not the whole story: even as they made their military and moral contributions to the Allies at the beginning of the war, the refugees became suspects. Just moments before celebrated as noble opponents of the Nazis, their trash is now being searched by the FBI – the “red menace” and McCarthyism turn free spirits and left-wing liberals into hostile “communists”. The country that was a refuge is transformed into a place of repression and persecution.

Captivating and atmospheric, Jan Jekal uses previously unpublished documents from archives in Los Angeles to trace how the exiles fought back against authoritarian America – with activism, wit, courage, and films that have become classics – but also how some of them despaired of America.

Narrative non-fiction
Hardcover with illustrations
400 pages
2026

English sample available
Selected for New Books in German – translation funding guaranteed for the English language
Selected for Litrix – translation funding guaranteed for the Polish language

Nominated for the Leipzig Book Fair Prize 2026

Jan Jekal, born in Kiel in 1993, is a freelance author and cultural journalist. He studied North American Studies at the Free University of Berlin. His articles on film and music have been published in *DIE ZEIT* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, among others. He also hosts the pop culture podcast *Rolling Stone Weekly*. Jekal lives in Berlin. For further information: rights@matthes-seitz-berlin.de
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Hollywood · Thomas Mann · Marlene Dietrich · McCarthy · Mistrust · Communism · Antisemitism



Matthias Bormuth

On the Eeriness of the World. Thinking with Hannah Arendt

On the trail of one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century – thinking with Hannah Arendt is more necessary than ever

In his portrait in the history of ideas based on her most important works, Matthias Bormuth brings us closer to Hannah Arendt's thinking as reflected in our present day. He offers a reading guide and, at the same time, a guide to thinking for ourselves. In doing so, he follows the traces of Arendt's life, from her beginnings in German existential philosophy to the political upheaval of 1933, her Zionist activism in exile in Paris, and her confrontation with anti-Semitism through her alter ego *Rahel Varnhagen*, right up to her time in New York. From 1941 onwards, she launched her social philosophy as a public intellectual, which has shaped international debate since *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, and as a critical journalist, she sparked a worldwide controversy about thoughtless action and social responsibility with *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Her passionate reflections create a "signature of plurality" that begins in the individual and unfolds further in dialogue with others.

Moved by the uncanniness of the world, Hannah Arendt seeks to understand its totalitarian and technological temptations. She thus encounters her time with a philosophy of freedom that is more relevant than ever, even fifty years after her death. Matthias Bormuth shows, based on her works, that Hannah Arendt is the Socratic thinker of modernity: only those who can be themselves are also capable of encountering the world.

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Non-fiction
Hardcover
174 pages
2025

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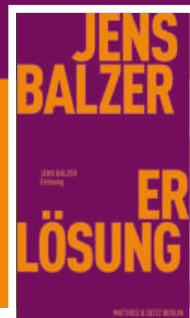
Matthias Bormuth is Professor of Comparative History of Ideas at the University of Oldenburg. There he heads the Karl Jaspers House and the Hannah Arendt Center research unit. He has published numerous books, essays, and editions on Hannah Arendt, Erich Auerbach, Karl Jaspers, Martin Warnke, and Max Weber. He has also published case studies on Ingeborg Bachmann, Uwe Johnson, Franz Kafka, and other modern authors.

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Heidegger · National Socialism · Anti-Semitism · Eichmann · Karl Jaspers · Philosophy · Totalitarianism

JENS BALZER

Erlösung



Jens Balzer

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Redemption. On Messianism and Apocalypticism in Contemporary Political Discourse

A highly topical essay on the return of religion to contemporary politics, culture, and philosophy

Religion is making a comeback in politics, culture, and philosophy – that is the defining feature of our time. Apocalyptic visions of salvation can be found just as much on the American right and among tech libertarians as on the postcolonial left and in its fascination with the death cults of political Islam. They can be found in Russian fantasies of a vast empire, but also where people strive for liberation from authoritarian constraints – as a longing for salvation from a world that can no longer conceive of community except in terms of social networks.

In his new essay, Jens Balzer shows how authoritarian thinking and religion become intertwined, but at the same time asks whether motives such as humility, grace, and ultimately salvation can show us a way out of the authoritarian constraints of the present. Can religious thought foster forms of community that counteract the false communalization of people, their isolation, and alienation in a world governed by digital technology? Can genuine religious thought be defended against the abuse of religion? And don't we actually need this religious thought in order to be truly redeemed?

Essay
Softcover
138 pages
2026

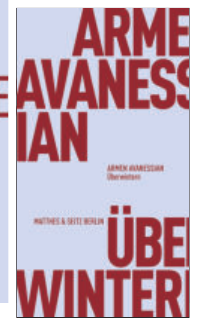
Jens Balzer, born in 1969, lives in Berlin and is a feature writer for *DIE ZEIT*. His previously by Matthes & Seitz Berlin published essays *Ethics of Appropriation* (2022) and *After Woke* (2023) have been translated into Spanish, the first one also into Italian.

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Apocalypse · Religion · Redemption · Christianity · Islam · Judaism · Silicon Valley

IAN

ARMEN AVANESSIAN
Überwintern



Armen Avanesian

Hibernation. Survival Strategies in Times of Scarcity

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

On life in times of multiple crises – a new planetary ethic

Armen Avanesian, the influential philosopher and specialist in speculative thinking about the future, presents hibernation – winter sleep or torpor – as an enlightening natural technique for our times. He combines philosophical reflection with cultural analysis: hibernation becomes a metaphor for concrete strategies of winding down and winding up again amidst hyperactivity, the pressure to grow and multiple crises. Grounded in the natural sciences and original in its humanities approach, he describes hibernation as a planetary ethic: co-evolutionary niches between standstill and progress, and a holding back that enables regeneration and reinvention. From sci-fi dystopias to degrowth strategies, a conceptual framework for the present emerges. Whilst biology regards hibernation and estivation as evolutionary masterpieces – in the face of resource scarcity and as protection against ageing – Avanesian transforms them into a cultural force for progress: philosophical hibernation as a response to global warming and digital insomnia.

Essay
Softcover
206 pages
2026

Armen Avanesian, born in Vienna in 1973, is a philosopher and political theorist, and holds the chair in Media Theory at Zeppelin University in Friedrichshafen. He is known for his contributions to accelerationism and speculative philosophy. His most recent publications include *Konflikt, Flüchtlingsmanagement* and *Planetary Ethics*.

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Strategy · Resource scarcity · Energy reduction · Adaptation · Environmental crisis · Anthropocene



MARKUS METZ / GEORG SEEßLEN

Technokratie



Georg Seeßlen, Markus Metz

Technocracy. The Renaissance of a Political Movement

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A highly topical essay that exposes the resurgence of anti-democratic elites

The 20th century was marked by the triumph of science and technology, while market economies and democracy repeatedly plunged into deep crises. Stock market crashes and mass unemployment exposed the weaknesses of liberal systems. Technocracy promises a way out of this. It relies on the rule of experts rather than democratic consensus. Its roots stretch from ancient utopias to the Anglo-Saxon movement of the 1930s, when thought leaders such as Thorstein Veblen and Howard Scott advocated for rational elites. In Germany, the idea became intertwined with anti-Semitism and authoritarianism, influencing both socialism and fascism.

In their essay, Georg Seeßlen and Markus Metz describe the renaissance of a political idea and highlight the dangers that arise when technocracy aligns with right-wing populism. They argue that in an age of rapid advancements in knowledge and technology, politics must also cede some of its control and decision-making power to science – though this must be done through public deliberation and democratic legitimization. A modern democracy strong enough to keep a technocratic element in check would then have less reason to fear being threatened – or even replaced – by technocracy.

Essay
Softcover
ca. 230 pages
2026

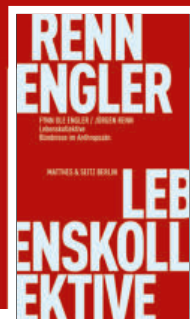
Markus Metz, born in Oberstdorf in 1958, studied journalism, political science, and theater studies in Berlin. He works as a freelance journalist and author and lives in Munich.

Georg Seeßlen, born in Munich in 1948, studied painting, art history, and semiotics in Munich. He has taught at various universities in Germany and abroad and works as a freelance author and film critic.

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Crisis of Democracy · Elon Musk · Technological Revolution · Authoritarianism · Right-Wing Populism

MATTHES & SEITZ BERLIN



Fynn Ole Engler, Jürgen Renn

Communities of Life. Alliances in the Anthropocene

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

A manifesto for what we share in the Anthropocene

This programmatic essay focuses on the concept of life collectives, which are also thought collectives. From a historical-materialist perspective, it discusses the long-term natural and social processes that have led to the Anthropocene as a new geological epoch. The authors are concerned with a reflection on our species and, thus, with a redefinition of humanity that takes into account the timescales of the intertwined histories of Earth and humankind as well as an understanding of planetary boundaries. From their perspective, humans possess the power to shape the planet, but at the same time, their opportunities and responsibilities are unevenly distributed. Against this backdrop, the authors explore our species' capacity for alliance – with nature as well as with one another – as a prerequisite for effectively addressing global challenges. Local communities and globally active intellectual collectives open up new perspectives for developing a species consciousness grounded in what we share and for designing sustainable paths toward the future.

Essay
Softcover
ca. 180 pages
2026

Fynn Ole Engler, born in Wismar in 1971, works as a philosopher of science at the University of Rostock. From 2006 to 2024, he conducted research at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin.

Jürgen Renn, born in Moers in 1956, is a historian of science, physicist, and mathematician. He served as director of the MPI for the History of Science in Berlin from 1994 to 2023, and has been the founding director of the MPI for Geoanthropology in Jena since 2022. His recent research has focused, among other things, on the Anthropocene and the challenges it poses to the history of knowledge. For further information: rights@matthes-seitz-berlin.de www.matthes-seitz-berlin.de/foreign-rights



Christiane Solte-Gresser

Dream and Reparation. Narrated Shoah Dreams

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

Dream narratives as cultural memory and a strategy for survival after the Shoah

Dream narratives form a crucial part of our knowledge of the Shoah. For many survivors, they serve as a strategy for carrying on: they express experiences that can hardly be communicated in any other way. In this essay, the act of recounting and sharing dreams is understood as a paradoxical practice of reparation – both individual and collective. As important – indeed, as inevitable – as financial, political, and legal efforts at reparation may be, they consistently prove insufficient. Insofar as the destruction and trauma inflicted can never be “made good,” the cultural engagement with them takes on greater significance: as an ongoing process of coming to terms with irreparable experiences. Christiane Solte-Gresser presents a striking spectrum of dreams from Shoah survivors who give narrative expression to their traumatic experiences. At the same time, she explores the reparative potential of dreams for our cultural memory and their contribution to contemporary politics of remembrance.

Essay
Softcover
166 pages
2026

Christiane Solte-Gresser, born in 1968, is a professor of general and comparative literature at Saarland University and director of the Käte Hamburger College for Cultural Practices of Reparation. She is president of the German Society for General and Comparative Literature and has held visiting and acting professorships at Goethe University Frankfurt and the Université d'Aix-Marseille.

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Martin Warnke

Large Language Kabbalah. A Brief History of Large Language Models

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

ChatGPT and other large language models – endless hallucinations?

It is not nerds, but scribes who can explain the field of generative artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT: such “large language models” have their roots in linguistics, literary criticism, and even the interpretation of sacred texts. Martin Warnke pursues this thesis through an archaeology of the origins of LLM – from Zellig S. Harris’ statistical language theory to Walter Benjamin’s philosophy of language to Jewish Kabbalah. In doing so, he shows that mystical text interpretation techniques have similar characteristics and thus also problems as today’s computer systems: It is language structures, not artificial brains, that fascinate and frighten us. The “hallucinations” of AI are not teething problems, but the inevitable consequence of linguistic processes that derive semantics from syntax alone, without reference to the world. Criticism must therefore start with the fundamental question: What are these systems that exist only in language and have no world?

“[...] the author, a physicist and historian of digital media, explains concisely and compellingly why large language models (LLMs) can produce a lot, but not intelligent behavior.”

– Günter Hack, FAZ

Essay
Softcover
152 pages
2026
Full English translation
available

Nominated for the Tractatus Prize 2026

Martin Warnke, born in 1955, holds a doctorate in theoretical physics and was Professor of Computer Science and Digital Media at Leuphana University Lüneburg. There, he was director of the DFG Collaborative Research Group 'Media Cultures of Computer Simulation'.

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Christine Wunnicke

Parrots. A Portrait

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

If a parrot speaks human language – does it know what it's doing?

Christine Wunnicke didn't name her thin, timid parakeet "Hansi" or "Bubi" – she called him "Klitz." Decades later, she does justice to the cage bird who died so young. But does knowing one means knowing all of them? And do they know us, too? Or where does their ability to mimic human speech like no other animal come from – without lips and with a rock-hard beak? Plucked from primeval forests, transported along colonial trade routes, locked in golden cages and draped over pirates' shoulders, trained to dance and speak – it's easy to forget that these colorful, clever birds manage just fine without us in the wild.

In her portrait, which turns out just as dazzling, cheeky, and clever as the revered representatives of this order of birds, Christine Wunnicke approaches the eloquent exotic creature. She traces the circumstances that have shaped our relationship with them, recounts parrot fantasies revealed through the centuries in fantastical depictions of parrots – and our insatiable desire to be able to speak with other animals.

"What was it imitating? A human? Another bird? A sneeze? The rattling of sails at sea?"

Non-fiction
Hardcover with numerous illustrations
ca. 160 pages
2026

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Georg Büchner Prize 2026

Christine Wunnicke, born in 1966, lives in Munich and Berlin. She writes novels, biographical works, and radio plays, and translates from English and Italian. Her books have received numerous awards, most recently the Wilhelm Raabe Literature Prize and the Jean-Paul Prize. Her last two novels, *Die Dame mit der bemalten Hand* (2020) and *Wachs* (2025), were shortlisted for the German Book Prize.

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Colourful · Parakeet · Exotics · Silk Road · Speech · Imitation · Cage bird



Alexander Klose, Benjamin Steininger

Disruptocene

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

We wanted to save insects; suddenly, NATO was under threat. We saw Peak Oil looming, but not Peak Liberal. Will the digital age prove even more disastrous than petro-modernity?

Essay
Softcover
144 pages
2026

The fabric of democratic society is in a state of instability. The already sluggish transition towards a socially just future in terms of energy and material resources seems to have been brought to a halt before it had even properly begun. More extraction, more consumption, less consideration, less balance. But beneath the historical events of the moment – the wars, election results and reactionary political shifts – lie longer-term processes: the restructuring of the metabolism of a civilisation built on combustion, more complex chemical process structures, and the expansion of the extractivist material regime. Can a critique of fossilised reason, can a new geoanthropology, conceive of humanity and the planet together in a productive rather than destructive way?

Disruptocene interprets the rise of ruthless power politics as a symptom of a profound and far-reaching transformation in the relationship with nature in the dawn-ing era – be it still ecologically-democratic, or, by decree, digital-nuclear-techno-cratic. After the Petro-era comes the Multi-Element Modern, and it will be no less explosive.

Alexander Klose, born in 1969, is a cultural researcher, curator and writer. He has been leading the 'Chemistry in transition' research team at the Just Transition Centre in Halle since 2024.

Benjamin Steininger, born in 1974, is a cultural studies scholar, historian of science and technology, curator, and postdoctoral researcher at the Max Planck Institute in Jena. His research focuses on industrial catalysis and fossil raw materials in the modern era and the Anthropocene. Since 2017, they have been exploring the complexities of petro-modernity as part of the 'Beauty of Oil' research collective.

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Simon Probst

Burying Glaciers

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

As more and more forms of life are threatened with permanent extinction, how do we cope with the grief over these losses?

What the international community insists on treating as a distant future has long since become a reality in our present: The victims of the climate crisis and the ongoing mass extinction have become too numerous to count in recent years. In 2019, Iceland officially mourned the loss of the Okjökull Glacier. In 2022, the Southern Snowfield will lose its glacier status and will henceforth be called “dead ice”. Species are also disappearing: the dodo was wiped out in 1690, the great auk in 1844, and in 2025, a shrew, several marsupial species, and a sea snail vanished forever. Commemorating the dead is one of the origins of human culture: we become who we are because we know what came before us. But if this assumption applies not only to humans but also to our natural environment – how, then, are we to mourn all those we have “let go”? And how do we find our way back from mourning to action?

Drawing on observations of new rituals, critical reflections, and personal experience, Simon Probst weaves an essay that asks how the culture of remembrance responds to the planetary crises of the present – and how we can strive to bring justice to their victims.

Essay
Softcover
80 pages
2026

Simon Probst, born in 1993, is a scholar of literature and cultural studies. He conducts research on the ecological crises of our time and is currently working on the research project 'Nature-Cultural Memory in the Anthropocene' at the University of Vechta. His dissertation on narratives of the Anthropocene was awarded the OLB Science Prize. His most recent publication is *Meaning in the Climate Crisis. On a Planetary Theory of Literature* (2024).

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Martin Gorke

*Precious Earth. On the Wonder of Our Biosphere
and Our Obligation to Preserve It*

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

**Our Earth – a geophysical anomaly, an improbability of
immense proportions; in short: an incomprehensible stroke of
luck worth preserving!**

Essay
Softcover
64 pages
2026

The myth that Earth was made for humans persists to this day. Yet the natural sciences have long convincingly demonstrated that a series of coincidences played a decisive role in the evolution of our biosphere – and ultimately in that of humans as well: The conditions on our Earth are so improbable that they can hardly have occurred more than once in our galaxy. A planet that has given rise to multicellular animals – and, in one species, even technological intelligence – is likely a very rare phenomenon in the vastness of space. But if the blue planet is so incredibly unique, what does that mean for how we treat it?

In the most astonishing detail, Martin Gorke describes the incredibly improbable lottery win that cosmic evolution has bestowed upon us with our Earth: a place to live, a place whose diversity we must preserve with all our might to all animals, plants, mountains, rivers, species, ecosystems, and, not least, the planet Earth.

Martin Gorke, born in 1958, studied biology and philosophy in Bochum and Bayreuth and earned his doctorate in both subjects. He then spent seven years as a nature conservation officer on the bird island of Norderoog in the North Frisian Wadden Sea. In 2008, he completed his habilitation at the University of Greifswald. In 2016, he was appointed to the Chair of Environmental Ethics there. In his two books, *Artensterben* (Species Extinction) (1999) and *Eigenwert der Natur* (The Intrinsic Value of Nature) (2018), Martin Gorke advocates a holistic environmental ethics.

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Bernhard Malkmus

Flight Lines. Of Avian and Human Homing Instincts

 Matthes & Seitz Berlin

"Bernhard Malkmus is a special writer: a lynx-eyed analyst of text and image, a subtle ecological ethicist and a very fine maker of sentences." – Robert Macfarlane

The English North East is a landscape that reflects the systemic changes to the biosphere caused by 250 years of technological and social revolutions: the richest coal deposits in Britain were mined here until recently, the world's largest shipyards were located here around 1900, and huge chemical agglomerates are still changing the earth's metabolism. Fringed by the mysterious North Sea coast to the east and bleak moorland mountains to the west, this Anglo-Scottish borderland is also an important breeding ground for numerous bird species. Bernhard Malkmus refers to the areas where these flying artists are at home as well as the calligraphy they draw in the air as the "skylines" of seabirds. But for some time now, this bird paradise has been ravaged by the bird flu, which has been bred in industrial animal husbandry and spread by migratory birds all over the world. As Malkmus finds more and more carcasses on his forays, he begins to create a literary monument to the animals.

Skylines is a delightful combination of travel diary and essay, in which natural and cultural history are interwoven: a song to the sea, a hymn to the grace and resilience of seabirds, a meditation on home and migration, a search for words of mourning in the face of species extinction around us.

Non-fiction
Hardcover with illustrations
246 pages
2025
English abstract and sample available
Selected for New Books in German – translation funding guaranteed for the English language

Shortlisted for the W. G. Sebald Literature Prize 2024

Bernhard Malkmus, born in Bavaria in 1973, teaches German and Environmental Humanities at the University of Oxford. Before that, he lived and worked in Newcastle upon Tyne. For the *Naturkunden* series he has previously written *Lynxes. A portrait* (2022) and edited a newly revised translation of Peter Matthiessen's *The Snow Leopard*. For further information: rights@matthes-seitz-berlin.de www.matthes-seitz-berlin.de/foreign-rights

England · Industrialisation · Avian influenza · Climate change · Nature essay · Climate grief

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